



Evaluation Service

# EVALUATION OF UNHCR'S LEADERSHIP OF THE GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER AND FIELD PROTECTION CLUSTERS: 2014-2016

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# Evaluation of UNHCR's Leadership of the Global Protection Cluster and Field Protection Clusters: 2014-2016

## Evaluation Report

### Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	3
Acknowledgments .....	5
Executive Summary.....	6
<b>PART 1: Introduction, methodology and context .....</b>	<b>11</b>
1. Introduction and evaluation background .....	12
2. Evaluation approach and methodology.....	14
3. Contextual overview .....	18
<b>PART 2: Evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations.....</b>	<b>23</b>
4. The effectiveness of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the protection cluster .....	24
5. Predictability of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the field protection clusters.....	29
6. Effectiveness and predictability of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the Global Protection cluster .....	42
7. UNHCR's support to protection mainstreaming and the Centrality of Protection .....	46
8. Conclusions .....	52
9. Recommendations .....	54
<b>Part 3: Annexes.....</b>	<b>57</b>
Annex 1: Evaluation terms of reference.....	58
Annex 2: Evaluation framework .....	69
Annex 3: Documents reviewed .....	74
Annex 4: People consulted .....	79
Annex 5: Focus group discussion guidelines .....	86
Annex 6: Online survey questions.....	90

## Acronyms

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations	IAHE	Inter-Agency Humanitarian Evaluation
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance	IARRM	Inter-Agency Rapid Response Mechanism
AoR	Area of Responsibility	IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management (cluster)	IASC WG	Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group
CCPM	Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring	ICCG	Inter-Cluster Coordination Group
CHF	Common Humanitarian Fund	ICCT	Inter-Cluster Coordination Team
CLA	Cluster Lead Agency	ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
CoP	Community of Practice	IDP	Internally Displaced Person
CP	Child Protection	IM	Information Management
CPI	Critical Protection Issues	IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group	IOM	International Organisation for Migration
CwC	Communicating with Communities	IRC	International Rescue Committee
DESS	Division of Emergency, Security and Supply	ISAF	International Security Assistance Force
DHRM	Division of Human Resource Management	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
DIP	Division of Internal Protection	MA	Mine Action
DPSM	Division of Programme Support and Management	MENA	Middle East and North Africa
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo	MINUSMA	Multidimensionnelle Intégrée des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation au Mali
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development	MONUSCO	Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la Stabilisation en RDC
EA	Evaluability Assessment	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	MSF	Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors without Borders)
ECOSOC	The United Nations Economic and Social Council	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
EDG	Emergency Directors Group	NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
EQ	Evaluation Question	OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ERC	Emergency Relief Coordinator	ODI	Overseas Development Institute
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation	OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner of Human Rights
FGD	Focus Group Discussion	OPR	Operational Peer Review
FPC	Field Protection Cluster	PoLR	Provider of Last Resort
FTS	Financial Tracking Service	PRG	Programme Reference Group
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	PwD	Persons with Disabilities
GPC	Global Protection Cluster	PWG	Protection Working Group
HC	Humanitarian Coordinator	RC	Resident Coordinator
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team	RG	Reference Group
HLP	Housing, Land and Property	RRP	Relief, Reintegration & Protection
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview	SAG	Strategic Advisory Group
HPC	Humanitarian Programme Cycle		
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan		
HRUF	Human Rights Up Front		

SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
STAIT	Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team
TA	Transformative Agenda
ToR	Terms of Reference
TT-L	Task Team on Learning
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHS	World Humanitarian Summit
WoSR	Whole of System Review

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The evaluation team leader, Andy Featherstone, is the principal author of this report. The evaluation team members, Tasneem Mowjee and Katie Tong, and the evaluation manager, David Fleming, provided inputs during the drafting process. The evaluation team were joined by Leonora Evans Gutierrez and Kate Hale in undertaking the field missions and desk reviews. Giorgia Giambi provided support for the online survey.

## Executive summary

### Introduction

This evaluation focuses on the performance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) for the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) and Field Protection Clusters (FPCs) between 2014 and 2017. The evaluation has the dual objectives of learning and accountability and seeks to generate evidence regarding the extent to which UNHCR has effectively performed its CLA role, both at the country and global level. The focus is on learning how the 26 protection clusters, for which UNHCR is the CLA at country level, are supported by the GPC, and what lessons have been learned by UNHCR in field CLA situations. The evaluation examines the achievements and challenges of the cluster at global and field level with regard to coordination, capacity building, and support to the field and mainstreaming protection.

The cluster approach was established in 2005 as part of the humanitarian reform process with the aim of strengthening system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. The GPC is a network of United Nations (UN) agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and international organisations working on protection for internally displaced persons and other populations affected by conflict and natural disaster. The GPC coordinates the development of policy, standards and operational tools relating to protection in humanitarian action, including practical guidance on how to establish and manage protection coordination mechanisms.

### Evaluation approach and methodology

In order to fulfil the requirements outlined in the terms of reference (ToR) as well as the expectations expressed by UNHCR and key stakeholders during the inception phase, the evaluation adopted the following principles as part of its approach:

- **Ensuring rigour** through a robust approach to evidence assessment by using i) an evaluation matrix, comprising four overarching evaluation questions (EQs), 11 sub-questions and a number of indicators for each sub-question; and ii) an evidence assessment framework to organise and analyse the data, draw out key findings and assess the strength of the evidence supporting the findings.
- **Ensuring a utilisation focus** through a participatory approach by engaging key stakeholders at critical stages of the process, including workshops during the inception and reporting phase and also at the end of each field mission, in order to validate emerging findings and obtain feedback on potential recommendations.
- **Addressing both summative and formative purposes** by examining UNHCR's historical performance as CLA, to make clear forward-looking recommendations that can help to improve its work and inform implementation of the current 2016-19 strategy.

The evaluation team used a building-blocks approach to the evaluation, which involved dividing the evaluation process into sequential steps from inception to data collection to synthesis of findings and reporting in order to build a robust chain of evidence. The data collection methods employed during the evaluation are listed below:

Method	Description
Document review	692 key documents were reviewed by the evaluation team which included 460 from the field missions and desk reviews.
Semi-structured interviews	The evaluation engaged with approximately 80 headquarters staff members and 300 informants across six field missions and two desk reviews.
Field missions	The evaluation team, in coordination with UNHCR, identified six case study countries where UNHCR is the CLA. Field missions included Afghanistan, Pakistan, Honduras, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and Iraq, in each of which the team engaged a diverse set of informants at national and sub-national level.
Desk reviews	Two desk reviews were conducted of Nigeria and the Typhoon Haiyan response in the Philippines. The purpose of these was to strengthen the evidence base to support the findings of the desk reviews.
Community engagement	The evaluation team engaged with communities in five of the six missions for the purpose of assessing good practice in accountability in protection programming.

**Online survey**

An online survey was circulated to all UNHCR-led protection clusters to fill evidence gaps, to capture broad perceptions of the effectiveness of the clusters and to assist in identifying recommendations. 241 responses were analysed (184 in English, 38 in French and 19 in Spanish) from across cluster coordinators, co-leads, AoRs and members.

**Evaluation questions**

The evaluation team explored four key evaluation questions:

- How effectively has UNHCR led and coordinated the Protection Cluster at field level?
- How predictably has UNHCR led and coordinated the Protection Cluster at field level?
- How effectively and predictably has UNHCR led and coordinated the Global Protection Cluster?
- To what extent has UNHCR as cluster lead agency advocated for the centrality and mainstreaming of protection at global and field levels?

**Findings****1. Effectiveness of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of FPCs**

The effectiveness of UNHCR's cluster leadership in delivering the six core functions of cluster coordination at field level has been mixed: FPCs have performed most consistently well in their support to service delivery, in providing protection analysis and, linked to this, support to advocacy on the protection of civilians. Performance of FPCs was far more variable in determining strategic priorities and in developing work plans, which negatively impacted their ability to monitor their performance.

#	The six core functions of cluster coordination
1	To support service delivery
2	To inform the Humanitarian Coordinator/Humanitarian Country Team's strategic decision-making
3	To plan and implement cluster strategies
4	To monitor and evaluate performance
5	To build national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning
6	To support robust advocacy

AAP is frequently considered to be a seventh function of cluster coordination; it has also regularly been highlighted as one of the weakest components of the implementation of the TA. The evaluation found no explicit or consistent evidence of promotion of AAP by FPCs although protection actors, including UNHCR, had AAP mechanisms in place.

**2. Predictability of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of FPCs**

UNHCR has strengthened its resourcing of the cluster with more dedicated posts at field level, particularly in large, complex emergencies. However, there have been challenges in recruiting the right people with the right skills at the right time, which UNHCR's Division of Human Resource Management (DHRM) is now beginning to address. For the period under review and for clusters that have already been activated, UNHCR has had some measure of success in ensuring the continuity of cluster leadership. Where gaps have occurred, these have frequently been covered on an interim basis by UNHCR staff or by surge staff from standby rosters.

UNHCR has made mixed progress in its collaboration with core cluster partners. While it routinely draws on the support of co-leads and sub-clusters to deliver predictable leadership, this is compromised by a lack of clarity about how the lead-co-lead relationship is moderated and the uncertainties surrounding field-level cluster architecture and reporting. While these challenges are frequently overcome through field-level negotiation, greater direction from UNHCR would provide a stronger foundation. UNHCR has been partially successful in managing relationships with key interlocutors including UN Missions and government representatives, although it could strengthen guidance to assist clusters in managing these important relationships. Collaboration with local NGOs and civil society groups is an area that UNHCR could strengthen and there is the potential for it to play a leadership role among peer CLAs in setting an agenda for transforming its engagement.



The predictability of UNHCR's leadership is undermined by the lack of clarity that exists between the FPCs and the sub-clusters about the PoLR role. While PoLR exists at the conceptual level, the complex cluster architecture has caused confusion about how to operationalise these important responsibilities. UNHCR's leadership of the cluster is also affected by Country Representatives interpreting its CLA responsibilities inconsistently, which can compromise perceptions of the cluster's neutrality. A final factor that has an important influence on predictability is planning for transition and de-activation. The evaluation found that UNHCR, like other CLAs, has been inconsistent in putting in place coordinated plans for transition and de-activation.

### 3. Effectiveness and predictability of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the GPC

The increase in UNHCR's funding for the GPC during the period under evaluation and the associated increase in dedicated posts have considerably strengthened both the GPC's capacity and its autonomy from UNHCR.

The absence of a mechanism to monitor progress against its work plan makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of UNHCR's support but the evaluation found that support to the field has been strengthened during the period under evaluation. Interviews revealed that the provision of training, technical support and tools have been well-received but better communication with protection cluster members about where and how to access them would increase their use. From the perspective of effectiveness, one area that has received insufficient attention by UNHCR is its oversight of cluster performance.

UNHCR has made mixed progress towards strengthening predictability; while relationships between the AoRs and the GPC Operations Cell have improved over the last year, there continues to be a lack of clarity in the relationship between the GPC and AoRs, which has an impact on the GPC's efficiency and operational effectiveness. A change in governance structure that came about after a significant consultation process has the potential to broaden out GPC engagement, but the inclusion of GPC co-leads would offer the best opportunity to strengthen collaboration.

### 4. UNHCR's support to protection mainstreaming and the Centrality of Protection

The Protection Task Team has made an important contribution to supporting protection mainstreaming through the provision of tools and training through a collaborative approach. While there has been progress with protection mainstreaming at the field level, protection clusters tend to continue to rely on checklists and guidelines. While some FPCs have engaged across clusters and reviewed proposals, collaboration was most successful when support was demand-driven. Interviews suggest that although protection concerns were raised and discussed during meetings, discussions about protection mainstreaming occurred infrequently so the inter-cluster coordinator group (ICCG) tended not to be a forum for live discussion about how to strengthen protection across the response.

While UNHCR has supported the GPC in undertaking a range of advocacy initiatives in support of the centrality of protection, the support and guidance given to the drafting and publication of the IASC Policy has been the most significant achievement. The successful delivery of the policy has drawn on UNHCR's engagement across the IASC WG, the EDG and GPCs leadership of the Protection Priority although there is scope to strengthen the effectiveness of its advocacy further by improving collaboration with key protection advocates in the future. The evidence provided by successive STAIT missions suggest that, at the field level, important progress is still needed in order to deliver more consistently against the policy. UNHCR has an important role to play in this through its engagement with the HC/HCT and its leadership of the protection cluster.

### Conclusions and recommendations

UNHCR's leadership of the protection cluster has assisted in strengthening global leadership and advocacy and has provided important support to field coordination and delivery of protection programming. During the period under evaluation, the GPC has been strengthened and has undergone a re-organisation, and there have been efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and predictability of leadership at the field level. While progress has been made, there is still significant work that can be done to strengthen the performance of the cluster.

The evaluation team makes the following recommendations, each of which has a clear target audience and is assigned an order of priority:

#	EQ 1: Effectiveness of field-level cluster leadership and coordination	Who is responsible	Priority level
1	<b>Ensure each FPC has clear performance targets.</b> In line with IASC guidance, UNHCR as CLA should ensure that each FPC has specific performance targets that include a strategy with an associated work plan and a commitment to use the CCPM on an annual basis. This would demonstrate effective management of the cluster and strengthen accountability.	UNHCR Reps, FPCs	High
2	<b>Promote routine establishment of Strategic Advisory Groups (SAGs) in FPCs with a clear mandate.</b> UNHCR should promote the routine establishment of SAGs in FPCs that is representative of its members and has a mandate to set strategic direction, agree policy positions, manage disagreements and monitor progress.	GPC Ops Cell and FPCs	Mid
#	EQ2: Predictability of field-level cluster leadership and coordination	Who is responsible	Priority level
3	<b>Provide guidance to strengthen understanding of UNHCR's CLA responsibilities to Country Offices.</b> There is a need to strengthen understanding of UNHCR's CLA responsibilities to Country Offices. Guidance should be provided which outlines the responsibilities of Country Representatives in managing the performance of cluster coordinators, and describes their role in facilitating the work of clusters in a way that is consistent with their neutrality and that allows effective functioning.	UNHCR HQ and DIP	High
4	<b>UNHCR should initiate a discussion with the AoRs with the objective of strengthening guidance on PoLR.</b> The existing guidance on PoLR should be developed further to provide unambiguous and unequivocal delineation of PoLR responsibility within the Protection Cluster specifically. This delineation should allow for different modalities in different contexts but criteria for such should be specified in the guidance.	UNHCR and GPC Ops Cell	High
5	<b>Act on feedback to strengthen the diversity of the protection cluster through developing guidance on improving cluster engagement with local actors.</b> UNHCR should act on feedback, received during the consultations for the 2016-19 strategy, on the importance of strengthening the diversity of the protection cluster. As part of its commitment to supporting localisation, the GPC has included local NGOs in its new governance structure. It is now important for this shift in emphasis to move from the global to the local. Therefore, the GPC Operations Cell should engage with the GPC membership to develop guidance for how the cluster can transform the way in which it engages with local actors which should address issues of representation in governance structures, leadership, capacity development and access to funding.	GPC Ops Cell	High
6	<b>Ensure that FPCs routinely have MoUs in place with all co-leads.</b> To ensure clarity on the respective roles and responsibilities of protection cluster leads and co-leads, and in line with IASC guidance, UNHCR as CLA should ensure that FPCs routinely have MoUs in place with all co-leads.	FPCs and UNHCR Reps	Mid
7	<b>Improve accessibility of key country-level documents.</b> In order to strengthen local engagement in FPCs, UNHCR should routinely translate key country-level documents into relevant languages. At a minimum, the GPC Operations Cell should ensure that core documents are translated into French, Spanish and Arabic.	GPC Ops Cell and FPCs	Mid
8	<b>Provide guidance for protection clusters on engaging government.</b> UNHCR as CLA should develop non-prescriptive guidance for protection clusters providing an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of government engagement in protection clusters.	GPC Ops Cell	Low
#	EQ3: Leadership and coordination of the GPC	Who is responsible	Priority level
9	<b>Undertake a strategic review of the GPC/AoR relationship.</b> UNHCR should initiate a process to strategically review how the GPC/AoR relationship is structured with a view to clarifying and strengthening collaboration and maximising effectiveness and efficiencies.	GPC Ops Cell	High
10	<b>Improve recruitment processes and strengthen performance management and capacity building.</b> It will be important to continue and conclude the process initiated by DHRM and DIP to review the protection cluster coordination job descriptions and create separate protection cluster coordination group in the functional groups. UNHCR should also promote the participation of GPC Operations Cell staff in 360° performance reviews for protection cluster coordinators. The Operations Cell should initiate an annual CCPM process across FPCs as a means of strengthening the GPC's targeting of field support and training.	GPC Ops Cell, Regional Bureaux, DIP and DHRM	High

11	<b>Revise membership of the Protection Programme Reference Group.</b> The membership of the Protection Programme Reference Group should be revised to include representation from NGOs which play cluster co-lead roles.	GPC Ops Cell	High
12	<b>Include key performance indicators in annual work plans.</b> The GPC Operations Cell should develop indicators to measure progress against the implementation of its annual work plan.	GPC Ops Cell	High
#	<b>EQ4: Protection mainstreaming and advocacy for the centrality of protection</b>	<b>Who is responsible</b>	<b>Priority level</b>
13	<b>Strengthen advocacy on the centrality of protection.</b> UNHCR should strengthen its advocacy on the centrality of protection by more formally including key partners and allies in the preparation of advocacy products. The GPC Operations Cell should set out a process for engaging with a small group of key advocacy partners.	GPC Ops Cell and FPCs	Mid
14	<b>Strengthen coordination of engagement and advocacy on IDP protection across the agency.</b> UNHCR's interlocutors with the IASC bodies are located in different divisions of the organisation and there is scope to strengthen the links between the Chief of the Inter-Agency Coordination Service, the Director of DESS, the coordinator of the GPC, the coordinator of the Global Shelter Cluster, and the Coordinator of the Global CCCM Cluster for the purpose of coordinating engagement and advocacy on IDP protection.	Executive Office, GPC Ops Cell, DIP, DESS, ICS, DER, DPSM	Low

## **PART 1:**

# **Introduction, methodology and context**

## 1. Introduction and evaluation background

*This section provides a brief overview of UNHCR's leadership of the Global Protection Cluster, it provides a summary of the evaluation objectives and scope of the evaluation, and it outlines the structure of the report.*

### 1.1 Overview of the Global Protection Cluster

The cluster approach was established in 2005 as part of the humanitarian reform process with the aim of strengthening system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) is a network of UN agencies, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and international organisations working on protection for internally displaced persons and other populations affected by conflict and natural disaster. UNHCR is the Lead Agency of the Protection Cluster. The GPC coordinates the development of policy, standards and operational tools relating to protection in humanitarian action, including practical guidance on how to establish and manage protection coordination mechanisms.

#### Figure 1: The vision, mission and organisation of the GPC<sup>1</sup>

The GPC coordinates and provides global-level inter-agency policy advice and guidance on the implementation of the cluster approach to protection clusters in the field; supports protection responses in non-refugee situation humanitarian action; and leads standard and policy setting relating to protection in complex and natural disaster humanitarian emergencies, in particular with regard to the protection of internally displaced persons.

**Vision:** All people affected or threatened by a humanitarian crisis have their rights fully respected in accordance with international law and their protection assured by relevant and timely actions through all phases of the crisis and beyond.

**Mission:** Within the overall humanitarian response architecture, the GPC works to improve the predictability, leadership, effectiveness and accountability of response to ensure that protection is central to humanitarian action. The protection of the rights of people in conflict and disaster settings requires a broad range of action by a wide variety of duty-bearers, so the GPC also acts as a bridge between humanitarians and others, including development, political, peacekeeping and other relevant actors.

**Leadership:** UNHCR is the Global Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) for Protection and is responsible for leading and coordinating other United Nations agencies, inter-governmental organisations and NGOs participating in the GPC. In light of their thematic expertise, other agencies have been designated as focal point agencies for specific Areas of Responsibility (AoRs) within the GPC:

- Child protection (CP) – United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- Gender-based Violence (GBV) – United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- Housing, Land and Property (HLP) – Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
- Mine Action (MA) – United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

### 1.2 Objectives and users of the evaluation

During the 2013 High Commissioner's Dialogue on protection challenges, which focused on protecting internally displaced people, the High Commissioner committed to conducting an evaluation of UNHCR's protection cluster leadership role, a commitment which this evaluation fulfils.

This evaluation of UNHCR's leadership of the GPC and Field Protection Clusters (FPC) focuses on its performance as CLA at both global and country levels between 2014 and 2017. This period spans two GPC strategies, 2012-15 and 2016-19 both of which set out two broad strategic objectives which can be summarised as:

- Increasing support to the field to ensure an effective, timely and relevant response; and
- Ensuring that protection is central to humanitarian action through national and global engagement.

The evaluation has the dual objectives of **learning** and **accountability** and seeks to generate evidence

<sup>1</sup> See <http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/about-us/who-we-are.html>

regarding the extent to which UNHCR has effectively performed its CLA role, both at the county and global level. The focus is on learning how the 26 protection clusters, for which UNHCR is the CLA at country level, are supported by the GPC, and what lessons have been learned by UNHCR in field situations. The evaluation examines the achievements and challenges of the cluster at global and field level with regard to coordination, capacity building, and support to the field and mainstreaming protection.

The primary users of the evaluation include headquarters and country-level UNHCR staff participating in cluster activities; senior managers of UNHCR, including in the Department of International Protection (DIP), the Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM), the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS) and the regional Bureaux; the staff of partner agencies participating in cluster activities at headquarters and field level (the four AoRs and cluster co-leads); and donors. Secondary users include observers of FPCs, and other collaborative entities.

### 1.3 Scope of the evaluation

The original ToR set out seven key evaluation questions and 27 further sub-questions covering the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence/connectedness, coverage and impact. The critical questions these sought to address are how effectively and predictably UNHCR has led the cluster at the field level; how the GPC has supported the field clusters; and what issues and factors enabled or impeded UNHCR's coordination of the protection cluster.

Initial consultations in Geneva with UNHCR and its partners and the pilot field mission to Afghanistan demonstrated the relevance of the overarching questions but identified several concerns, namely: the unmanageable number of evaluation questions and sub-questions; the lack of emphasis placed in the ToR on evaluating the coherence of the GPC and FPCs; and the challenge of engaging communities through focus group discussions (FGDs) to assess the relevance of the FPCs in responding to people's protection priorities.

The following solutions were agreed to address these challenges:

1. The number of questions and sub-questions were significantly reduced and each question is articulated thematically rather than being disaggregated according to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development-Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) evaluation criteria;
2. The period under evaluation was shifted to 2014-2016;
3. The coherence of the protection cluster including the AoRs was included as a sub-question;
4. It was agreed that the focus of community engagement in the evaluation should be Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP).

The revised evaluation matrix contains four key questions beneath which are 11 sub-questions.

- **Key evaluation question 1:** How effectively has UNHCR led and coordinated the Protection Cluster at field level?
- **Key evaluation question 2:** How predictably has UNHCR led and coordinated the Protection Cluster at field level?
- **Key evaluation question 3:** How effectively and predictably has UNHCR led and coordinated the Global Protection Cluster?
- **Key evaluation question 4:** To what extent has UNHCR as cluster lead agency advocated for the centrality and mainstreaming of protection at global and field levels?

### 1.4 Structure of the report

This report is the main output from the evaluation and is structured as follows:

#### **PART 1: Introduction, methodology and context**

**Section 1** of the report provides an introduction and background to the evaluation, its overall scope, and its governance and management. **Section 2** describes the team's overall approach to the evaluation, the analytical framework that the evaluation team used to answer the evaluation questions, and the challenges

faced by the team. **Section 3** of the report provides an overview and analysis of the context of protection in humanitarian action during the period under evaluation.

## **PART 2: Evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations**

**Sections 4-7** of the report outline the findings of the evaluation against each of the four evaluation questions. **Section 8** presents conclusions against each of the evaluation questions and links these to lessons that have been highlighted during the evaluation. **Section 9** of the report provides priority recommendations and allocates responsibility for these to specific stakeholders. For each recommendation, reference is made to the relevant sections in the report and an indication of the level of priority is given.

## **2. Evaluation approach and methodology**

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*This section provides a summary of the evaluation approach and methodology including the tools that were used. It provides a summary of participation in the evaluation and notes the challenges and limitations.*

### **2.1 Evaluation approach and principles**

In order to fulfil the requirements outlined in the ToR as well as the expectations expressed by UNHCR and key stakeholders during the inception phase, the evaluation adopted the following principles as part of its approach:

**Ensuring rigour through a robust approach to evidence assessment:** An analytical framework was used which comprised two main tools to ensure rigour and credibility to the findings. The first was the evaluation matrix and the second tool was an evidence assessment framework (see section 2.2 below).

**Ensuring utilisation focus through a participatory approach:** In order for the report to be useful for UNHCR, the GPC and key partners, it was important to build a strong sense of ownership of the evaluation's findings and recommendations. This was achieved through dialogue with the main stakeholders at critical stages during the process. A workshop was conducted during the inception phase to identify key issues; the field teams held interactive workshops at the end of each case study country visit in order to validate emerging findings and to obtain feedback on potential recommendations; prior to the submission of the draft report an emerging findings workshop was held with the Reference Group members and stakeholders to validate and fine-tune the findings and recommendations; and a final workshop is planned with senior stakeholders to present the findings and recommendations.

**Addressing both summative and formative purposes:** Discussions with UNHCR during the inception phase highlighted that while this evaluation examines UNHCR's performance during the last three years as CLA, it is also important to make clear forward-looking recommendations that can help to improve its work and inform implementation of the current 2016-19 strategy. Thus, the evaluation combined a retrospective analysis (a summative assessment) with a focus on future action (a formative assessment) at both the global and field levels.

### **2.2 Analytical framework**

The analytical framework comprised two main tools:

**The evaluation matrix:** The evaluation matrix (included in Annex 2) presents the overarching evaluation questions and sub-questions that guided the evaluation team's line of questioning and analysis throughout the evaluation. For each sub-question, the matrix lists the indicators against which evidence was gathered during the desk review and field visits. The indicators cover different aspects of each sub-question and ensured that data was collected in a systematic and consistent way.

The evaluation matrix also identified the analytical methods that the team employed to answer each sub-question as well as the sources of data to address the indicators. Listing the data sources for each sub-question provided a foundation from which to develop data collection tools to address all the relevant sub-questions.



**The evidence assessment framework:** In order to organise and analyse the data gathered during the evaluation, an evidence assessment framework was developed (Figure 2). Throughout the evaluation, evidence gathered was listed against each indicator by data source and the evaluation team periodically reviewed this to identify emerging findings and to ascertain where there is strong evidence that requires limited triangulation during field visits, and where there is weak evidence that requires additional focus during the field visits. Using the same tool to organise evidence from the desk review simplified the process of comparing and synthesising evidence from the two phases. The framework also helped the team to separate context-specific findings from those at strategy level.

Emerging findings were identified based on the frequency with which issues were raised in the documentation, interviews and field missions. Particular emphasis was placed on issues that were raised across different stakeholder groups or that were frequently raised by the same stakeholder group across different field missions. These were documented under each of the evaluation questions and were used to develop hypotheses to test during the research phase and to develop during the analysis of the evaluation findings.

**Figure 2: Extract from the evidence assessment framework**

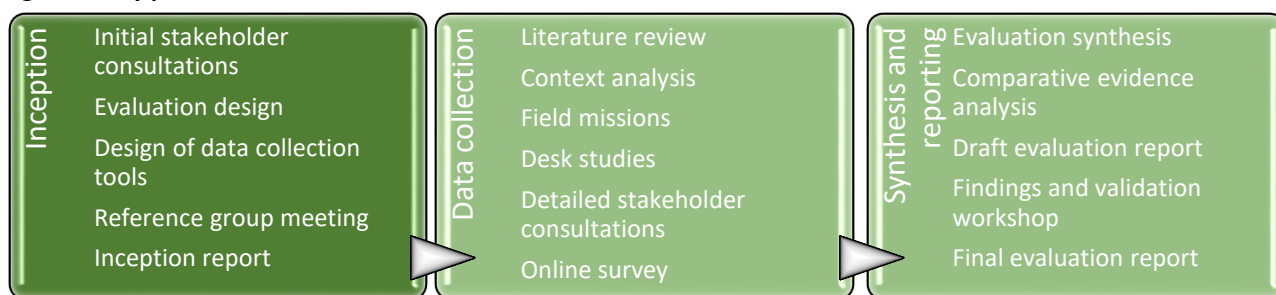
Each column in the evidence assessment framework was completed for each piece of evidence/block of text to allow the evaluation team to sort the evidence. Each team member was responsible for transferring the key evidence/findings from their interviews and FGDs into the evidence assessment framework at the end of the field visit. A simplified example using evaluation question 1 is provided below:

EQ1. How effectively has UNHCR led and coordinated the Protection cluster at field level?						
Indicators	Reference	Data source	Global/Field	Author	Sub-ques. 1.1	Sub-ques. 1.2
Drop-down menu to allow sorting by indicators	Unique reference number for identification	Drop-down menu: FGD, KII, UNHCR document	Drop-down menu: Field or global interview	Drop-down menu with evaluation team names	Evidence to be inserted by team members	Evidence to be inserted by team members

### 2.3 Evaluation process and methodology

As illustrated in Figure 3, the evaluation comprised three key phases, each of which involved a specific set of activities outlined in the team’s work plan. The team used a building-blocks approach to the evaluation, which involved dividing the evaluation process into sequential steps in order to build a robust chain of evidence.

**Figure 3: Key phases and activities of the evaluation**



#### 2.3.1 Inception phase

During the inception phase, the team undertook initial consultations with stakeholders in Geneva. A literature review of documents on the GPC website and in the public domain was also carried out. An evaluability assessment (EA) was undertaken to ensure that the evaluation was feasible, practical and would be as useful as possible to UNHCR. Based on these exercises and in discussion with the Evaluation Service and the Evaluation Reference Group, the team designed the evaluation matrix and evidence assessment framework as the key tools for organising data collection and analysis. The pilot field mission to Afghanistan was conducted in December 2016. The inception phase concluded with the submission of the inception report.

#### 2.3.2 Data collection phase



The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach to collect data which included the following methods:

**Document review:** The evaluation team drew on a review of key documentation throughout the evaluation. This included an initial review of the context and contribution to the EA, country-based review of documents in advance of the field missions and as part of desk reviews, and a review of supporting evidence during the analysis phase (Annex 3 provides a list of the key documents reviewed during the evaluation). 692 key documents were reviewed by the evaluation team which included 460 from the field missions and desk reviews.

**Semi-structured interviews:** The evaluation engaged key informants from UNHCR, GPC, AoRs and country-specific informants. Based on the indicators in the evaluation matrix, the team developed questionnaires tailored for each group of stakeholders. (Annex 4 provides a list of the people that were consulted during the evaluation). The evaluation engaged with approximately 80 staff members from agencies headquarters and 300 informants from the six field missions and two desk reviews.

**Field missions:** The evaluation team in coordination with UNHCR identified six case study countries to visit where UNHCR is the CLA (Afghanistan, Pakistan, Honduras, DRC, South Sudan and Iraq). The purpose of the field missions was to evaluate aspects of strategy implementation at national, sub-national and community level. As each humanitarian response is highly context-specific, the evaluation sought to balance coverage across different geographic regions with criteria such as the nature of the cluster (national or sub-national), diverse operations (mixed situations and IDP responses), scale of the emergency (including system-wide L3 responses<sup>2</sup>), level of funding measured by Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Financial Tracking System, and the presence/absence of a UN Mission.

**Desk reviews:** The evaluation team conducted two desk reviews of Nigeria and the Typhoon Haiyan response in the Philippines which included a review of key country-level documentation – such as annual reports, monitoring data and results frameworks – as well as telephone interviews with key informants, with the purpose of strengthening the evidence base to support the evaluation findings and judgments against the evaluation questions and sub-questions.

**Focus group discussions (FGDs):** The evaluation team engaged with communities in five of the six missions with the purpose of assessing good practice in accountability in protection programming. The methodology included sex- and age-disaggregated discussions focused on equality of participation between men, women, boys and girls. The FGDs complemented cluster-level discussions on the promotion of AAP which also drew on the Preliminary Guidance Note disseminated by the IASC Emergency Directors Group (EDG) in 2016 (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: A summary of community engagement during the evaluation**

Community sex- and age-disaggregated FGDs were conducted in five out of the six country visits. As referenced in the inception report, the original community engagement methodology trialled in the Afghanistan pilot mission was judged not to be appropriate to the evaluation and so the community engagement methodology was re-orientated to focus on AAP. The table below shows the numbers of individuals engaged during the community FGDs.

Country	Youth female	Youth male	Older women	Older men	Total
Afghanistan	15	33	23	32	103
Pakistan	0	8	26	30	64
DRC	14	10	15	11	50
South Sudan	18	18	12	7	55
Honduras	14	20	32	12	78
Iraq	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>328</b>

**Online survey:** An online survey was developed to fill evidence gaps, to capture broad perceptions of the effectiveness of the clusters and to assist in identifying recommendations. The survey was translated into

<sup>2</sup> A system-wide L3 Response activates a system-wide mobilisation of capacity to enable accelerated and scaled-up delivery of assistance. It is declared by the ERC, in consultation with the IASC Principals when a humanitarian situation suddenly and significantly deteriorates and the capacity to lead, coordinate and deliver humanitarian assistance and protection on the ground does not match the scale, complexity and urgency of the crisis.

French and Spanish and was circulated to all UNHCR-led cluster participants (see Figure 5 for a summary of participation).

#### Figure 5: Participation in the electronic survey

The survey was sent to all active UNHCR-led protection clusters. A total of 297 members participated in the evaluation and 241 responses were analysed (184 in English, 38 in French and 19 in Spanish).<sup>3</sup> The vast majority of the respondents were protection cluster members (74%), followed by cluster coordinators (12%) and AoR/sub-cluster leads (9%). Only 5% were cluster co-leads. The majority of respondents were from Africa (42%), followed by the Middle East (24%) and Asia (22%). Only 3% were based in Europe and 8% in the Americas. Respondents were almost equally split between UN agencies (34%), international NGOs (32%) and national or local NGOs (31%). Only 4% of the respondents were from national or local authorities.

### 2.3.3 Synthesis and reporting phase

During the synthesis and reporting phase, the evaluation team used the evidence assessment framework to synthesise the evaluation findings. This comprised a critical analysis and interpretation of the evidence to draw out emerging findings and to assess the strength of the evidence underpinning these. This also ensured that evidence from the literature, interviews, field missions and desk reviews informed a single, coherent set of conclusions and recommendations.

Based on the outputs of the workshop, a draft evaluation report was prepared and submitted. Prior to submission, the team briefed UNHCR and Reference Group members on the findings and discussed the report's recommendations in an emerging findings' workshop to validate the findings and assist in building ownership. Following submission of the draft report and receipt of feedback, the final evaluation report was submitted and findings and recommendations were presented at a stakeholder workshop in Geneva.

## 2.4 Challenges and limitations

A number of challenges and limitations were identified during the inception phase, in particular through the EA, and mitigation measures were put in place to reduce their impact.

**Lack of baseline data and incomplete monitoring data for the period under evaluation:** To identify and address gaps in documentation, a shared online folder was established for each country to facilitate the collection, sharing and synthesis of data in advance of each field mission. Through this approach, gaps were identified in advance of travel and efforts were made to fill them by other means such as in-country and follow-up interviews. Secondary data including ProCap mission reports, cluster strategies and evaluation reports were also used to assist in filling gaps. Where it was not possible to identify a baseline, or to reconstruct one, it was not possible to identify changes in the performance of the cluster over time.

**A lack of cluster performance data:** A Cluster Coordination Performance Management (CCPM) tool<sup>4</sup> was developed and disseminated by the IASC in January 2014 but uptake has been inconsistent with only five of all the UNHCR-led protection clusters using the tool in 2016. Data from the CCPM tool was used to inform the evaluation findings and was supplemented by primary research conducted by the evaluation team.

**Lack of staff in country for the period under evaluation:** The evaluation team liaised with UNHCR in country in advance of the field missions to identify staff availability during the period under evaluation, and sought to make contact with staff who have moved duty stations but remain in the humanitarian system. Where it was not possible to locate key staff, the evaluation sought to use historical documentation to fill gaps in knowledge.

**Limitations in the ability to engage communities on AAP:** Having discussed several options for community engagement during the inception phase and having trialled one approach in the pilot field mission, it was agreed that the focus of community engagement during the evaluation should be placed on evidencing the

<sup>3</sup> Of the 297 people that started the survey, 56 either completed only the first three questions or provided partial responses. These were not included in the sample.

<sup>4</sup> See [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/guidance\\_note\\_14.02.14.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/guidance_note_14.02.14.pdf)

link between accountability and protection. Due to the need to adopt a purposive sampling strategy it was agreed that emphasis would be placed on seeking to capture good practice.

**Limited access to disaggregated financial data:** While the evaluation questions focused on both human and financial resourcing provided by UNHCR to the cluster, it proved difficult to obtain disaggregated financial data for analysis. For this reason and where possible, UNHCR's resourcing of the cluster was assessed through an analysis of cluster coordination deployments in each of the field missions. This was supplemented by efforts to identify the incidence and duration of staffing gaps.

**Limited understanding by cluster members about the role of a cluster:** It was evident from country-level key informant interviews that many cluster members lacked an understanding of the role of a cluster as outlined in the IASC Cluster Coordination Reference Module.<sup>5</sup> While this could be mitigated in one-to-one key informant interviews, it was more problematic to address this during FGDs or where there were time constraints. The evaluation team consider this has led to positive bias (see below).

**The existence of positive bias:** The evaluation drew on some evidence generated by external researchers, where available, but the team was largely reliant on documentation provided by the GPC and by the country-level protection cluster to answer certain evaluation questions relating to results and effectiveness (including through the online survey). This introduced significant potential for positive bias which the team sought to address through an approach which (i) drew on external evaluation and reviews, (ii) included external key informants at both country and global-levels, and (iii) triangulated findings across countries and multiple data sources where this was possible.

### 3. Contextual overview

*This section provides an overview of the context within which UNHCR has led the protection cluster. It summarises the changes in global humanitarian need that prompted humanitarian reform and the influence this had on the coordination of protection. It documents recent action to place protection at the centre of humanitarian action and provides an overview of the role and organisation of the GPC.*

#### 3.1 The evolution of the humanitarian system

Across the last thirty years, the evolution of global humanitarian architecture has been iterative and relatively haphazard, despite attempts to provide some structure to the changing architecture as it emerged. While there has been some acceptance of the need for change, there has also been resistance from within a humanitarian system that has been described as *'both made to fail and too big to fail.'*<sup>6</sup> Commentators have divergent views on its success or failure, but there can be little argument about its growth: global humanitarian response has become an enormous industry, increasing ten-fold in size from an estimated formal expenditure<sup>7</sup> of \$2.1 billion in 1990, to \$22 billion in 2014, with 250,000 people employed by what has, essentially, become the *'world's humanitarian welfare system.'*<sup>8</sup>

But the nature of human suffering is also changing. In the 2013 High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection it was noted that *'chronic displacement [is] becoming the norm.'*<sup>9</sup> In 2017 UNHCR estimates that there are 65.6 million forcibly displaced people worldwide and 22.5 million refugees,<sup>10</sup> a scale of displacement not witnessed since the end of the Second World War. It is clear that the challenges of refugee and migration issues have become a defining feature of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and how these issues are addressed will reflect

<sup>5</sup> See [https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/iasc-coordination-reference%20module-en\\_0.pdf](https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/iasc-coordination-reference%20module-en_0.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Excluding personal remittances and local faith or other donations not captured by FTS or previous systems.

<sup>8</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015.

<sup>9</sup> UNHCR (2013) *High Commissioner's Dialogue on Protection Challenges*, 2013.

<sup>10</sup> See <http://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html>. Accessed on 04/07/2017.

critically on the future of humanity. It is not just the scale, but also the nature of displacement that has changed. Displacement has become more protracted and is also increasingly occurring within urban and host community settings, as opposed to traditional camp settings. Cyclical disasters – particularly those driven by changes in weather patterns – are increasing in frequency and in scale, and long-standing conflicts are re-emerging with new dimensions. With a global population of 7.3 billion people, which is predicted to increase to nearly 10 billion by 2050, it would appear likely that the *'world's welfare system'* will continue to be stretched to its limits.

### 3.2 The rise of the clusters under humanitarian reform

Triggered by the inadequacy of the scale-up to the conflict in Darfur and the international response to the 2004 Asian Tsunami, much has been written about the evolution of the global humanitarian system since the roll-out of humanitarian reform in 2005. Of interest to this evaluation are the more recent system-wide evaluations, particularly the 2010 Cluster Evaluation.<sup>11</sup> This concluded that, while there were significant shortcomings with the cluster system, the benefits generally outweighed the disadvantages. It also surmised that the cluster system had reduced duplication of relief efforts and improved the overall capacity to better identify gaps. Shortcomings identified were the exclusion of local actors and the failure to link with existing State structures (in many cases, contributing to actually weakening national and local ownership and capacity); and the fact that clusters had become increasingly process-focused rather than outcome-orientated. It was also noted that there was *'little integration of cross-cutting issues'*<sup>12</sup> and that inter-cluster coordination was weak. The evaluation additionally noted more specific operational shortcomings, such as cluster coordinators who were often not trained or competent in facilitation, and the *'lack [of] a common, basic handbook or toolkit.'*<sup>13</sup>

Since 2010, a number of attempts to address these shortcomings have been made, not least the 2011 Transformative Agenda (TA) process. The TA reforms were based around three pillars of improved coordination, leadership and accountability. In relation to improved coordination, the activation of clusters was supposed to become *'more strategic, less automatic, and time-limited.'* However, progress since the launch of the TA has been mixed. Within TA protocols, minimum standards for participation in clusters were introduced. While this has had some positive effects on the engagement in clusters by international NGOs, it has also highlighted the low level of participation by NGOs from the global South.<sup>14</sup> The TA has sought to address the critique that the cluster system has become too process-focused rather than outcome-orientated, but the multitude of new tools and policies required to be used and implemented within clusters has been perceived by some as having the opposite effect.<sup>15</sup> The launching of the *'Cluster Coordination Reference Module'* in 2012 and its subsequent revision in 2015 may have started to address some of these concerns but it is still too early to assess its impact.

Of relevance to this evaluation is ALNAP's 2015 Cluster Coordination Report<sup>16</sup> which concluded that clusters generally operate at an *'alignment'* level rather than a *'collaboration'* level. It also stressed that *'rather than creating a single agreed strategy, which all members then implement, Cluster members are in fact planning and initiating their own organisation-specific activities, and then putting these all together to make a common strategy; the strategy is guided by the activities, and not the other way around'*.

A final critical point on the evolution and effectiveness of the cluster system is the role of the CLA. Two of the most important issues are neutrality and the more practical issue of resourcing, which are inextricably inter-

<sup>11</sup> The first Cluster Evaluation was conducted in 2007 and the Cluster Evaluation II was conducted in 2010.

<sup>12</sup> Steets et al. (2010) *Cluster approach evaluation 2 – synthesis report*. URD & GPPI, April 2010.

<sup>13</sup> Steets et al. (2010) *Cluster approach evaluation 2 – synthesis report*. URD & GPPI, April 2010.

<sup>14</sup> Krueger, S., Derszi-Horvarth, A. and Steets, J (2016) *The Transformative Agenda: A review of reviews and follow-up*, Global Public Policy Institute and Inspire Consortium, p.39.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p.36.

<sup>16</sup> Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2015) *Exploring coordination in humanitarian clusters*. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

linked. There seems to be a general consensus that *'double-hatting'<sup>17</sup> is negative and should be avoided at any cost'*.<sup>18</sup> This view has arisen as a consequence of the time constraints experienced when double-hatting occurs but is also a result of the perceived conflicts of interest that can occur when a cluster coordinator has to fulfil her/his cluster role as well as an agency-specific one. However, it is important to recognise that there is a risk that the neutrality of the clusters, which was the subject of a joint letter from CLAs to their Country Representatives in 2009,<sup>19</sup> could have implications for the way in which CLAs provided support to them.

### 3.3 The role of protection within the humanitarian system

The IASC definition of protection which is also used by the GPC is: *'all activities, aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. human rights, humanitarian and refugee law). Human rights and humanitarian actors shall conduct these activities impartially and not on the basis of race, national or ethnic origins, language or gender.'*

The challenge with this definition is that it does not easily lend itself to a clear and unambiguous understanding of what protection is. For example, some have argued that the IASC definition lends itself to *'multiple interpretations'*.<sup>20</sup> Others have suggested that *'we do have a shared definition...the real problem is the definition is broad and therefore is understood differently'*,<sup>21</sup> which suggests that it is the breadth of the definition that is the problem. A further source of confusion are the different levels at which protection is considered. Unlike any other thematic or sectoral area, protection is simultaneously a goal of humanitarian action, an approach (or lens), and a specific set of activities – which themselves may be direct, integrated, or mainstreamed.<sup>22</sup> In reality, protection is both (an outcome and an activity) and more, and this is why protection defies neat labelling and also why there are multiple interpretations of what protection is.

Protection has other significant challenges.

- Firstly, it is clear that protection issues relating to the protection of civilians in conflict require a political solution. *'There are no humanitarian solutions to humanitarian problems'* is an oft-repeated refrain from former UNHCR High Commissioner Sadako Ogata, referring to the fact that humanitarian responses to political problems are little more than *'sticking plaster'* and solutions can only come from political action taken by UN Security Council and member states.
- Secondly, many specific protection issues (which often fall within AoRs particularly CP, GBV, and housing land and property) have roots outside of an emergency. That is, those issues (such as sexual violence) generally existed before the humanitarian crisis occurred and have been exacerbated by a crisis. Therefore, genuine solutions to these specific protection issues require a development and human-rights-orientated response as much as an emergency response.
- Thirdly, specific sector, agency, and mandate foci have dominated protection programming in emergencies. Much of the guidance that is available is for specific population groups – for example, the 2015 GBV Guidelines aimed predominantly at women and girls; and CP guidelines specifically for children. The Independent Whole of System Review suggests that the demographically targeted nature of programming is contrary to a *'whole of caseload'* approach to protection issues:<sup>23</sup> *'status-*

<sup>17</sup> Double-hatting is the practice of a CLA staff member holding both the role of the cluster coordinator as well as a specific function within the CLA organisation.

<sup>18</sup> Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2015) *Exploring coordination in humanitarian clusters*. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI.

<sup>19</sup> Joint Letter from Cluster Lead Agencies to their Directors/Representatives at country level, 20 October 2009.

<sup>20</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015.

<sup>21</sup> Christoplos, I. & Bonino, F. (2016) *Evaluating protection in humanitarian action: Focus on decision-making processes and options to address common issues and challenges*. ALNAP Pilot Guide. London: ALNAP/ODI.

<sup>22</sup> Murray, J. & Landry, J (2013) *Placing protection at the centre of humanitarian action: study on protection funding in complex humanitarian emergencies*, Julian Murray Consulting & Christoplos, I. & Bonino, F. (2016). *Evaluating protection in humanitarian action: Focus on decision-making processes and options to address common issues and challenges*. ALNAP Pilot Guide. London: ALNAP/ODI.

<sup>23</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015.



*based categorisation and supply-drive approaches prevail within the humanitarian system as opposed to whole of caseload and needs-based approaches*.<sup>24</sup> There is potentially an inherent conflict between mandate-driven and demographically targeted protection programming by individual agencies, and the centrality of protection and the understanding of the multi-sectoral and holistic requirements of effective protection programming. The 2014 ALNAP 'evaluating protection in humanitarian action' report speaks to the fact that guidance written through mandate-specific lenses (both sector and agency) has made it difficult to properly evaluate protection programming and may also inhibit protection programming itself.<sup>25</sup>

Protection is also increasingly being seen as inextricably linked to AAP which many consider to be two sides of the same coin. The linkages are evidenced by the fundamental need for sex- and age-disaggregated data and therefore an understanding of the *'unique experiences of men, women, girls and boys and others with specific diversity-specific vulnerabilities*. Furthermore, protection cannot work without placing accountability at the heart of activities: ensuring accountability to all affected populations with an age, gender and diversity approach represents a means of ensuring protection risks are understood and addressed, while also providing mechanisms through which protection violations can be reported and therefore addressed.

### 3.4 An increasing focus on protection? The Centrality of Protection and Human Rights Up Front

There has been an increasing system-wide focus on protection since the IASC Principals Statement on the Centrality of Protection in December 2013.<sup>26</sup> This places an emphasis on *'the protective dimension of international humanitarian action, beyond agencies with specific protection responsibilities...and represents a step-change from the more traditional focus on relief assistance*.<sup>27</sup> Prior to this, 2011 IASC operational guidance on the protection of persons in natural disasters was promoted as a *'major contribution to the promotion of a rights-based approach in situations of natural disasters*'.<sup>28</sup>

Complementing the centrality of protection is the Human Rights Up Front (HRUF) initiative, which arose as a result of the UN protection failings in Sri Lanka and is internal to the UN.<sup>29</sup> While both initiatives have scope to foster important changes, the centrality of protection has resulted in a number of changes in how the humanitarian community has sought to prioritise protection including by the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). It has also led to an emphasis on the linkages between protection and humanitarian accountability, which has been further strengthened by the publication of the 2016 IASC Guidance Note for Protection and AAP in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC).<sup>30</sup>

### 3.5 UNHCR's IDP Coordination role and the protection cluster

Within this evolving humanitarian system, UNHCR has played a prominent role in IDP protection. It has been operationally involved in meeting IDP needs since 1972 when the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations called on the High Commissioner to extend assistance both to refugees returning then to southern Sudan and persons displaced within the country<sup>31</sup> but it was in response to humanitarian reform that

<sup>24</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015, p.52

<sup>25</sup> Christoplos, I. & Bonino, F. (2016) *Evaluating protection in humanitarian action: Focus on decision-making processes and options to address common issues and challenges*. ALNAP Pilot Guide. London: ALNAP/ODI, p.10

<sup>26</sup> IASC (2013) *The Centrality of Protection Statement in Humanitarian Action*, 2013

<sup>27</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015.

<sup>28</sup> IASC (2011) *IASC Operational Guidelines on the protection of persons in situations of natural disasters*, The Brookings – Bern Project on Internal Displacement, January 2011.

<sup>29</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015.

<sup>30</sup> IASC (2016) IASC Emergency Director's Group, Preliminary Guidance Note, *Protection and accountability to affected populations in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle*.

<sup>31</sup> Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution 1705 (LIII), 27 July 1972.

the Executive Committee of UNHCR agreed that it should assume, for conflict-induced IDPs, the role of Cluster Lead Agency for the three clusters of protection, emergency shelter, and camp coordination and camp management. Two-years later, in 2007, a policy on UNHCR's Role in Support of an Enhanced Humanitarian Response to Situations of Internal Displacement was developed which outlined a range of organisational implications, stretching from the structure of the Office and its human resources' development to the mobilization of resources and a new budgetary system.<sup>32</sup>

To deliver its coordination responsibilities, UNHCR established the GPC which over time, has also evolved to its current form of four distinct AoRs of CP, GBV, HLP, and MA. Currently the GPC is operating within a strategic framework for the period from 2016 to 2019 which builds on the previous strategic framework of 2012 to 2014 (extended to 2015). This 2012-2015 Strategy was informed by a visioning process. 'Extensive consultations' were then used to inform the 2016-2019 strategy.<sup>33</sup>

The 2015 Whole of System Review (WoSR) of Protection was critical of the effectiveness of the GPC: *'the evidence collected demonstrates that the protection cluster mechanism is not functioning effectively at the global or field level'*.<sup>34</sup> It quoted key informants as describing the GPC as *'inconsistent'*, with a *'significant disconnect between global and field-level activities'* and that the GPC *'tends to impose ready-made approaches rather than facilitating the development of context-specific analyses'*.<sup>35</sup> Also, the GPC's own survey conducted for the development of the 2016-2019 strategic framework found that less than half of respondents were *'well acquainted'* with the GPC.<sup>36</sup>

There are also documented challenges in the coherence of the Protection Cluster. Many of these are legacies of agency and sectoral mandates which pre-dated the cluster system, but even post-2005 the AoRs have grown and evolved at different speeds and in different ways from each other and from the GPC. For example, the CP AoR (commonly referred to as the Child Protection Working Group) established a dedicated CPWG Coordinator as early as 2007<sup>37</sup> (as opposed to 2016 for the GPC) and increased in membership from seven to 40 organisations over a ten-year period from 2006 to 2016. The GBV AoR developed more slowly than that of CP but has been strengthened by the 2013 *'Call to Action'* for GBV in emergencies. Furthermore, the updated GBV Mainstreaming Guidelines released in 2015,<sup>38</sup> supported by a well-designed and well-funded dissemination strategy, have also served to increase focus and attention to GBV in general and therefore, *de facto*, to the GBV AoR. The other two AoRs (HLP and MA) have much more limited scope, with objectives that mirror the overall GPC objectives and work plans that fall under the GPC work plans. It was noted in the current 2016-2018 Strategy for HLP that *'[t]he HLP AoR has not functioned adequately for the past two years, with coordination and leadership being dormant'* but that now a renewed vigour from members will increase HLP activity moving forward.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>32</sup> UNHCR (2007) *Policy Framework and Implementation Strategy: UNHCR's Role in Support of an Enhanced Humanitarian Response to Situations of Internal Displacement*, 9 February 2007.

<sup>33</sup> GPC (2016) *Global Protection Cluster Strategic Framework 2016-19*.

<sup>34</sup> Niland, N., Polastro, R., Donino, A and Lee, A. (2015) *Independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action*, May 2015.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> GPC (2015) *Survey for the Global Protection Cluster Revised Strategic Framework 2016-2019*, 2015.

<sup>37</sup> Child Protection Working Group (2016) *Building on success, 2006-16, A review of important initiatives, achievements, innovative ways of working and tools developed by the UNICEF-led Child Protection Working Group, from 2006 to 2016*.

<sup>38</sup> These Guidelines are an IASC-endorsed product.

<sup>39</sup> HLP (2015) *Housing Land and Property in Humanitarian Emergencies, the 2016-2018 Work plan*, 2015.

## **PART 2:**

# **Evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations**



**Part 2** of this evaluation report presents the evaluation team's findings, conclusions and recommendations. **Sections 4-7** set out key evaluation findings supported by evidence against each of the four headline evaluation questions. **Section 8** presents the evaluation conclusions against each headline evaluation questions. **Section 9** sets out the evaluation team's recommendations.

## 4. The effectiveness of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the field protection cluster

*This section examines UNHCR's leadership of the FPCs. It uses the six core functions of the cluster as outlined by the IASC as benchmarks to assess performance. AAP is included in this as a seventh function which is consistent with the IASC CCPM Tool.*

### Main findings

The effectiveness of UNHCR's cluster leadership in delivering the six functions of cluster coordination at field level has been mixed: FPCs have performed most consistently well in their support to service delivery, in providing protection analysis and, linked to this, support to advocacy on the protection of civilians. Performance of FPCs was far more variable in determining strategic priorities and in developing work plans, which negatively impacted their ability to monitor their performance.

AAP is frequently considered to be a seventh function of cluster coordination; it has also regularly been highlighted as one of the weakest components of the implementation of the TA. The evaluation found no explicit or consistent evidence of promotion of AAP by FPCs although protection actors, including UNHCR, had AAP mechanisms in place.

### UNHCR's delivery of the six functions of cluster coordination

The cluster approach was adopted in large part to ensure that international responses to humanitarian emergencies are predictable and accountable and have clear leadership for the respective areas or sectors of the response. Linked to this, was a focus on strengthening accountability between organisations and professionalism more generally.<sup>40</sup> The six core functions are outlined below (Figure 6). This section discusses each function in turn, except for building national capacity, which is detailed in section 5.2.

**Figure 6: Core functions of a cluster<sup>41</sup>**

#	Function	Description
1	To support service delivery by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing a platform that ensures service delivery is driven by the Humanitarian Response Plan and strategic priorities.</li> <li>Developing mechanisms to eliminate duplication of service delivery.</li> </ul>
2	To inform the HC/HCT's strategic decision-making by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preparing needs assessments and analysis of gaps (across and within clusters, using information management tools as needed) to inform the setting of priorities.</li> <li>Identifying and finding solutions for (emerging) gaps, obstacles, duplication and cross-cutting issues.</li> <li>Formulating priorities on the basis of analysis.</li> </ul>
3	To plan and implement cluster strategies by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing sectoral plans, objectives and indicators that directly support realisation of the overall response's strategic objectives.</li> <li>Applying and adhering to common standards and guidelines.</li> <li>Clarifying funding requirements, helping to set priorities, and agreeing cluster contributions to the HC's overall humanitarian funding proposals.</li> </ul>
4	To monitor and evaluate performance by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and reporting on activities and needs.</li> <li>Measuring progress against the cluster strategy and agreed results.</li> <li>Recommending corrective action where necessary.</li> </ul>

<sup>40</sup> IASC (2005) Humanitarian Reform and the Global Cluster Approach. Available at <https://drc.dk/media/2113486/humanitarian-reform-and-the-global-cluster-approach-intro.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> IASC (2015) *Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level*, Revised version, July 2015.

5	To build national capacity in preparedness and contingency planning	<b>See section 5.2</b>
6	To support robust advocacy by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identifying concerns, and contributing key information and messages to HC and HCT messaging and action.</li> <li>▪ Undertaking advocacy on behalf of the cluster, cluster members, and affected people.</li> </ul>

**Service delivery**

The evaluation found that FPC coordinators varied in the extent to which they facilitated the clusters’ service delivery function. The evaluation identified some examples of good practice at sub-national level. In Iraq, the mix of talented leadership and a committed cluster membership had resulted in UNHCR as CLA supporting service delivery by coordinating the activities of its members, highlighting and filling gaps and raising and escalating issues of concern. In Bukavu, in DRC, the FPC discussed protection alerts identified through UNHCR’s protection monitoring system and developed an action plan for response that the FPC followed up on in subsequent meetings. However, this good practice was not replicated in other sub-national FPCs in DRC. Similarly, in South Sudan UNHCR had been weak in ensuring that the FPC responded to protection needs identified through assessments.

The FPCs have delivered the important task of protection monitoring and analysis through publication and dissemination of a range of different reports. Protection monitoring and analysis is a prerequisite for FPCs to identify needs and ensure service delivery. The IASC’s Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action bestows on the protection cluster ‘primary responsibility to support...in depth and integrated analysis that is informed and validated by affected persons. The protection cluster must also ensure continuous protection monitoring and analysis.’<sup>42</sup> Figure 7 summarises the approach taken to reporting to support M&E. In many countries (Afghanistan, DRC, Iraq and South Sudan) the cluster publishes monthly or quarterly monitoring reports which many interviewees outside the cluster considered to be ‘essential reading’. In practice, the quality and completeness of these reports has differed considerably, and has been dependent on the access that protection cluster members had to areas of conflict and the willingness that existed to share information. In some cases, cluster members had expressed concerns about the fear of reprisals from government.<sup>43</sup> In response to this, clusters either limited the circulation of their products or censored themselves, with the latter having negative implications for joint analysis.

**Figure 7: Approaches by the protection cluster to support monitoring and analysis**

Country	Key monitoring and analysis products	Frequency
Afghanistan	Regional/emergency protection updates, IDP assessment reports	Ad hoc
DRC	Regional protection monitoring reports	Monthly
Iraq	Protection cluster dashboard, rapid protection assessments, protection monitoring tool, standard operating procedures, policy notes	Monthly & ad hoc
Nigeria	Rapid protection assessments, Protection Sector Working Group dashboard, position papers and policy notes, vulnerability screening, advocacy documents	Monthly & Ad hoc
Pakistan	Protection cluster mission reports, protection cluster monitoring missions, policy documents and briefing notes	Ad hoc
Philippines	Typhoon Haiyan protection assessments, protection cluster updates	Ad hoc
South Sudan	Protection trends reports, protection cluster updates and briefings	Quarterly & ad hoc
Honduras	Common position papers (on forced displacement and education)	Ad hoc

**Inform the HC/HCT’s strategic decision-making**

The evaluation found that the extent to which cluster coordinators engaged with the HC/HCT varied across the case studies, with regular engagement in countries such as the DRC, Iraq and Nigeria offset by little or no

<sup>42</sup> IASC (2016) *Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action*, October 14 2016, p.7.

<sup>43</sup> The reprisals most frequently took the form of denial of humanitarian access although local NGOs had more existential concerns of their association with the protection cluster.

engagement in countries such as Afghanistan and South Sudan. Therefore, it is not surprising that FPC coordinators rated this as an area of weakness in the CCPM exercise. The ability of FPC coordinators to engage with the HC/HCT depends on both the level of interest of HCs and the level of support that they receive from UNHCR senior leadership. For example, in Afghanistan, the HC preferred to work with the UN Mission on protection issues due to a perception that the coordinator was too junior to provide strategic support; while in South Sudan, the HC had limited engagement on protection issues. The role of UNHCR Representatives in supporting the engagement of coordinators with the HCT is discussed further in section 5.3.

**The deployment of an Information Management (IM) Officer was able to significantly strengthen the ability of FPCs to communicate their value and to inform strategic decision-making.** As highlighted in Figure 8, the use of IM tools is one aspect of supporting the HC/HCT's decision-making. IM capacity in clusters in general has been a comparatively neglected area<sup>44</sup> although this appears to be changing.<sup>45</sup> The failure of protection actors to provide a clear definition of protection and what the cluster is seeking to achieve was one of the key criticisms of the WoSR. The evaluation field missions revealed a stark contrast between those protection clusters that had dedicated IM officers that understood the key value that the role played in communication and in strengthening analysis and those that did not.

**Figure 8: Good practice – exploring the potential of IM in the protection cluster in Afghanistan**

In terms of how IM can strengthen the work of the protection cluster, the case of Afghanistan exemplifies the shift that is occurring with the recent deployment of an IM officer who has started to move the cluster from a focus on report-based information to offering a growing range of products that presents information in a simpler, visually appealing way. This has been linked to an effort to move away from jargon and complex terms in an effort to build broader understanding of protection priorities, analysis and achievements.

**Plan and implement cluster strategies**

**FPCs were generally weak in the development of strategic plans and priorities and only in two of the field missions and one desk review was there evidence of a strategy that was updated and relevant.** Afghanistan was preparing a comprehensive strategy at the time of the mission, the Honduras Protection Working Group had developed strategic objectives and had a work plan in place and Nigeria had updated its strategy in November 2016. This did not mean that clusters were completely devoid of strategy but that it was often piecemeal and, as a consequence, many tended to be reactive and focus on the issues of the moment. The dynamic nature of high threat environments may necessitate this at times, but this should not be the norm. Given the breadth of actors engaged in the cluster, the planning and coordination role that the cluster is supposed to play, and the complexity of the contexts in which it works, a strategy that is aligned with the HPC is an important vehicle for delivering successful coordination.<sup>46</sup> The development of work plans was similarly piecemeal and only in Honduras was there a work plan in place, with one in the process of development in Afghanistan. In the case of the latter, this offered an opportunity to engage the cluster membership in a process of identifying priorities which was considered to have bolstered participation as well as strengthening the coherence of the cluster as a whole. While there was collaboration between the FPC and sub-clusters elsewhere, there was not the same clarity about the complementary roles that each played.

**Monitoring and evaluating performance**

**The evaluation found little evidence of FPCs monitoring and assessing their performance.** Clusters can use the CCPM tool that was developed in 2014 in response to a request made by the TA *'to consider ways to monitor the performance of cluster coordination at country-level.'*<sup>47</sup> The aspiration is for the CCPM to be used three to six months after the onset of an emergency and on an annual basis thereafter by all clusters. However, these aspirations are yet to be realised and in 2016 it was estimated that only 35% of activated clusters had undertaken the CCPM in the previous year.<sup>48</sup> The protection cluster has made limited use of the tool, with

<sup>44</sup> Knox-Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2016) *Improving Humanitarian Action, ALNAP Working Paper*. London: ALNAP/ODI, p.35.

<sup>45</sup> In Nigeria for example, see Information Management Mission Report, Nigeria, 23rd – 29th August 2015.

<sup>46</sup> IASC (2016) *Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action*, October 14 2016, p.5.

<sup>47</sup> Global Cluster Coordinator Group (2014) *Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring, Guidance Note*, January 2014, p.3.

<sup>48</sup> OCHA (2016) *Global Overview of Coordination Arrangements in 2016, Global Analysis*, October 2016, p.3.

only five UNHCR-led FPCs having used it in 2016 and others choosing not to prioritise it.<sup>49</sup> A strategy and work plan also provides a foundation for monitoring the performance of the cluster and the lack of these across the FPCs in the case studies made monitoring the cluster's performance more difficult. While the use of the tool by other clusters is outside of the scope of this evaluation, anecdotal evidence suggests that some CLAs and clusters have sought to use it more rigorously as well as developing their own performance monitoring tools (Figure 9).

**Figure 9: Good practice - UNICEF's approach to monitoring cluster performance**

The recent evaluation of UNICEF's CLA responsibilities notes that each of the clusters and AoRs has a work plan and results framework, and has periodically sponsored operational lessons learned exercises.

Furthermore, UNICEF-led and co-led clusters also use the CCPM. While different clusters apply it differently, at least one has made a commitment to rigorous application across each country cluster on an annual basis. This represents an impressive commitment although it should not be considered a panacea as *'the tool is primarily based on qualitative self-assessment of minimum standards and does not include critical CLA measures related to partnership effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and relevance and appropriateness.'*<sup>50</sup>

UNICEF also uses a Cluster/Sector Coordination Milestone Monitoring Tool focusing on process monitoring - it helps to assess whether clusters that have been set up are meeting all the expected steps or milestones towards good coordination. It is most useful in the first three months that clusters are triggered - by then these key milestones should be achieved. There are many options for how the tool is applied. At a more basic level, cluster coordinators can self-report against milestones. It is preferable for transparency that such reporting is shared with and validated by cluster partners at a cluster coordination meeting.<sup>51</sup>

**Although FPCs tended not to monitor their performance formally, they used ad hoc informal meetings or learning events to reflect on past practice.** These face-to-face meetings have proved to be extremely rich in highlighting strengths and weaknesses and in agreeing changes in practice. During the period under evaluation, such meetings have been held in Afghanistan,<sup>52</sup> Pakistan, Nigeria,<sup>53</sup> Honduras and South Sudan.<sup>54</sup> Documentation shows that they have played an important learning role which has frequently led to changes in practice.

**The evaluation found no evidence of efforts to systematically gather, document or share the results of learning events outside of the countries concerned to date but the GPC is working to strengthen the sharing of knowledge.** The GPC created the Community of Practice (CoP) in June 2016, which enables cluster coordinators to share experiences and good practice, and the country-specific pages of the GPC website now offer far better access to online documentation than was the case in previous years. However, there is still scope to more systematically gather good practice, guidance and report and to make it globally accessible.

**Supporting robust advocacy**

**The evaluation found significant evidence of the important role that the FPCs play in supporting advocacy on humanitarian access, principles and protection issues, even though some cluster coordinators regard this as a weakness.** This finding is supported by the protection monitoring and analysis, where many of the reports routinely included advocacy messages and identifying lobbying targets. Similarly, protection clusters have maintained their relevance by being responsive to changes in the context of civilian protection: in Afghanistan, the Protection of Civilians Working Group (a sub-group of the protection cluster) has prepared a suite of reports for HC/HCT on specific protection challenges; in Iraq, key protection issues have been singled out and articulated in a series of reports as the conflict with ISIL was launched and the Mosul offensive gathered pace; and in Nigeria advocacy notes have been prepared in advance of the HC's travel to north-east Nigeria and for

<sup>49</sup> While the IASC guidance on the use of the CCPM states that an annual review is 'mandatory', there was little evidence from within the protection clusters that this was widely known.

<sup>50</sup> Avair Analytics (2013) *Evaluation for UNICEF's Cluster Lead Agency role in humanitarian action*, December 2013. New York: UNICEF, p.24.

<sup>51</sup> See <http://www.unicefinemergencies.com/downloads/eresource/HPM.html>

<sup>52</sup> Afghanistan Protection Cluster (2014) Notes, APC Retreat & APC SAG, 12-13 March 2014.

<sup>53</sup> PSWG Nigeria (2015) Visioning and Strategic Retreat, Protection Sector Working Group: Nigeria. Conclusions, Recommendations and follow-up.

<sup>54</sup> South Sudan Protection Cluster (2016) 2016 Protection Cluster Strategic Planning Meeting, 17 March 2016.

the Emergency Directors Group.<sup>55</sup> There is evidence that UNHCR as cluster lead frequently understood this important role and acted on it, as discussed further in section 7.

Analysis from four of the five FPCs where the CCPM tool was used in 2016 shows mixed performance against the cluster functions which included AAP as a seventh function (Figure 10).

**Figure 10: CCPM results for four protection clusters in 2016**

Core cluster functions (including AAP)	Role in the cluster	
	Coordinators	Members
Supporting service delivery	78	79
Informing strategic decisions of the HC and HCT	43	64
Planning and strategy development	49	66
Monitoring and evaluating performance	64	65
Building national capacity in preparedness	59	60
Supporting robust advocacy	19	43
Accountability to affected populations	53	53

Key	70% +	Good	45–69%	satisfactory	20-44%	unsatisfactory	1-19%	weak
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Despite the challenges of reliability, **the results show a level of consensus among coordinators and members that the cluster performs best in supporting service delivery (the only function which is considered as ‘good’ by cluster members and coordinators) and least well in meeting its advocacy aspirations.** It is noteworthy that coordinators also considered that the cluster performed unsatisfactorily in informing strategic decisions of the HC and HCT and in supporting robust advocacy. The other functions were scored as being ‘satisfactory’.

#### UNHCR’s role in creating an enabling environment for AAP in the protection cluster

AAP is frequently considered to be a seventh function of cluster coordination but Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team (STAIT) missions have regularly highlighted it as one of the weakest components of the implementation of the TA.<sup>56</sup> The IASC EDG Guidance Note<sup>57</sup> highlights the important linkages between protection and accountability and considers it as one of the four key elements of protection mainstreaming. At a global level, UNHCR as CLA was requested to provide assistance in shaping the scope and meaning of AAP to make it operationally relevant and to ensure that protection clusters in the field were promoting AAP across all clusters.<sup>58</sup>

**The evaluation found no evidence that FPCs explicitly promote AAP although UNHCR and cluster members usually have AAP mechanisms in place.** A local NGO in Pakistan had adopted AAP practices in IDP-hosting areas and it was evident from community FGDs that this was an example of good practice. Women were confident that they could speak to the NGO providing protection services, saying clearly “*we can tell them everything*” and “*yes we have our voice*”. This was reiterated by men and boys. UNHCR had taken a lead on establishing protection desks in South Sudan, which fulfilled an accountability function. Also, in Bor, mixed community groups gave examples of how feedback to the implementing agency had been acted upon, such as requesting the start of family tracing and reunification services, and fencing for the Child Friendly Space which were then provided. They also spoke of their engagement with the implementing agency through monthly community meetings. In DRC, local NGOs demonstrated good practice, but international agencies less so. In the Philippines, the FPCs in Manila and Tacloban were credited with placing AAP on the humanitarian agenda<sup>59</sup> and there was a GPC deployment for protection mainstreaming which included AAP and Communicating with Communities (CwC). In Iraq, there were plans for the CwC Working Group to work more closely with the protection cluster. Iraq also offered evidence of a collective accountability mechanism, the

<sup>55</sup> PSWG Nigeria (2016) Note on Protection for the planned HC Mission to North East and Upcoming EDG Conference Call with Donors, March 2016.

<sup>56</sup> STAIT, *Biannual EDG donor meeting*, 17 June 2016, p.2.

<sup>57</sup> IASC (2016) IASC Emergency Director’s Group, Preliminary Guidance Note, *Protection and accountability to affected populations in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle*.

<sup>58</sup> GPC (2015j) *Global protection cluster strategic framework 2016-19 consultations with WFP*, Rome, 19 October 2015, p.1.

<sup>59</sup> IASC (2014) *Operational Peer Review, Response to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines*, February 2014.



IDP call centre, which worked closely with the protection cluster.<sup>60</sup> In Honduras, evidence pointed towards a very mixed approach by protection cluster members to accountability (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11: Findings on AAP from Honduras**

Honduras provided an example of how inconsistently AAP is being implemented across partners, highlighting that it is not UNHCR via the Protection Working Group (PWG) *per se* that is promoting AAP, but rather different partners have differing levels of organisational commitment to AAP. The evaluation team conducted three field visits, engaging with communities receiving protection services from three different partners (national and international NGOs). For the first partner, AAP was not necessarily formalised within programming but as a grass-roots organisation, participation and inclusion were at the very heart of all activities, and AAP was embedded in all activities and had evolved quite organically. For the second partner (also a local NGO), the activities were extremely prescribed and community members had no real knowledge of the programme, criteria for participation, or how to feedback or engage (or even if they were permitted to). For the third partner (an international NGO), community engagement and accountability was far greater for women, men, and youth male groups, but extremely low for the youth female group.

**Stakeholders that were surveyed were broadly positive about protection cluster AAP mechanisms although response mechanisms were highlighted as poor.** Online survey respondents mostly assessed protection cluster AAP mechanisms as “OK” to “good”, although a question that asked about the effectiveness of mechanisms to receive and respond to complaints received the lowest score. Respondents provided many examples of ways in which protection partners have promoted AAP, including by engaging local organisations; by engaging with disability organisations; by establishment of grievance desks/help desks/complaints desks; by protection mainstreaming; by participatory and sex, age and diversity disaggregated assessments; and through information bulletins.

## **5. Predictability of UNHCR’s leadership and coordination of the field protection clusters**

*IASC guidance on ‘predictable leadership’ in humanitarian reform focuses attention on three inter-linked issues: ensuring capacity is in place, that collaboration exists and that there is clarity about the Provider of Last Resort (PoLR) role. This section seeks to evaluate UNHCR’s performance against these three issues. It also explores factors that affect the predictability of UNHCR’s leadership.*

### **Main Findings**

#### **Resourcing cluster coordination and response capacity**

UNHCR has strengthened its resourcing of the cluster with more dedicated posts at field level, particularly in large, complex emergencies. However, there have been challenges in recruiting the right people with the right skills at the right time, which UNHCR’s Division of Human Resource Management (DHRM) is now beginning to address. For the period under review and for clusters that have already been activated, UNHCR has had some measure of success in ensuring the continuity of cluster leadership. Where gaps have occurred, these have frequently been covered on an interim basis by UNHCR staff or by surge staff from standby rosters.

#### **Fostering collaboration with partners and other interlocutors**

UNHCR has made mixed progress in its collaboration with core cluster partners. While it routinely draws on the support of co-leads and sub-clusters to deliver predictable leadership, this is compromised by a lack of clarity about how the lead-co-lead relationship is moderated and the uncertainties surrounding field-level cluster architecture and reporting. While these challenges are frequently overcome through field-level negotiation, greater direction from UNHCR would provide a stronger foundation. UNHCR has been partially successful in managing relationships with key interlocutors including UN Missions and government representatives, although it could strengthen guidance to assist clusters in managing these important relationships. Collaboration with local NGOs and civil society groups is an area that UNHCR could strengthen and there is the potential for it to play a leadership role among peer CLAs in setting an agenda for transforming its engagement.

#### **Factors that inhibit or enable the predictability of UNHCR’s leadership**

<sup>60</sup> For example, the Protection Cluster has provided Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and GBV training to support call centre workers on case management.

The predictability of UNHCR's leadership is undermined by the lack of clarity that exists between the FPCs and the sub-clusters about the PoLR role. While PoLR exists at the conceptual level, the complex cluster architecture has caused confusion about how to operationalise these important responsibilities. UNHCR's leadership of the cluster is also affected by Country Representatives interpreting its CLA responsibilities inconsistently, which can compromise perceptions of the cluster's neutrality. A final factor that has an important influence on predictability is planning for transition and de-activation. The evaluation found that UNHCR, like other CLAs, has been inconsistent in putting in place coordinated plans for transition and de-activation.

## 5.1 UNHCR's resourcing of cluster coordination

*The focus of this sub-section is UNHCR's resourcing of the FPCs. It seeks to identify the relevance and effectiveness of UNHCR's processes of cluster appointment and assignment, it examines continuity of staffing and how gaps are filled through surge deployments, and outlines the approaches taken by UNHCR to train cluster staff.*

### Cluster leadership and appointment of cluster coordinators

**The evaluation found that UNHCR has strengthened its cluster coordination capacity between 2013 and 2017.** There were dedicated cluster coordinators at national level in five of the six field missions (the only exception being Honduras where there is a PWG rather than a cluster). At headquarters level, UNHCR has made additional resources available to increase the number of dedicated cluster coordinators globally. Practice was more variable at sub-national level where there tended to be a mix of dedicated and double-hatted coordinators, with decisions based on the scale and complexity of IDP operations, the available funding and UNHCR's operational footprint. In countries without dedicated cluster staff, such as Honduras, there was a greater reliance on the GPC Operations Cell to provide guidance and support.

**Getting the 'right people in the right place at the right time' can be a challenge.** ALNAP's recent research on coordination underlines that the quality of coordinators is as important as quantity. It highlights the importance of having *'the right people in the right roles'* but also stresses the challenges that exist in finding suitable people.<sup>61</sup> Across the six country missions, the evaluation team encountered a diverse range of cluster coordinators, each of whom had different backgrounds, experiences and technical skills, which influenced how they undertook their role and the performance of the cluster more broadly. The evaluation found, in particular, that:

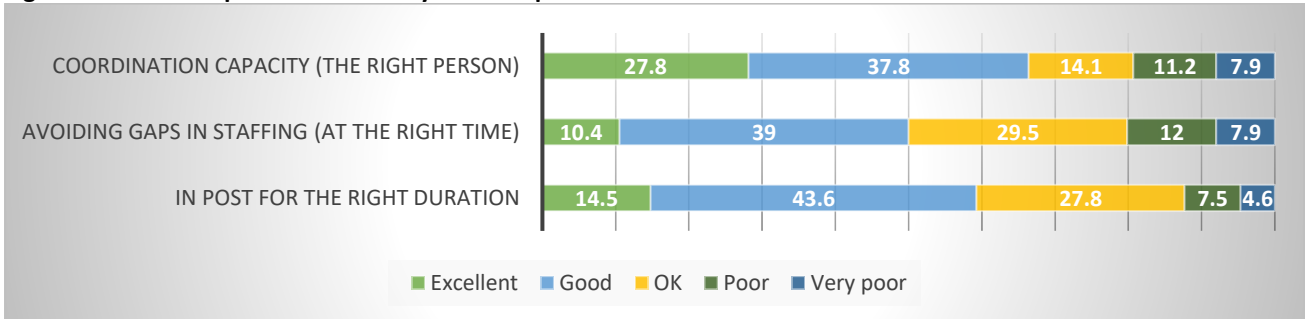
- There was no correlation between the seniority of a cluster coordinator and his/her performance in the role.
- While technical knowledge was considered to be extremely important, interviews suggest that cluster members placed a high value on *'soft'* or interpersonal skills. The additional complexity of the FPC, which needs also to coordinate with sub-clusters, places a far heavier emphasis on working collaboratively and as a consequence draws more heavily on these competencies.
- As the cluster is an inter-agency construct, cluster members valued inter-agency experience. As a consequence of this, diverse work experience was considered an advantage for cluster coordinators and strengthened perceptions of the independence of the cluster.<sup>62</sup>

**There is wide variation in stakeholder views on UNHCR's performance in relation to the provision of timely and adequate cluster coordination.** Responses to the online survey highlighted considerable variation in cluster members' views about UNHCR's performance in getting the right cluster coordinator with the right skills in post at the right time and for the right duration (Figure 12). However, the results were generally very positive with 65% of respondents considering that cluster coordination capacity was either excellent or good.

<sup>61</sup> Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2015) *Exploring coordination in humanitarian clusters*. ALNAP Study. London: ALNAP/ODI, p.34.

<sup>62</sup> This echoes a lessons-learned document from the Child Protection AoR which found that *'in contexts where strong, traditional, agency-centric leadership styles were adopted by coordinators, cluster lead agencies were unsuccessful in building strong inter-agency coordination mechanisms.'* See *Coordinating Child Protection Responses in Emergencies: Lessons Learned for Child Protection Sub-clusters*, October 2011.

**Figure 12: UNHCR’s provision of timely and adequate cluster coordination staff**



**UNHCR is addressing the challenges with getting the right people in place at the right time through procedures for appointing and assigning cluster coordinators.** Currently, most protection cluster coordinator posts are advertised according to functional groups that comprise standard job descriptions that encompass a large group of related protection jobs with similar duties and requirements. As there is no distinction between the protection cluster coordination role and other UNHCR protection-related roles, the process does not explicitly promote some of the most important competencies of the role such as interpersonal skills.<sup>63</sup> While UNHCR has sought to ensure that it has sufficiently qualified staff members as cluster coordinators by creating posts at P4 and P5 level, cluster coordination positions are frequently in non-family duty stations and have poorer conditions of service, making them less attractive to experienced staff members at these levels.

The DHRM has now recognised these challenges and it is in the process of engaging with DIP to initiate a review of the protection cluster coordination job descriptions, which will include the creation of a separate protection cluster coordination group in the functional groups. The competencies for this role will include soft skills. DHRM is also working with DESS to develop an Administrative Instruction on Duty of Care measures for high-risk operations that should enhance attraction and retention of staff within these operations. As part of a strategy to strengthen the pool of cluster coordinators, DHRM is recommending the establishment of specific talent pools for each of the three clusters that UNHCR leads, which will include inter-agency profiles.

**UNHCR has also invested in the training and development of a cadre of cluster coordinators, using different approaches.** This is evidenced by the inclusion of the role in its Capacity Building Initiative. Initiated in 2013, this is targeted at mid-career level professionals with expertise and working experience in functional areas where the agency lacks internal capacity to meet its operational requirements, and partners an induction process alongside training, guided self-study, coaching and mentoring.

The GPC Task Team on Learning (TT-L), co-chaired by UNHCR, has been leading the design and the delivery of learning programmes on protection cluster coordination. The aim of the programme is to strengthen the capacity of FPCs by delivering a menu of training programmes which includes the Protection Cluster Coordination Learning Programme, a Training of Trainers on Protection in Practice, a co-lead training programme and a training programme on Protection in Natural Disasters. UNHCR has developed an agency-specific Coordination and Leadership (Co-lead) Training Programme to prepare UNHCR staff members to work in the protection, shelter, and camp coordination and camp management clusters, and other inter-agency coordination mechanisms. It includes an assessed self-study phase, an online community of learning, individualised coaching and a workshop component as well as post-workshop follow-up activities. An important part of this is the module on ‘soft skills’ (e.g. communication and meetings, negotiation, presentation, self-awareness and collaborative approach), which are essential for successful cluster coordination.

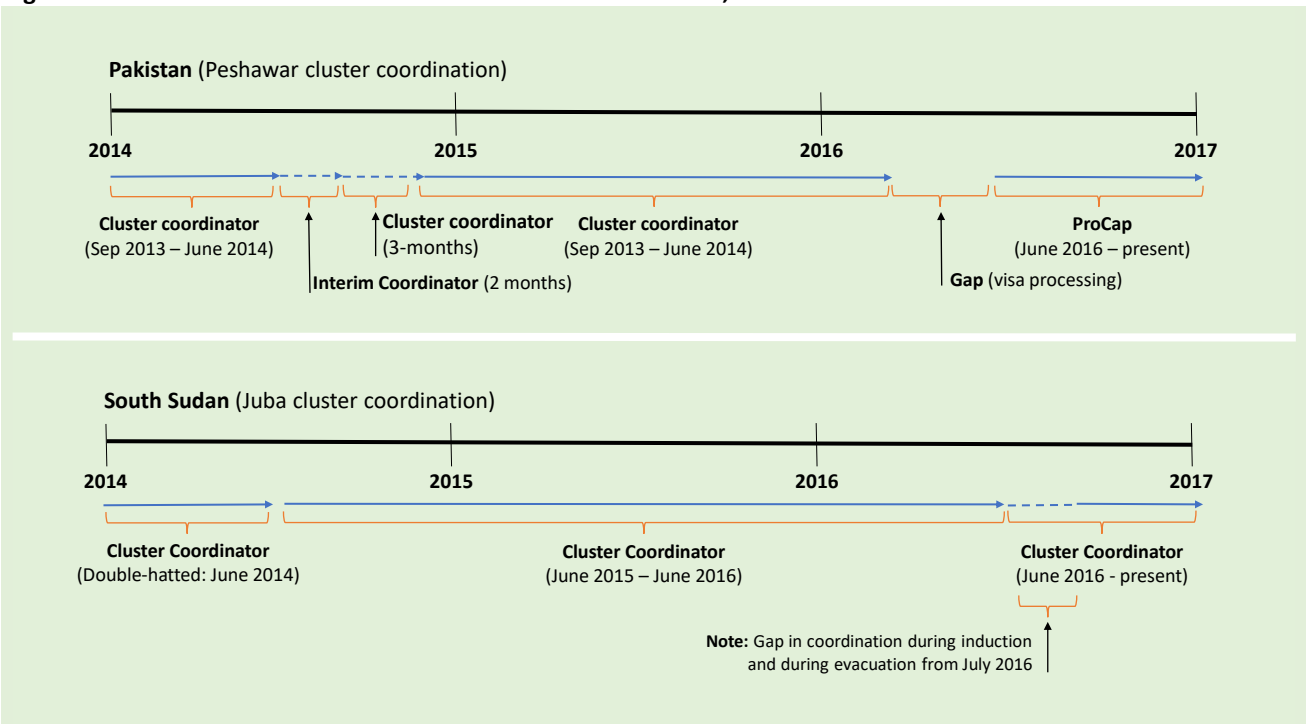
<sup>63</sup> Interviews suggested that some people may move into a cluster coordination role as a means of getting on to a more senior level. In this way, a staff member might consider rotating into a cluster coordinator position if it moves them from a P4 to a P5 but after s/he has completed their term, they are likely to take on a different role.



**Cluster staffing, surge capacity and emergency deployments**

Despite the significant challenges of resourcing coordination in complex and insecure contexts, UNHCR has had some measure of success in ensuring continuity of cluster leadership, drawing on its own capacity and that of others. The timelines below (Figure 13) provide two examples of the resourcing of the cluster coordinator post in Pakistan and South Sudan respectively. In Pakistan, UNHCR drew on its own internal capacity in 2014 to fill a gap between coordinators and in 2016 was able to draw on the support of a member of ProCap. In South Sudan, there was greater continuity during the period under evaluation with the only gap occurring when the coordinator was evacuated during an upsurge in violence in 2016.

**Figure 13: Cluster coordinator data for Pakistan and South Sudan, 2014-2016<sup>64</sup>**



It is difficult to identify specific trends in the duration that cluster coordinators stayed in post with the longest deployments rarely going beyond 12 months (albeit with some exceptions, such as South Sudan) and the shortest being two-three months. Where there was a succession of short-term deployments, this significantly disrupted the cluster’s operation.

In cases where it is not possible to assign/appoint cluster staff in a timely way, for specific time-bound deployments or where there is a need for senior surge staff, the GPC can provide direct assistance through deploying its staff through support missions.<sup>65</sup> Protection clusters use a number of standby arrangements and deployment schemes. The evaluation focused particular attention on the OCHA-managed inter-agency ProCap and GenCap rosters. Figure 14 provides an overview of the key ProCap missions in support of the protection cluster.

**Figure 14: ProCap deployments in support of the protection cluster 2014-2017**

#	Country	Role	Deployment date	Request date
1	Philippines	Cluster coordination, mainstreaming	27/11/13 – 27/05/14	Not available
2	Philippines	Cluster coordination, mainstreaming	10/01/14 – 15/07/14	Not available

<sup>64</sup> This is a snapshot of UNHCR’s resourcing of the cluster coordinator post. It does not include other national-level staff (IM officer, junior coordination posts) or sub-national cluster staff. All coordinators are dedicated unless indicated.

<sup>65</sup> Reports on GPC Support Missions are available on the GPC website including for Afghanistan, CAR, Chad, Colombia, DRC, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, South Sudan and Yemen (see <http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/field-support/global-protection-cluster-support-missions.html>)

3	Global/roaming (GPC-based)	Geneva, Georgia, Ukraine, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria	15/01/15 – 31/03/16	Dec 14/Jan 15
4	Global roaming (GPC-based)	Geneva, Central African Republic, Iraq, Philippines, Turkey, Solomon Islands, Nigeria	28/10/13 – 31/01/15	Not available
5	South Sudan	HCT Protection Strategy	07/06/15 – 06/12/15	Feb 2015
6	DRC	National Strategy on Durable Solutions for IDPs	10/12/15-13/08/16	Not available
7	Chad	Support for the protection cluster	24/01/16 – 23/05/16	30 Jul 2015
8	Global/roaming	Ethiopia, Niger, Haiti	25/07/16 – 22/09/16	Mar 2016
9	Burundi	Creation of protection sector/group	18/04/16 – 30/12/16	23 Mar 2016
10	Pakistan	Protection cluster coordination	10/06/16 – present	Mar 2016
11	Ethiopia	Support to HCT and protection cluster, protection mainstreaming	20/02/17 – present	11 Nov 2016

**There was significant praise for the quality and professionalism of ProCap staff, but some concerns about the challenges of getting engagement from the humanitarian community for strategic protection products developed by short-term specialists.** Protection cluster members and other humanitarian actors appreciated the inter-agency experience and significant operational protection knowledge of ProCap staff. Despite this, the evaluation team encountered several examples during field missions of products developed during ProCap deployments failing to garner the level of ownership required (these include the durable solutions strategy in DRC and the protection mainstreaming toolkit in South Sudan<sup>66</sup>). This was due to a combination of a lack of ownership of the process and the limited possibilities that existed for support and follow-up. This challenge is not peculiar to the protection cluster but is a more general problem associated with the management and use of short-term expertise. However, it does underline the importance of ensuring that UNHCR's protection cluster coordinators ensure that requests made for ProCap staff are consistent with the short-term nature of their tenure in country and that, during their time in country, they work closely with them to facilitate engagement and ownership of any reports, toolkits and strategies that are produced.

## 5.2 UNHCR's role in fostering collaboration at the field level

*This sub-section examines how UNHCR collaborates with key partners and interlocutors to predictably carry out its responsibilities. Cluster co-leads, sub-clusters, cluster members, local NGOs, and government and local authorities are (potential) key partners while UN Missions and national security forces and foreign militaries shape the protection environment in which FPCs work. This section describes UNHCR's relationships with each of these actors in turn.*

### Cluster co-leads<sup>67</sup>

**The evaluation identified a range of co-lead roles across the case studies, which faced similar challenges to UNHCR around funding, resourcing and leadership continuity.** The evaluation missions identified NGO co-leads in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq and South Sudan with staff from NRC, DRC and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) taking on the roles. It is noteworthy that the protection clusters for both of the desk reviews, Nigeria and the Philippines, were co-led with the government. Each of the NGO co-leads, at a minimum, had representation at national level with several also playing a co-leadership role at sub-national level; national-level co-leads were frequently dedicated (Iraq, South Sudan and Afghanistan<sup>68</sup>) but there were also examples of double-hatted co-leads (Pakistan). In two of the countries (Afghanistan and South Sudan), co-leadership

<sup>66</sup> South Sudan Protection Cluster (2015) Protection Cluster Mainstreaming Toolkit.

<sup>67</sup> Co-leadership of clusters is considered to be an essential part of cluster functioning because 'Research and evaluations have found that...partnerships, advocacy and information transfer tend to improve. Sharing leadership produces stronger engagement and better coordination. NGOs are often well established in remote field locations where the UN has limited or no presence. They can offer technical expertise, different approaches to accountability to affected people, long-term involvement in and knowledge of the community, and leadership potential.'<sup>67</sup> Despite this, there is significant confusion about which terminology to use and the evaluation team encountered various terms, some of which was used inter-changeably. Co-leadership, as it will be referred to in this report, was also termed co-facilitation, co-coordination and co-chair, the exact meaning of which differed from one context to another.

<sup>68</sup> In Afghanistan, a dedicated co-lead was budgeted but had not been recruited at the time of the evaluation mission and so there was a double-hatted staff member standing in to fill the gap.

posts were under recruitment and so there were gaps in staffing and the NGOs had made temporary cover arrangements. Co-lead NGOs faced many of the same challenges as UNHCR in ensuring continuity of leadership and in obtaining consistently high-quality staff, particularly in countries suffering from protracted conflict for which it was particularly difficult to recruit. In addition, they faced funding challenges and posts were frequently funded by donors or respective Common Humanitarian Funds (CHF) on an annual basis. In only one case did the co-lead have greater resources than UNHCR, which had the potential to significantly expand the capacity of the protection cluster (see Figure 15).

**Figure 15: Good practice - strengthening cluster co-leadership in Afghanistan**

In Afghanistan, NRC had received a grant to resource dedicated Protection Cluster co-leadership positions at the national and sub-national levels, including in Kabul, Mazar-e Sharif, Kunduz, Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Herat at a time where conflict-displacement, involuntary refugee return, and the effects of armed conflict upon the civilian population were increasing. It was anticipated that the focus of the additional staff will be strengthening field reporting on protection to improve context analysis, enable the Afghanistan protection cluster to mobilise its membership to conduct coordinated sectoral assessments, and provide technical trainings and adequate dissemination of technical standards and guidance. It was also anticipated that it would improve the reach and functional performance of the cluster to the field (i.e. beyond regional hubs).

**The evaluation found that UNHCR most frequently adopted a hierarchical model, which placed the international NGO co-lead as subordinate to the UNHCR lead, a model that the GPC Operations Cell endorsed.** This was clear in South Sudan and in Afghanistan, where UNHCR took the lead role though the co-lead shared tasks. In some cases, NGO co-leads had clear and separate responsibilities. For example, in Pakistan, IRC had responsibility for training and mainstreaming. UNHCR and the GPC Operations Cell justified this approach on the basis of the different accountabilities of UNHCR's CLA role and its responsibilities as PoLR.

**There were mixed views on the strengths and weaknesses of an approach that designates specific roles to the lead and co-lead as opposed to an approach that shares responsibilities.** A GBV sub-cluster study on co-leadership considers it beneficial to *'divide roles and responsibilities of co-leads based on different strengths, skills and capacities.'*<sup>69</sup> However, the evaluation found that, in Iraq, a shared approach offered advantages, particularly where there is need for significant field travel or where international staff regularly take rest and recuperation. In such contexts, it may be rare for the lead and co-lead to be in the same place at the same time and so there are benefits to considering the leadership functions as inter-changeable.

**Interviewees frequently cited a lack of clarity about co-leadership roles and responsibilities as a concern.** Irrespective of the co-leadership model that is adopted, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is one of the most important foundations for the relationship. However, responsibilities were clearly outlined in this way only in a minority of the case studies. Given that the IASC considers a MoU mandatory, this is an important area for corrective action.

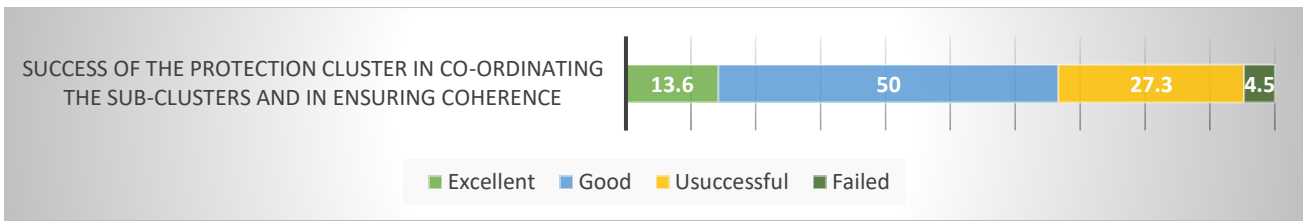
### Sub-clusters

**There was a lack of consensus across the country case studies about the optimal structure for protection clusters and sub-clusters at country level.** The online survey showed a fair degree of satisfaction, with over 60% of sub-cluster leads considering that collaboration between the FPC and the sub-clusters was either excellent or good (Figure 16). However, despite the positive result, feedback from interviews suggests that there is often a challenging relationship between the protection clusters and sub-clusters in countries.

**Figure 16: Perceptions of sub-cluster survey participants of the coordination of the protection cluster<sup>70</sup>**

<sup>69</sup> Child Protection AoR (2016) *Sharing leadership – NGO co-leadership of child protection coordination groups at country level – tools and guidance*, p.10.

<sup>70</sup> The figure above shows only the responses received in the online survey from sub-cluster leads.



**The evaluation found that sub-clusters can be rooted in a myriad of inter-agency challenges.** Even though the TA clearly expects clusters – including sub-clusters – to remain focused on people in need of protection, they face a range of challenges. These challenges vary depending on personalities, across coordination models, as well as agency relationships in countries, and they also exist between sub-clusters. The evaluation missions identified several examples: in one country, there had been long-term challenges in the relationship between the FPC and the sub-clusters but the situation had improved with the introduction of weekly meetings between the cluster coordinator, co-lead and sub-cluster leads. In another of the missions, while there had been recent improvements in the relationship, sub-cluster leads still expressed a level of dissatisfaction. In such instances, there was a suggestion that the UNHCR as the CLA had an important role to play in addressing challenges and seeking to address problems more swiftly.

**There were examples of successful attempts to strengthen coherence between the sub-clusters and the protection cluster.** In these cases, good practice was based on (a) collegial relationships between each of the lead agencies at a country management level; (b) the collaboration, facilitation, and coordination skills of the UNHCR FPC coordinator – including a willingness to work in a collaborative manner; and (c) joint planning, strategising, fundraising, and advocacy by the FPC as a single unit encompassing all the sub-clusters (see Figure 17).

**Figure 17: Good practice – strengthening coherence within the protection cluster, the case of Afghanistan**

In Afghanistan, there was significant coherence within the protection cluster with each of the sub-cluster respondents providing examples of the valuable support that the protection cluster coordinator had provided. For example, the protection cluster had advocated strongly for sub-clusters' participation in the Inter-Cluster Coordination Team (ICCT). This benefitted the sub-clusters, the protection cluster (which appreciated the support of the sub-clusters in ICCT), and the coherence of protection as a whole. Examples were also provided of the cluster coordinator having worked with each of the sub-clusters to strengthen the relevance of their programmes to the HRP. This was made possible through a joint process of strategy formulation which included the development of shared objectives.

**Cluster members**

**While UNHCR routinely seeks to develop in-country mechanisms to coordinate with AoRs this is less routine for the broader membership.** The Cluster Reference Module suggests that *'the efficient functioning of a cluster is a joint responsibility of the CLA, the Cluster Coordinator, all participants in the cluster at national and sub-national level, and resourcing partners'*<sup>71</sup> which infers the need for a broader group, commonly referred to as a Strategic Advisory Group. In the field missions undertaken by the evaluation team, only two of the six protection clusters (Iraq and Pakistan) had a functioning Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) (a third cluster had a SAG in theory but not in practice as it had not been activated). Given its diversity, a SAG offers a more representative group to fulfil the oversight and monitoring role outlined by the IASC. It also offers a forum to discuss and agree issues that would prove difficult to broker agreement across all of the members in addition to strengthening perceptions of the cluster as being independent of its CLA.

**Local NGOs<sup>72</sup>**

**Local NGO participation in FPCs was variable across the different evaluation missions** even though, with a growing emphasis on localising humanitarian response, the participation of local NGOs in clusters is a particularly important aspect of humanitarian coordination. It is also an area that has historically been a weakness in clusters with reports from two of the case study countries (the Typhoon Haiyan response in the

<sup>71</sup> IASC (2015) *Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level*, Revised version, July 2015, p.22.

<sup>72</sup> The term 'local NGOs' will include local, regional and national NGOs throughout this report

Philippines and the response to conflict in South Sudan) raising concerns about barriers for local NGO participation.<sup>73</sup> The evaluation identified the following common themes around local NGO participation:

- With a few exceptions (notably, South Sudan), local NGOs tended to be in the minority in the national protection cluster and were in the majority at the sub-national level;
- In countries where English was the second or third language, interviewees in Afghanistan and South Sudan raised concerns about the predominant use of English in cluster meetings particularly given the complex terminology linked to protection. In Iraq, cluster members addressed the issue by providing instantaneous translation for those who do not speak good English;
- There was concern that the GPC general guidance documents were rarely translated and were frequently not even available in French (DRC). Documents that were written in-country were rarely translated into local languages, which made it difficult for local NGOs to use them. Where these were developed to guide operations, this was considered particularly short-sighted as in many of the case study countries, field staff had very limited English language proficiency;
- None of the field missions had local NGOs as co-leads at national level and there were relatively few instances where they co-led at sub-national level (Pakistan). They more frequently led PWGs in field locations, often in areas where international staff could not be based or travel due to security restrictions.

**The evaluation found relatively few ways in which UNHCR as CLA had specifically sought to strengthen local NGO engagement; capacity building was largely focused on classroom-based training and most clusters reported that the heavy workload precluded them from supporting capacity development.** Post-World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) there is a challenge in how clusters can best support local NGOs, which is answered in part in an article on localising protection, which suggests that *'in order for local actors to be valued within the system, the nature of the inter-relationships between national capacity and the international system needs to shift from a largely paternalistic and sub-contracting relationship to one of more equal partnership.'*<sup>74</sup> Despite some of the challenges in finding adequate time for, and appropriate approaches to, focus on capacity development, cluster members responding to the online survey viewed the capacity development efforts of the protection cluster favourably, with over 50% considering that it had been effective in strengthening the capacity of local NGOs. When the results are filtered to isolate the responses of local NGO staff, they are even more positive (see Figure 18).

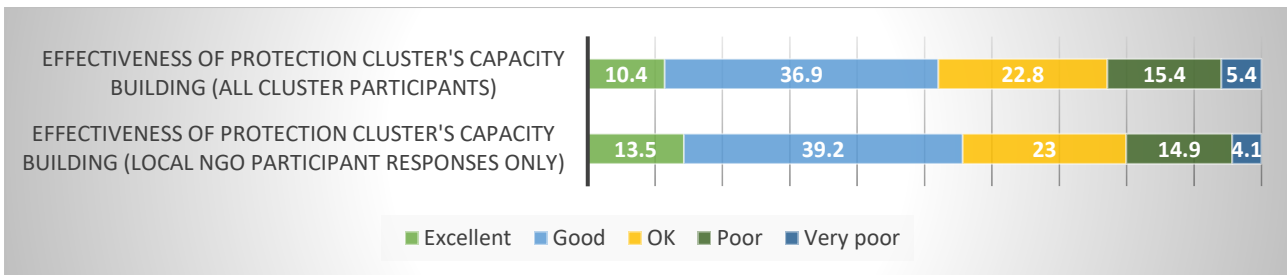
**Despite optimistic survey results, during interviews at country level, local NGO staff often voiced frustration concerning their participation in the clusters, particularly in those that had a large international presence.** In South Sudan, where local NGOs were the majority both at capital level and field level, there was a strong feeling that the cluster was too focused on the international system with too few opportunities for local organisations to participate in a meaningful way.<sup>75</sup> Conversely, in Peshawar, Pakistan, where local NGOs made up the majority of the membership and local staff most frequently represented international NGO members, there was greater harmony. The cluster was also far more focused on the national rather than the international system because it was in an area where few international staff are permanently based, although it faced other challenges.

**Figure 18: Perceptions of the effectiveness of the protection cluster at strengthening the capacity of local NGOs**

<sup>73</sup> See Featherstone, A. (2014) *Missed again - making space for partnership in the Typhoon Haiyan response*, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam, ActionAid and Tearfund and Tanner, L & Moro, L. (2015) *Missed Out: The role of local actors in the humanitarian response in South Sudan*, CAFOD, Christian Aid, Oxfam and Tearfund.

<sup>74</sup> Russell, S. (2016) Challenging the established order: the need to 'localise' protection, in *Forced Migration Review 53*, October 2016

<sup>75</sup> See also Tanner, L. & Moro, L. (2016) *Missed Out: The role of local actors in the humanitarian response in the South Sudan Conflict*. Report commissioned by Christian Aid, CAFOD, Trocaire, Oxfam, Tear Fund, April 2016.



### Government and local authorities

**Despite the government taking on a primary role in preparing for, and responding to, crises, there is evidence of different levels of government engagement with the protection cluster.** There are currently nine countries in which the government co-leads the protection cluster<sup>76</sup> (including the desk review countries, Nigeria and the Philippines), but there are other levels of engagement which result in different ways of responding (see Figure 19). The results of the online survey reflected this diversity with approximately 10% of those that responded indicating that the government played a co-leadership role, and almost half indicating that the government was absent from the protection cluster in which they participated.

**Figure 19: Different levels of engagement – South Sudan and DRC**

In South Sudan, the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs was not invited to engage in the national protection cluster due to sensitivities linked to its role in the ongoing conflict. However, there is greater engagement with local authorities at the sub-national level, albeit with opposition from some NGOs. In this context, UNHCR employed alternative channels to raise protection issues with the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission. In the DRC, although some viewed the government as being the “most serious obstacle” to achieving protection outcomes, the government participates in the protection cluster at both national and sub-national level. Government respondents found this a useful way to gather information on protection violations that they could use to advocate with colleagues.

**Evaluation participants expressed divergent views about the appropriateness of government entities engaging with the protection cluster.** In the online survey, approximately one third (36/99) of non-government respondents believed that it was ‘*appropriate/justified/important*’ that government participated in the protection cluster. Reasons given included the fact that governments hold primary responsibility for protection of civilians as well as the important role they played in achieving protection solutions; engagement in the protection cluster increases a government’s understanding of protection risks and needs and can encourage it to address protection issues. An almost equal number of non-government respondents (35/99) considered that it was not ‘*appropriate/justified/important*’ that government participated in the protection cluster. The divergent opinions were usually linked to the context, and specifically the role of the government in countries affected by conflict, particularly where it was a party to the conflict, and/or it was, or was perceived to be, a perpetrator of protection violations. In these instances, it was felt that government participation in cluster activities stymied discussion and could hinder the cluster response.

For example, in Nigeria, there were some concerns that government leadership had made it difficult to raise and discuss protection violations by the military in the protection sector working group, particularly in the past when the government did not acknowledge the scale of the crisis in the north-east. This view is supported by the FAO/WFP Joint Evaluation of Food Security Cluster Coordination<sup>77</sup> and is echoed in a recent ALNAP paper on humanitarian action which considered that ‘*the potential for governments to challenge the humanitarian principle of impartial, needs-based assistance led some participants at the meeting to suggest a clear ‘no government’ line in conflict situations: humanitarians should not be coordinated by governments, and should not allow government actors into coordination fora.*’<sup>78</sup> There was far less opposition to government engagement in natural disasters; a good example of this was the Philippines where the government played a

<sup>76</sup> GPC interview. While the OCHA Global Overview of Coordination Arrangements in 2016, referenced 27% of 27 countries reviewed (7.29) protection clusters having a Government co-lead.

<sup>77</sup> See Steets *et al.* (2014) *Strategic evaluation: FAO/WFP joint evaluation of Food Security Cluster coordination in humanitarian action, evaluation report*, August 2014, p. 11

<sup>78</sup> Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2016) *Improving Humanitarian Action*, ALNAP Working Paper. London: ALNAP/ODI, p.39



co-leadership role in the protection and sub-clusters, which received endorsement across all of the evaluation interviews.

**The rejection of government participation in specific circumstances can be an attractive position from a highly principled, conceptual perspective but different models have been used successfully across different contexts.** Good practice would suggest that, where possible, efforts should be made to engage with government, particularly given the temporary nature of clusters and the ultimate need for transition and de-activation. The survey results highlighted some support for this position, with some suggestion that government should be engaged but in a limited form.

**Across the case study countries, the evidence suggests that greatest engagement occurs at a sub-national or local level rather than at a national one, which was a reflection that government participation was 'positive locally' and 'sensitive nationally'.** However, even within countries there is rarely a single approach with Iraq offering a good example of this as local authorities participate in some of the PWGs but not in others – even within one context, different modalities may be necessary for different specific contexts. Also, across the case study countries, there tended to be greater government engagement via relevant line ministries, which participated in sub-clusters (such as the Ministry of Education engaging in CP), than in the protection cluster. This may reflect the fact that there is less political sensitivity at sub-cluster or thematic level.

### UN Missions

**In the evaluation field missions, UNHCR as CLA consistently advocated for engagement with the Mission and frequently enjoyed good collaboration with it (including in Afghanistan, South Sudan and DRC).** UN Missions play an important role in protecting civilians and facilitating humanitarian assistance, making it important for FPCs to engage with them. However, engagement with UN Missions has potential implications for the cluster's neutrality, impartiality and independence, or perceptions thereof. For example, NGO staff members raised concerns about the engagement of UN Missions in the cluster in DRC and South Sudan.<sup>79</sup> The relationship in South Sudan had caused considerable tension with cluster members, particularly when there was a need to discuss issues related to the Mission in the cluster. The GPC has prepared a '*Diagnostic Tool and Guidance*' on the interaction between FPCs and UN Missions<sup>80</sup>, which provides practical guidance to cluster members, but this remains a draft document and there was limited knowledge of it in the protection clusters that participated in the evaluation. Outside of the case study countries, Mali offers an encouraging example where progress has been made in addressing mutual blind spots and identifying potential complementarities between a UN Mission and a FPC (see Figure 20). The joint mission report serves as an important aide memoire for how collaboration between these two protection actors could be structured and moderated elsewhere.

#### Figure 20: Good practice – joint protection mission to Mali<sup>81</sup>

The purpose of the joint protection mission was to develop a comprehensive understanding of protection concerns between the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and other protection partners, which included the protection cluster, with a view to identifying a strategy for engagement to ensure that protection is effectively addressed as a key aspect of their respective mandates. Throughout the joint mission, there was a lack of clarity among both humanitarians and MINUSMA as to the mandates, goals and roles of the other, and some apprehension on the humanitarian side as to the implications of some elements of the MINUSMA mandate and potential repercussions of its implementation, including for humanitarian action.

The joint mission assisted in strengthening understanding that, as part of their mandates, both humanitarian actors and MINUSMA have a responsibility and desire to improve protection for people affected by the crisis in Mali. It was agreed that engagement should be grounded in and serve this objective. There was recognition that not all goals were shared and there is a need for clear distinction between the political and military objectives of the Mission and humanitarian objectives and operations. A number of recommendations were made which were aimed at facilitating this outcome and strengthening coordination.

<sup>79</sup> See for example, Arensen, M. (2016) *If we leave, we are killed: Lessons learned from South Sudan Protection of Civilian Sites, 2013-16*, International Organisation for Migration & Confederations Suisse.

<sup>80</sup> GPC (2013) *Diagnostic tool and guidance on the interaction between field protection clusters and UN missions*, Draft, July 2013.

<sup>81</sup> Joint Protection Mission to Mali, 19-23 August 2013, Mission Report.

While the mandate and approach of the UN Mission play an important role in how an FPC engages with it, interviews suggest that this is often dependent on the personnel in the Mission, whose knowledge and interest in humanitarian action can be variable.

### National security forces and armed actors

**The evaluation found that attempts to reach consensus within the membership of the protection cluster on 'red lines', 'do no harm' approaches or 'principled engagement' with armed actors was frequently fraught with problems that reflect the divided nature of the humanitarian community on these important but sensitive issues.** Where armed actors did not have a UN mandate, there was far less consistency in the approach of the cluster to its engagement with national security forces. There were significant differences in the approaches in Nigeria, Pakistan and Iraq (including with the US-led coalition in Iraq) and, in some cases, this had caused significant tension both within the cluster and between the cluster and other members of the humanitarian community. In several of the field missions (South Sudan, Pakistan and Iraq), the inability of UNHCR as CLA to broker agreement on issues linked to humanitarian principles had led to challenges in the functioning of the protection cluster, which raises an important question about how to manage disagreement in clusters. This is a key role of the cluster lead and co-lead, but on occasions where it has not been possible to make compromises, these issues have proved extremely divisive.

## 5.3 Factors that influence the predictability of UNHCR's leadership of FPCs

*The PoLR role is a key aspect of predictable cluster leadership. This sub-section begins by assessing how UNHCR as CLA has fulfilled its PoLR responsibilities. It also presents additional findings from the evaluation that have a bearing on its ability to play a predictable leadership role. These include issues of cluster neutrality and planning for cluster transition and de-activation.*

### UNHCR's role as Provider of Last Resort

**Specific to the protection cluster, significant confusion exists between FPCs and sub-clusters about the concept of PoLR which appears in part to be a result of contradictory guidance.** The 2008 IASC guidance on PoLR states that '*focal point Agencies are responsible for acting as provider of last resort within their particular areas of responsibility, under the overall leadership of the designated cluster lead for protection and as agreed by the protection cluster at the country level*'.<sup>82</sup> This suggests that AoR leads are PoLR for their respective areas, under the umbrella of UNHCR as the overall GPC lead and only when agreed by the protection cluster at the country level. The 2016 IASC Policy on Protection is somewhat clearer than the 2008 guidance in stating that '*[o]rganisations that lead AoRs and field-level sub-clusters have the same responsibilities as cluster leads*'.<sup>83</sup> This interpretation echoes the view of many AoR staff. The existence of different interpretations means that there is significant scope for ambiguity, and some AoR coordinators spoke of the need for greater clarity.

**The concept of PoLR is 'critical to the cluster approach, and without it the element of predictability is lost'.<sup>84</sup> However, the fact that it is caveated by issues of access, security, and funding which are frequent challenges in humanitarian operations meant that during interviews it was often viewed as more theoretical than operational.<sup>85</sup>** From an operational perspective, the cluster architecture and variable capacities at field level add to the confusion that already exists and make it difficult to offer prescriptive guidance about PoLR, particularly given that sub-cluster architecture is rarely consistent within and across contexts. However, the frequent need for PoLR responsibilities to be negotiated at country level on a case-by-case basis significantly compromises both the concept of accountability and predictability that the PoLR was devised to address.

**In instances where there is clarity about PoLR responsibilities, however, and where adequate funding exists to operationalise this at the country level, there are examples of UNHCR comprehensively fulfilling its PoLR**

<sup>82</sup> IASC (2008) *Operational guidance on the concept of 'provider of last resort'*, May 2008, p.1.

<sup>83</sup> IASC (2016) *Inter-Agency Standing Committee Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action*, October 14 2016, p.28.

<sup>84</sup> IASC (2008) *Operational guidance on the concept of 'provider of last resort'*, May 2008, p.1.

<sup>85</sup> This view is consistent with the findings of the evaluation of UNICEF's CLA role in humanitarian action which concluded that '*the original POLR concept was found, in the evaluation, to be largely meaningless given the 2008 revisions to its definition – "depending on access, security and availability of funding" – which can be used to explain almost all operational gaps.*'



**responsibilities.** In South Sudan, for example, respondents reported that UNHCR stepped in and acted as PoLR during the Juba crisis of July 2016 when many other protection actors evacuated. The response included CP and GBV work such as emergency activation of referral pathways and spearheading initial communications on GBV risk. The existence of a budget for IDP operations and an operational footprint was also considered to be an important factor in UNHCR being able to play its role as PoLR in South Sudan; the existence of the UNHCR IDP unit which had access to funds and a large operational footprint across large parts of the country meant that UNHCR had an analysis of the gaps and was able to support the operationalisation of PoLR responsibilities when needs were identified.

### UNHCR's CLA responsibilities and perceptions of cluster neutrality

**Like every CLA, the evaluation found that UNHCR needs to balance having close links with the protection cluster while at the same time ensuring that partners view it as a neutral inter-agency platform.** The relationship between the CLA and the cluster is an important factor in the effectiveness of cluster leadership and perceptions of neutrality. UNHCR's performance in the field depends in large part on the understanding and approaches of Country Representatives. For UNHCR, this is outlined in a set of '*Operational guidelines for UNHCR's engagement in situations of internal displacement*', which clarifies its responsibilities and decision-making within the IASC cluster approach. Importantly, it also provides parameters for UNHCR's operational engagement, including principles for engagement and interventions to consider in support of UNHCR's CLA commitment.<sup>86</sup> From UNHCR's perspective, clusters are a coordination mechanism and not legal entities, their staff members are hired by the CLA, UNHCR is the PoLR and accountability rests with the CLA. For these reasons, the protection cluster (at global or field level) cannot be independent from UNHCR. However, cluster coordinators should bring together different viewpoints in order to reach agreement on the cluster's position on different issues. The WoSR questioned UNHCR's commitment to an inter-agency approach and similar concerns were raised in this evaluation. These concerns make it extremely important that UNHCR follows IASC guidance about cluster neutrality.

**While protection cluster coordinators were broadly cognisant of the importance of cluster independence, UNHCR Representatives were frequently less clear in their understanding.** CLAs asserted the importance of cluster independence to their Country Representatives in a joint letter in 2009 stating that, '*cluster coordinators should act as neutral representatives of the cluster as a whole, rather than as representatives of their particular agency*'.<sup>87</sup> For the six countries visited during the evaluation, the lack of clarity among UNHCR Representatives about the need for cluster independence was manifest in inconsistencies in the way that senior country-based UNHCR staff related to the cluster. This had important impacts on how the cluster operated and how its members perceived it. This finding is consistent with the findings of the evaluation of UNICEF's CLA role.<sup>88</sup>

**Variations in level of understanding in cluster independence have direct impacts on the cluster.** The evaluation identified three broad categories of country-level engagement between UNHCR and the protection cluster (Figure 21). In some countries, there was evidence that UNHCR has taken decisions about the cluster that reflected its own agency interests rather than those of the cluster (UNHCR's recent proposal to deactivate the Pakistan protection cluster).<sup>89</sup> There have also been instances when UNHCR's advocacy positions have been extended to the cluster despite being contrary to the views of the membership (in Erbil, Iraq earlier in the period under evaluation). One of the most important reactions to a perceived lack of independence is a deterioration of trust in the cluster by the membership, which may manifest itself in a reduction in the sharing of protection-related monitoring data. In at least one of the field missions where this had occurred, a vicious cycle had been initiated in which diminishing trust had led to a reduction in information sharing, which

<sup>86</sup> UNHCR (2016) *Operational Guidelines for UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement*, UNHCR/OG/2016/2, February 2016.

<sup>87</sup> IASC (2009) *Joint Letter from Cluster Lead Agencies to their Directors/Representatives at Country Level*, October 2009.

<sup>88</sup> Avahir Analytics (2013) *Evaluation for UNICEF's Cluster Lead Agency role in humanitarian action*, December 2013. New York: UNICEF, p.20.

<sup>89</sup> It is noteworthy that since the evaluation mission, this decision has been reversed.

had adversely affected the performance of the cluster. In this example, humanitarian agencies and donors were seeking alternative means of coordinating their protection activities outside of the cluster.

**Figure 21: Implications of different relationships between UNHCR and the FPC at country level**

	Description	Impact on cluster
<b>Indifference</b>	The cluster is considered a low priority and as a consequence received little support from UNHCR at a country level.	This may permit the cluster a level of independence and neutrality, but it will also be deprived of strategic support which may be required with HC/HCT-level.
<b>Collaboration</b>	UNHCR understands the importance of cluster neutrality at the same time as being cognisant of the important support role that it should play.	The cluster benefits from having neutrality and a level of independence as well as being able to draw on UNHCR's backing and receive strategic support where necessary.
<b>Co-option</b>	The cluster is viewed as subordinate to UNHCR and as a consequence it is managed in a way that reflects UNHCR's country priorities.	The cluster lacks neutrality which can place it at odds with its membership particularly where there is a clash of priorities or disagreement on where to focus its resources.

The evaluation field missions offered an example of good practice in strengthening perceptions about the independence of UNHCR's clusters in Iraq through locating the protection, shelter and CCCM Cluster in a single office which also accommodated co-leads and which had quickly become an important locus of coordination (see Figure 22). This model contrasted with the one encountered in other field missions where the protection cluster was frequently located among UNHCR's protection units and was separated from other UNHCR-led clusters.

**Figure 22: Good practice – the co-location of UNHCR-led clusters in Iraq**

In Iraq, UNHCR has co-located the three clusters under its leadership (or co-leadership) in a separate part of its office in Erbil. The protection, shelter and CCCM clusters now have their own office where the leads, co-leads and support staff are all based. The shift to a model of co-location is considered to have had a number of benefits. In addition to strengthening perceptions of independence for all three of the clusters, it also acts as a one-stop shop for visiting NGO staff which increases its inter-agency feel. There are also important benefits to the clusters themselves who are more easily able to coordinate across different sectors. For the protection cluster, it offers practical opportunities to ensure that protection is part of cluster conversations. In this way, co-location has strengthened protection mainstreaming, as it has become part of general communication between the clusters rather than a separate discussion.

**Interviews with other CLAs suggested that they experienced similar challenges, and so UNHCR is in no way exceptional, but some agencies have taken steps to strengthen understanding and have put in place measures to ensure greater consistency in how clusters are managed.** To ensure clarity about its CLA responsibilities within its country leadership, UNICEF has produced and disseminated a booklet, *'Cluster Coordination Guidance for Country Offices'* which outlines the key responsibilities for UNICEF Country Representatives and offices.<sup>90</sup> This does not guarantee that all of its Country Representatives adopt the actions and behaviours that are outlined, but it does establish an important set of benchmarks and expectations for the level and type of support that representatives and their offices should provide to clusters.

### Planning for cluster transition and de-activation

**The evaluation identified both good practice and challenging examples of cluster transition and de-activation.** Clusters are activated to fill a gap in government coordination, and IASC guidance emphasises the need for de-activation plans to be made at the earliest stages and that building capacity of local partners and government should be an objective from the outset. This has gained greater prominence since the TA highlighted the importance of ensuring the contextual relevance of clusters and that national and local leadership is supported where adequate capacity exists. The transition and de-activation of the protection cluster in the Philippines offers an example of good practice (see Figure 23).<sup>91</sup>

<sup>90</sup> UNICEF (2015) *Cluster Coordination Guidance for Country Offices*. New York: UNICEF.

<sup>91</sup> Landouzy-Sanders, A. (2014) *Handover note on Protection Cluster Coordination during the Humanitarian Response to Typhoon Haiyan, Philippines*, June 2014.

**Figure 23: Good practice – protection cluster activation, transition and de-activation in the Philippines**

The protection cluster activated after Typhoon Haiyan devastated large parts of the Philippines' Eastern Visayas in November 2013. It offers an example of a cluster that was successfully activated, transitioned and de-activated after the crisis. The process was assisted by the institutionalisation of the cluster system in the National Disaster Management System for six years prior to the typhoon but also benefitted from a focus on capacity building from the outset. UNHCR took over leadership of the cluster from Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the months after the typhoon and led alongside the government's Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). Identification of the Philippines Commission of Human Rights and DSWD as the cluster leads in-waiting from the outset of the response and targeted capacity strengthening played an important role in facilitating the handover. Transition plans were in place in early 2014 and included agreed criteria for handover. Regional protection cluster coordination handed over by June 2014 and the process completed towards the end of the year.

**Planning for transition is a weakness of the clusters.** Despite the existence of good practice outlined above, planning for transition is an identified weakness, with OCHA finding that only 31% of clusters from a review of 27 countries had transition plans in place in 2016<sup>92</sup> and the independent evaluation of UNICEF-led clusters concluding that *'transition from and to sectoral coordination mechanisms or other forms of humanitarian coordination is problematic.'*<sup>93</sup> In Pakistan, while there was good engagement by UNHCR with local government, which participated in the cluster, coordination between the protection cluster and the HCT on the future of the cluster had been weak. As a consequence, there were very different views about the transition process and the timeframe. The example highlighted the challenges which exist when discussions about change in cluster architecture occur in the absence of a transition plan to guide the process. This example underlines the importance of having a plan in place from the outset, which has the support of HC/HCT and can guide capacity development.

## **6. Effectiveness and predictability of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the Global Protection Cluster**

*The focus of this section is UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the Global Protection Cluster. It examines effectiveness and predictability through an assessment of how UNHCR has resourced the GPC and supported it to achieve the strategic objective of providing high-quality support to field operations, and the extent to which it has fostered coherent coordination and collaboration with its global partners.*

### **Main Findings**

#### **Resourcing the GPC to support the protection cluster**

The increase in UNHCR's funding for the GPC during the period under evaluation and the associated increase in dedicated posts have considerably strengthened both the GPC's capacity and its autonomy from UNHCR. While it is difficult to assess effectiveness because the GPC lacks a mechanism to monitor progress against its work plan, its field support has been strengthened during the period under evaluation; the provision of training, technical support and tools have been well-received but better communication with protection cluster members about where and how to access them would increase their use. From the perspective of effectiveness, one area that has received insufficient attention by UNHCR is its oversight of cluster performance.

#### **Fostering coherent coordination and collaboration with the GPC's global partners**

UNHCR has made mixed progress towards strengthening predictability; while relationships between the AoRs and the GPC Operations Cell have improved over the last year, there continues to be a lack of clarity in the relationship between the GPC and AoRs, which has an impact on the GPC's efficiency and operational effectiveness. A change in governance structure that came about after a significant consultation process has the potential to broaden out GPC engagement, but the inclusion of GPC co-leads would offer the best opportunity to strengthen collaboration.

### **6.1 UNHCR's role in resourcing the GPC Operations Cell to support FPCs**

<sup>92</sup> OCHA (2016) *Global Overview of Coordination Arrangements in 2016, Global Analysis*, October 2016, p.3.

<sup>93</sup> Avani Analytics (2013) *Evaluation for UNICEF's Cluster Lead Agency role in humanitarian action*, December 2013. New York: UNICEF, p.16.

*This sub-section examines UNHCR's support to the GPC Operations Cell and the extent to which this has facilitated their coordination of the FPCs.*

### **UNHCR's support to the GPC Operations Cell**

**UNHCR has increased its investment in the GPC and is better resourced than other UNHCR-led clusters,** moving from a double-hatted P5-level coordinator supported by a dedicated UNHCR P4 senior protection officer in 2014 to a dedicated P5-level coordinator working with an Operations Cell that had seven members from mid-2016. While the GPC Coordinator and two P3 level members are UNHCR staff, the Danish Refugee Council deploys three Operations Cell members on a cost-sharing basis, ProCap was deploying the roving senior protection officer and CashCap is deploying the cash expert. As a result, the GPC is better resourced than the other UNHCR-led clusters (that do not have dedicated coordinators, for example).

**The GPC Operations Cell has been able to secure ECHO grants in addition to its UNHCR funding that have enabled it to work with partners and task teams on a range of activities to meet the GPC's strategic objectives.** The GPC and UNHCR's IDP section have had a joint operational budget of \$400,000 since 2014 which is for expenditures other than UNHCR staff costs (such as meetings, the GPC website, projects and non-UNHCR staff costs). The cost of UNHCR staff members in the Operations Cell is financed from a separate budget. The GPC has also received two-year ECHO grants for its activities, with the first one for 2013-2014 and a second one for 2015-2016. Under UNHCR's budgeting process, the GPC would be expected to use funds raised to cover its budget to avoid UNHCR having to allocate the money from un-earmarked funds. However, since the GPC and the IDP section have a relatively small budget, the GPC has been able to get agreement from the budget committee to increase its budget level so that the ECHO grants have provided additional funding rather than being absorbed into the GPC budget. The second ECHO grant has focused on operationalising the centrality of protection.

**There is a lack of consensus among GPC and partners around the most optimal financing structure for GPC's work.** The GPC Operations Cell has flagged that, while partners have received funding for their activities (particularly through the ECHO grants), they have not contributed funding for the GPC's work, even though the ECHO grants require the recipient to finance 20% of project costs from other sources. There was a view that partners would feel that they had a greater stake in the GPC if they were contributing to it financially. However, some partners felt that the administration associated with UNHCR financial transactions was a strong disincentive and they found in-kind contributions to be the most effective way to contribute. They gave examples of providing staff time and expertise, in addition to their support for the work of task teams and advocacy. There was a suggestion that, a range of partner-funding would also strengthen the autonomy of the GPC as it would be less reliant on UNHCR as the CLA.

### **GPC support to the Field Protection Clusters**

**Since increased support to the field was a strategic priority in both of the GPC's strategic frameworks during the review period, the GPC has provided a range of guidance and support to FPCs.** This includes the development of an online protection toolbox,<sup>94</sup> the establishment of a help desk, missions and deployments to provide support, and the development of training courses for cluster coordinators and FPC members. In response to consultations for the GPC's 2016-19 strategic framework, the Operations Cell added a CoP to its field support. The aim is to develop a network that is relevant for FPCs and that also feeds field perspectives into the GPC's policies, work plans and activities. While the evaluation found evidence of its use by cluster coordinators such as in South Sudan, where it had been used to support the development of a sub-cluster strategy, there was much more limited knowledge about it among FPC members.

**The Operations Cell provides demand-driven support to FPCs which is well targeted.** In order to focus its support, the Operations Cell has designated focal points for countries with FPCs to build relationships with the coordinators and provide support. It also had a senior protection officer from ProCap to travel to the field and provide support as needed.<sup>95</sup> The Operations Cell does not have formal criteria to prioritise FPCs for support

<sup>94</sup> See <http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/tools-and-guidance/protection-cluster-coordination-toolbox.html>

<sup>95</sup> Since ProCap has faced funding shortages in 2017, the Operations Cell has not drawn on it for field deployments and its own members have travelled on missions to provide support as needed.

but it does seek to target its support at a discrete number of operations which currently include Syria, Yemen, Iraq, South Sudan and Nigeria.<sup>96</sup> Operations with large but relatively stable IDP populations (such as Sudan and Colombia) are secondary priorities while small emergencies, such as Cameroon and Mauritania, form the third tier. Currently, the Operations Cell staff member responsible for communications supports most of the non-UNHCR-led FPCs. Cluster coordinators are responsible for identifying their support needs and requests have included assistance with locating relevant documents, sharing good practice, the provision of advice on issues such as humanitarian evacuations or support to the development of advocacy notes or guidance documents for the HCT, assistance with issues connected to the HPC and deployment of specialists.<sup>97</sup> Although the Operations Cell clearly provides a wide range of support to cluster coordinators, it does not tend to engage NGO co-leads even though the latter play a critical role in cluster coordination.<sup>98</sup>

**The case studies and desk reviews provided mixed feedback about the different types of support that the GPC provides to the field.** The CashCap training on protection in cash-based interventions has been well-received. Some coordinators spoke of using the help desk as well as contacting the Operations Cell members to request support. While cluster coordinators were familiar with the support that was available, members had less awareness of it and frequently lacked knowledge of the GPC toolbox or other guidance and documentation available on the GPC website. There was also a concern raised from non-English-speaking countries that GPC documentation was not available in languages other than English, particularly French, Arabic and Spanish.

**To date, the GPC Operations Cell has not had a mechanism for monitoring the effectiveness of its work, including support to the field.** The 2016-19 strategic framework does not have indicators to measure progress. Although the Operations Cell can assess the extent to which it has delivered activities in its work plan, there is no method for assessing the quality of the achievements. This is partly due to the challenge of developing relevant indicators for the kind of work that the Operations Cell undertakes and partly due to a lack of monitoring capacity within the Cell.

**The Operations Cell is limited in its oversight of cluster performance.** The Operations Cell maintains an overview of whether clusters have a strategy in place and it provides support to FPCs undertaking CCPM, but it does not track their performance. It also does not seek to use information available from DHRM to monitor staff retention, the average number of postings that coordinators have had and/or other human resources information that could help it to target training and support to the field. While members of the GPC Operations Cell may receive updates on the performance of clusters they have no management responsibility and, as a consequence, play no formal role in performance management. In order for the GPC Operations Cell to provide effective support to the field, it would be beneficial to have a systematic overview of the performance of protection cluster coordinators appointed by UNHCR and other agencies, possibly through participation in peer reviews or 360° evaluations.<sup>99</sup>

## 6.2 UNHCR's role in fostering coherent coordination and collaboration with its global partners

*This sub-section analyses the different ways in which UNHCR has collaborated with its global partners, horizontally with other UNHCR-led clusters and vertically with cluster members, during the evaluation period. It also examines the relationship and standing of the AoRs within the GPC.*

### Horizontal collaboration with other UNHCR-led clusters

<sup>96</sup> At the time the evaluation was conducted, the priorities were Syria, Yemen, Iraq, South Sudan and Nigeria.

<sup>97</sup> In addition, there is a staff member responsible for communications, which includes the GPC's website, newsletters and social media. She reaches out to cluster coordinators to ensure that country pages on the GPC website are up to date and uses social media to keep them informed about relevant initiatives.

<sup>98</sup> In one case, when UN staff were evacuated due to violence, the co-lead was left to manage the protection cluster as well as the sub-clusters. The Operations Cell offered support late in the day but was then unable to deploy someone in time to provide support.

<sup>99</sup> The UNHCR performance appraisal system can include the perspective of peers but this is not a requirement.

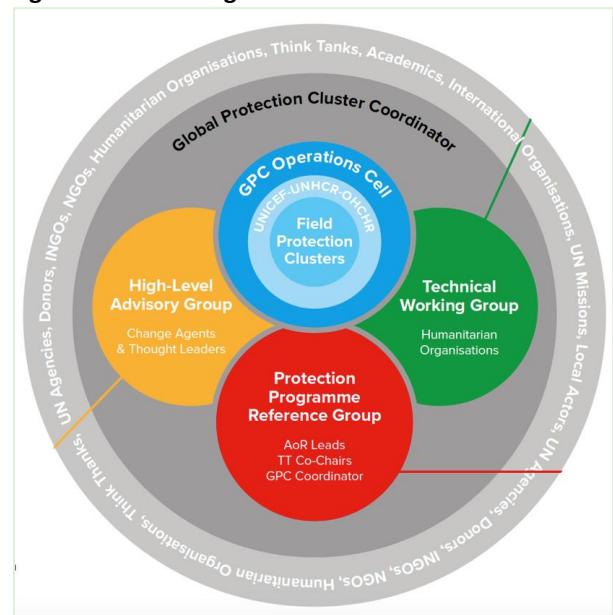


**The current situation of the GPC within the UNHCR organisational structure presents both advantages and disadvantages.** Within UNHCR, the GPC is located within the DIP while the shelter and CCCM clusters are under DPSM. The advantage of locating the GPC within DIP is that it has a direct link to UNHCR's policy and standard-setting work on a broad range of protection issues. The disadvantage is that this separates the GPC from the other clusters as there is no formal mechanism to ensure that the three clusters collaborate and coordinate. In addition, the shelter and CCCM clusters are less adequately resourced than the GPC which means that they can find it challenging to keep pace with the GPC on joint initiatives or issues of common interest. Nevertheless, the three global cluster coordinators have taken the initiative to establish a monthly meeting at global level which enables them to discuss issues of common interest, such as cash programming and how to incorporate protection issues into cluster training to reflect the centrality of protection and the IASC protection policy. The clusters have also undertaken joint missions, to support multi-year planning in the DRC, and to Nigeria when it was declared an L3 emergency in August 2016.

### Vertical collaboration with partners, protection actors and others

**The GPC Operations Cell engages with partners, protection actors and others primarily through its governance structure and task teams.** With the introduction of the GPC's strategic framework for 2016-19, the GPC felt that it also needed to change the composition of the SAG that had guided its work from 2013 onwards.<sup>100</sup> This was partly in response to criticisms in the WoSR about the need for greater inclusion of national and local actors and about the lack of innovation. The GPC Operations Cell established three separate bodies to comprise a governance structure in 2016: the Technical Working Group (TWG) to oversee the implementation of the GPC work plan, the Protection Programme Reference Group (PRG) to ensure coherence in protection programming at field level, and a High-Level Advisory Group (see Figure 24).<sup>101</sup> As the structure is still in the process of being activated, the evaluation did not engage its current members, but several informants highlighted that this structure omits representation for co-lead agencies and this would appear to be an important omission.

Figure 24: The GPC governance structure



**Outside of its governance structures, the GPC Operations Cell has sought to engage with a range of partners, including AoRs, on specific initiatives.** The GPC also engages with protection partners through task teams, which are usually time-bound bodies established to implement a specific activity.<sup>102</sup> Task Teams currently exist for protection mainstreaming, learning, law and policy, and donor dialogue.<sup>103</sup> Four of the task teams should be co-led by UNHCR and a partner (e.g. the Task Team on Donor Dialogue is co-led by UNHCR's Donor Relations and Resource Mobilisation Service and InterAction), however, partners sometimes face challenges obtaining adequate resources for co-leadership.

**Outside of the Task Teams, the GPC engages with stakeholders through different types of events and the Operations Cell's capacity to organise such events has increased with its size.** The minutes of the SAG retreat in February 2015 note that events such as roundtables can be catalytic, bringing together a range of

<sup>100</sup> The GPC initially established a Steering Committee, building on the Reference Group that supported a 'visioning' exercise that resulted in the development of the 2012-2014 strategic framework. In April 2013, in accordance with the Transformative Agenda, the title changed to the GPC SAG (Minutes of the GPC SAG meeting on 12 April 2013).

<sup>101</sup> GPC (2017a) *Global protection cluster funding needs*, 2017.

<sup>102</sup> For example, in 2016, the GPC established the Protection Priority Task Team to support the drafting of the IASC protection policy. It disbanded once the work was complete.

<sup>103</sup> See <http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/about-us/who-we-are.html>

stakeholders and with the potential to contribute to a dialogue or initiative or to lead to the development of guidance. The GPC has organised thematic seminars and roundtables since 2012. It also hosted a webinar for the first time in 2017, on international humanitarian law and evacuations, making the recording available on its website.<sup>104</sup> In 2016, the Operations Cell organised country briefings on Ukraine and Somalia.

### Internal (to GPC) collaboration with AoRs

**Interviews suggest that the GPC's unique architecture in including four AoRs can present challenges in terms of achieving shared protection outcomes and working in the most effective and efficient way.** In the survey, nearly 70% of respondents indicated their support for the present configuration of the FPCs. However, just under a third of participants felt that change was necessary and, during interviews, many headquarters-based AoR staff considered that the difficulties inherent in internal coordination provide a compelling reason to review the structure.

The fundamental concern is one of relationship hierarchy and whether the AoR sub-clusters report vertically up to the GPC, or horizontally across to them. A secondary issue is how the structure should be managed operationally so that members can most effectively engage without duplicating efforts. As an example, some members choose to engage with the GBV and CP AoRs and, for this group, there is no perceived value to engaging with the GPC as well. Conversely there are others that would prefer the GPC to provide a one-stop shop rather than having to engage across several coordination platforms. This challenge is also replicated at the field level where the lack of clarity can have important implications for the predictability and effectiveness of the response.

**The evaluation found that the overall issue of collaboration within the GPC (including both AoR relationships with the GPC and AoR relationships with each other) is based on long-standing fragmented relationships.** Reasons for this include the different mandates of the lead agencies involved, which can be exacerbated by personalities at both global and field levels, and the dissatisfaction of some AoR staff with the hierarchical structure. This challenge is aggravated by the lack of clarity in the relationship between the GPC and AoRs.

**While relationships between the AoRs and the GPC have improved over the last year, there is scope for further improvement.** This has taken time and effort on the part of the GPC and UNHCR and has been made possible with the additional resourcing of the GPC Operations Cell. The Operations Cell has taken practical steps, such as providing IM support to AoRs, which in the past were separate with each AoR producing its own websites and toolkits. The GPC IM Officer, working with the AoR IM Officers, has been trying to consolidate the different guides, tools, and templates into a single suite of resources. This work is still in process. However, many interviewees believed it was necessary to initiate a process of strategic review of the GPC structure to consider the best configuration of AoRs. This would ensure optimal coverage and avoid duplication at field level, and strengthen coherence and clarify accountabilities at global level. In doing this, the goal should be a structure that is consistent with the delivery of predictable and effective humanitarian response. This would have the greatest potential to harness the resources and network power of the key UN protection agencies and cluster members to promote the centrality of protection.

## 7. UNHCR's support to protection mainstreaming and the Centrality of Protection

*This section focuses on two issues: the support provided by UNHCR to protection mainstreaming at global and field level, and UNHCR's advocacy for the centrality of protection.*

### Main Findings

#### UNHCR's support to protection mainstreaming

The Protection Task Team has made an important contribution to supporting protection mainstreaming through the provision of tools and training through a collaborative approach. While there has been progress with protection mainstreaming at the field level, protection clusters tend to continue to rely on checklists and guidelines. While some

<sup>104</sup> See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdTB9Q3HaV8>



FPCs have engaged across clusters and reviewed proposals, collaboration was most successful when support was demand-driven. Interviews suggest that although protection concerns were raised and discussed during meetings, discussions about protection mainstreaming occurred infrequently so the inter-cluster coordinator group (ICCG) tended not to be a forum for live discussion about how to strengthen protection across the response.

**UNHCR’s advocacy on the Centrality of Protection**

While UNHCR has supported the GPC in undertaking a range of advocacy initiatives in support of the centrality of protection, the support and guidance given to the drafting and publication of the IASC Policy has been the most significant achievement. The successful delivery of the policy has drawn on UNHCR’s engagement across the IASC WG, the EDG and GPCs leadership of the Protection Priority although there is scope to strengthen the effectiveness of its advocacy further by improving collaboration with key protection advocates in the future. The evidence provided by successive STAIT missions suggest that, at the field level, important progress is still needed in order to deliver more consistently against the policy. UNHCR has an important role to play in this through its engagement with the HC/HCT and its leadership of the protection cluster.

**UNHCR’s support to protection mainstreaming**

At the global level, UNHCR works through the protection mainstreaming Task Team. This has over 30 members representing GPC AoRs, UN agencies, NGOs, Global Clusters and stakeholders from across the humanitarian sector and is jointly chaired by the IRC and OCHA. In 2014, it developed a mainstreaming training package, which was rolled out by the IRC in six regional training of trainers that targeted protection cluster coordinators, inter-cluster coordinators, and coordinators of other clusters. The Task Team on Protection Mainstreaming has also developed an innovative Protection Mainstreaming Guidance App for Smartphones (Figure 25).

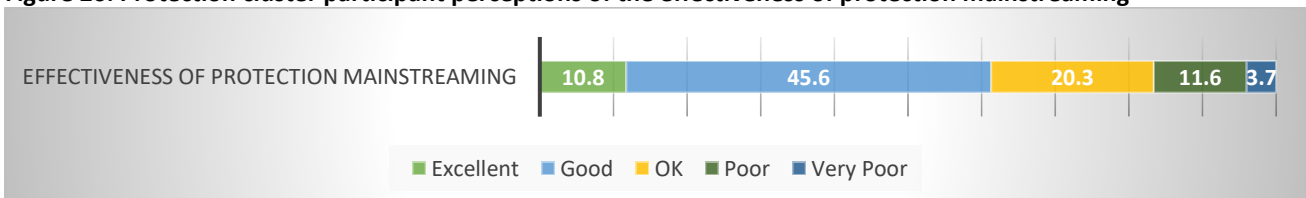
**Figure 25: Good practice – the Protection Mainstreaming Guidance App**



The protection mainstreaming app is a companion to the GPC protection mainstreaming guidance and includes all sector guidance available from the GPC structured by categories. IRC developed the app and manages it as co-chair of the Task Team on Protection Mainstreaming. It is available in English, French and Arabic. It currently has 650 users in Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Yemen, Niger, Liberia, Nigeria, Sudan, Ethiopia, DRC, Kenya, Tanzania, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Indonesia, Colombia and Ukraine, which includes a notable user-base in contexts where insecurity frequently precludes training of staff and partners.

**While the focus on mainstreaming by the protection cluster has been significant in some countries, it has been less of a focus in others,** particularly where resources have been stretched or where the cluster has chosen to prioritise other activities. In some countries, FPCs have developed and disseminated checklists for assessments and for cluster programming (Afghanistan, Pakistan, DRC). Protection cluster members have also undertaken targeted training of other clusters. In South Sudan, a ProCap staff member developed a protection mainstreaming mapping report and mainstreaming toolkit in 2015. Outside of the case study countries, Yemen developed mainstreaming guidance in 2015 and Ukraine in 2016. In both Afghanistan and Iraq, the protection cluster had worked with OCHA to screen pooled funding applications against protection mainstreaming requirements; in Afghanistan, this went beyond looking at the relevant proposal rubric and included scrutiny of project objectives, budgets and human resource provision to check that protection mainstreaming commitments were evident throughout the proposal. The results of the online survey showed that cluster participants generally regarded their mainstreaming efforts as ‘good’ (see Figure 26).

**Figure 26: Protection cluster participant perceptions of the effectiveness of protection mainstreaming**



**In several countries, despite the existence of protection mainstreaming materials, it was difficult to evidence their use by cluster.** In South Sudan, several of the agencies interviewed were either unaware of the existence of the mainstreaming toolkit or preferred to use their own internal guidelines, with which they were

familiar. In general, while a review of mainstreaming approaches shows a preference towards the development and promotion of guidelines by FPCs, the limited progress made in embedding protection across humanitarian response suggests that they are insufficient to embed protection across a response.

**There were some good examples of clusters proactively approaching the protection cluster for guidance** on how to address protection concerns or requesting support from the protection cluster for proposal development (Pakistan and Iraq). This offered opportunities to ensure that protection was at the heart of operations and was mainstreamed throughout proposals. In DRC, the protection cluster provided practical support to other clusters and agencies to operationalise protection. In these cases, a focus on practical support appears to have had far greater effect.

**The adoption of the HPC and the Humanitarian Needs Overviews (HNO) and Humanitarian Response Plans (HRP) for HC/HCT management of a humanitarian response and resource mobilisation represents an important opportunity to clearly outline the role of protection in humanitarian action.** IASC Principals expect protection to be addressed both explicitly in, and across, each of the HRPs. In support of this, the GPC prepared a set of guidance notes in 2015 for the protection clusters' participation in the development of HNOs and HRPs.<sup>105</sup>

**Interviews with ICCG members suggest that although protection concerns were raised and discussed during meetings, the ICCG tends not to be a forum for live discussion about how to strengthen protection across the response; and that discussions about protection mainstreaming occurred infrequently.** This is despite the fact that responsibilities for mainstreaming protection are shared, and one of the functions of the ICCG is to provide space for protection issues to be discussed and to support clusters' engagement in operationalising protection as a cross-cutting issue. The evaluation found no single explanation for this during in the country missions, but rather a range of factors that included limitations in the capacity and leadership of the protection cluster, a failure of ICCG members to view protection as central to humanitarian response and a lack of space in the ICCG agenda. Evidence of the challenges in the performance of ICCGs is listed in ALNAP's research on coordination, to which the findings from this evaluation add. The research also highlights the need for more work in defining the role of the ICCG, particularly with regard to its linkages with HCTs.<sup>106</sup>

### UNHCR's advocacy on the Centrality of Protection at field level

**The evaluation found that, as expressed by successive STAIT missions, there is considerable work to do to ensure the centrality of protection, both in the provision of protection cluster support and in HCT leadership.** The publication and dissemination of the IASC Principals statement on the centrality of protection in humanitarian action in December 2013 clarified the role that the HCT plays in providing leadership on protection.<sup>107</sup> In 2016, the IASC Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action endorsed the 2013 statement and defined the process for its implementation, establishing clear expectations of cluster support and HCT action. Furthermore, the revised IASC HCT ToR makes reference to the centrality of protection. STAIT mission reports have analysed the performance of a number of HCTs against these benchmarks. In the biannual EDG-donors meeting in June 2016, HC/HCT leadership on protection was the most frequently raised issue, highlighted in ten of the 12 Operational Peer Review (OPR) and STAIT missions. In the report that accompanied the meeting, it was considered that *'HCs and HCTs generally recognise protection as central to humanitarian response. However, many still need to demonstrate senior leadership on protection, particularly in respect of championing the centrality of protection.'*<sup>108</sup> A summary from five of the evaluation field missions of the extent to which HCT practice met with the aspirations outlined in the IASC policy is summarised in Figure 27.

**Figure 27: Summary of cluster/HCT implementation of actions outlined in the IASC Protection Policy**

Country	HCT actions proposed in the IASC protection policy
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<sup>105</sup> GPC (2015) *Guidance on the Humanitarian Programme Cycle for Protection Clusters*.

<sup>106</sup> Knox Clarke, P. and Campbell, L. (2016) *Improving Humanitarian Action, ALNAP Working Paper*. London: ALNAP/ODI, p23.

<sup>107</sup> IASC (2013) *The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action Statement by the IASC Principals*, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

<sup>108</sup> STAIT (2016) Biannual EDG – donor meeting, Overview of recurring issues identified in field implementation of the Transformative Agenda, 2013-2016, 17 June 2016, p.3.

	Cluster protection strategy that is updated and in use	HCT Protection strategy that is updated and in use	Protection is a standing agenda item	Monitor progress against the policy
<b>Afghanistan</b>	Yes (2017)	No	No	No
<b>DRC</b>	No	In process	No	No
<b>Iraq</b>	No	No	Yes	No
<b>Pakistan</b>	No	No	Yes	No
<b>South Sudan</b>	No	Not updated	No	No

**Although protection issues are frequently on HCT agendas, are regarded as important by HCTs and are partnered with targeted advocacy, HCT attention frequently wavers and their leadership on protection issues is variable.** Good practice identified during the field missions and desk studies included the following:

- Protection is a standing item on the Iraq HCT agenda. Prior to each meeting a short document, '*critical Protection Issues*' (CPI), is prepared by the protection cluster and presented by the UNHCR representative. The CPI outlines key advocacy issues for action;
- In Pakistan, there was frequent communication between the protection cluster coordinator in Peshawar and the HC/RC in Islamabad and there was regular participation of the Peshawar-based Humanitarian Regional Team in the Islamabad HCT meetings via video link;
- The Yemen HCT (which was not part of the evaluation) has an updated protection strategy that includes five specific protection-related outcomes.

While the IASC policy suggests that UNHCR as CLA for the protection cluster has a key role to play in supporting the HC/HCT there are several reasons why it is not consistently fulfilling this function:

- A lack of protection cluster coordinator capacity to engage at a level that is appropriate for the HC/HCT;
- The lack of a cluster strategy, which may leave the cluster coordinator ill-placed to offer guidance and support to the HC/HCT;
- A lack of willingness on the part of the HC/HCT to prioritise engagement on protection or to work with the protection cluster;
- A decision by the HC to prioritise advice and support on protection from the UN Mission or from other protection actors.

**The UNHCR Representative can play an important supporting role, including facilitating the protection cluster's access to the HC/HCT, or where required, to engage on its behalf. The evaluation found mixed evidence of how this support has played out.** There are examples of Representatives who had played a pivotal role in supporting the cluster to have regular access to HC/HCT and who also raised issues on the cluster's behalf. However, in the absence of this kind of support, access of the FPC to the HCT depended on the HC in countries; and where the cluster coordinator lacked the capacity to engage or there was a lack of strategic analysis, senior informants indicated that they were considering alternative strategies for HCT support.

### UNHCR's global advocacy on the Centrality of Protection

**The GPC Operations Cell has played an important role in advancing the centrality of protection through its own advocacy initiatives.** Advocacy papers on geographic and thematic protection issues have included a briefing note on the declaration of famine in Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen (April 2017), GPC Alerts in South Sudan and Aleppo (July and November 2017 respectively), and a note on partner contributions to the Independent High-Level Panel on Peace Operations (January 2015). The GPC has also convened meetings in support of protection priorities, including a side event during the WHS (May 2016), on the launch of the Secretary General's report on the WHS and at the 2015 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment. While the GPC has played an important role in escalating protection concerns, it has also recognised the importance of ensuring its advocacy efforts are complementary to those in the field, which emphasises the Operations Cell's important role in supporting FPCs and HCTs at country level. Learning this lesson has allowed it to re-focus efforts to prioritise thematic issues or to engage in protection issues that are regional or that are common to a number of countries, which is evident in the recent briefing note on the four famines.

Since 2013, the GPC Coordinator has led the IASC Protection Priority with interested IASC WG members. Priorities for the WG in 2014 included the commissioning of the WoSR, facilitation of the review process and subsequent publication of the report in May 2015. After publication, the GPC took the lead in preparing a consolidated list of recommendations and drafting a management response.<sup>109</sup> The process of acting on these was subsumed into the 2016-19 GPC strategy which was considered to '*reflect the ambitions of the Whole of System Review*'.<sup>110</sup>

**Other parts of UNHCR have also made an important contribution to advocating on the centrality of protection, through their participation in relevant IASC bodies.** The IASC Working Group is composed of the Directors of policy or equivalent of the IASC organisations; UNHCR is represented by the Chief of the Inter-Agency Coordination Service. A review of the IASC WG's agenda between 2014 and 2017 shows a periodic emphasis on protection during the WoSR and more recently in 2016-17, when displacement and protection outcomes have been a strategic priority for the IASC WG. UNHCR has engaged on issues linked to the centrality of protection with frequent representation from the former GPC Coordinator and, more recently, by UNHCR's IASC WG focal point, the Chief of the Inter-Agency Coordination Service.

UNHCR provided significant support for the development and publication of the '*IASC policy on protection in humanitarian action*' in October 2016, thereby delivering the final task outlined in the ToR for the IASC Protection Priority, which was the development of a Comprehensive Policy Framework. The policy provides practical guidance about how the Humanitarian community and HCTs specifically should place protection at the centre of humanitarian action. In so doing, it outlines a step-change in how the humanitarian community operationalises protection principles. The publication of the policy represented a major milestone for the IASC and interviews with UNHCR staff and key informants underlined that there had been a unity of purpose from senior UNHCR staff members, who jointly contributed to achieving it.

The third group with which UNHCR has strategic engagement on issues of protection is the IASC EDG. The group supports humanitarian operations by advising the Emergency Relief Coordinator and the IASC Principals on operational issues of strategic concern, and by mobilising agency resources to address operational challenges and gaps.<sup>111</sup> In 2014 the EDGs created the STAIT<sup>112</sup> to provide peer support to HCs and HCTs through field missions, as well as by sharing learning and good practice between field leaders. It is the STAIT that has been particularly active in raising issues related to the centrality of protection, albeit with frequent participation from UNHCR staff as part of the STAIT teams.

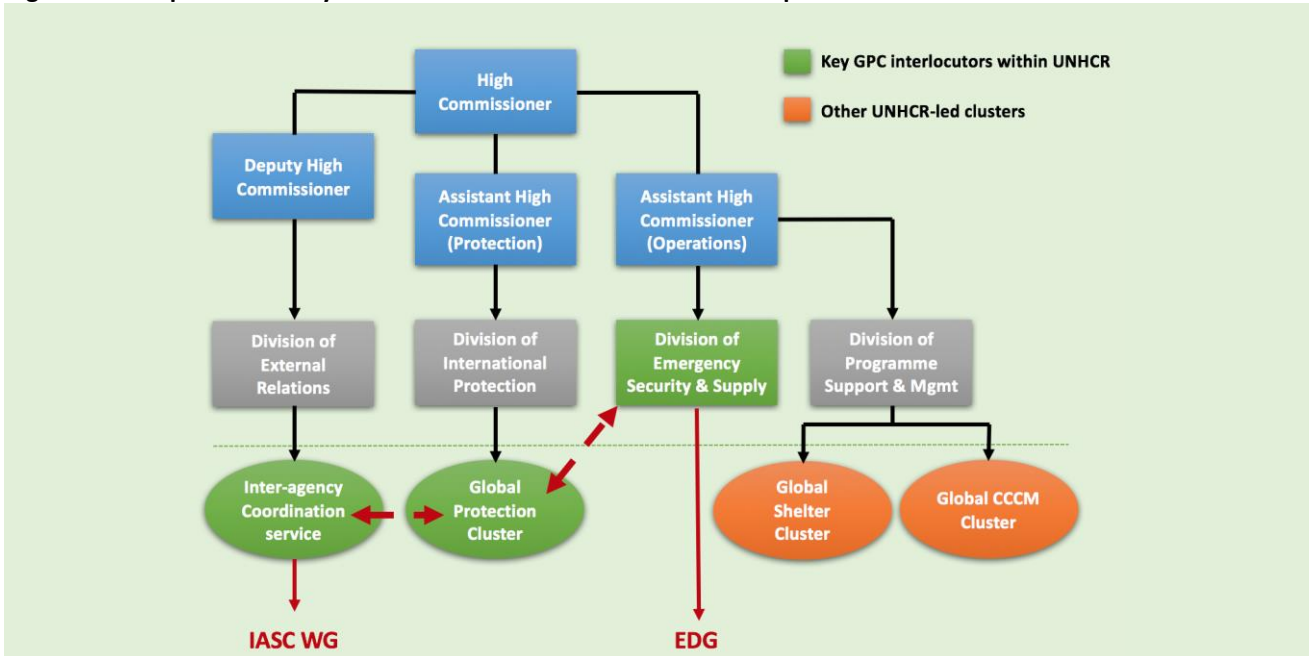
**The shared nature of UNHCR's advocacy for the centrality of protection has been important as global representation on protection is spread between different parts of the agency and key advocacy targets are diffuse.** The challenge that this presents to UNHCR is in ensuring adequate internal coordination to deliver consistent messaging. As Figure 28 shows, the Inter-Agency Coordination Service, the DESS and the GPC led UNHCR's representation in the IASC WG, the EDG and the IASC Protection Priority respectively. While there are informal links between each of these, there is no single forum to allow common messages to be developed, for feedback on protection-related issues or for regular discussion about plans and priorities and the GPC Coordinator lacks a formal link to the Inter-Agency Coordination Service and DESS. To address this, the GPC Coordinator and Inter-Agency Coordination Service have instituted a monthly meeting to strengthen internal coordination.

<sup>109</sup> IASC Protection Priority Task Team (2016) *Recommendations from Whole of System Review of Protection for action by actors other than the IASC WG*, Draft, 7 March 2016.

<sup>110</sup> GPC (2016) *Strategic framework*, 2016-19, UNHCR, p.8.

<sup>111</sup> For the period under evaluation, UNHCR has been represented on the EDG by Terry Morrel, Director of the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply.

<sup>112</sup> Since the initial drafting of the evaluation report, the STAIT has been renamed 'Peer2Peer Support'.

**Figure 28: The position of key GPC interlocutors across UNHCR's headquarters structure**

Between 2014 and 2016, the GPC Support Unit and the SAG (comprising GPC partners) coordinated advocacy, which offered significant latitude for members working at a global level to influence and support advocacy. It focused on working with a small number of engaged international NGOs (many of whom also co-led protection clusters) and UN agencies that had a specific focus on protection. This engagement between the Support Unit and SAG partners offered the potential to use agency resources to share advocacy responsibilities and was considered by many to strengthen its quality and to expand its reach. The disadvantage of the structure was that transaction costs were often high due to the frequency of the meetings and the challenges faced in reaching consensus on key issues.

Since the changes in governance structure, some of UNHCR's most significant protection advocacy partners have not been able to engage with UNHCR by providing input into GPC products and documents. Interviewees accepted the need for a balance between consultation and streamlined processes for producing outputs but felt that the GPC Operations Cell needed to be more consultative and inclusive so that GPC products are more robust and reflect different perspectives.

## 8. Conclusions

*This section provides a summary of answers to the evaluation questions and sub-questions, drawing on the findings from sections 4-7 and highlighting relevant lessons which can inform future practice.*

### 8.1 Effectiveness of field-level cluster coordination

**The effectiveness of UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the FPCs over the period under evaluation has been variable.** At their best, the protection clusters have been able to use the information gathered from sub-national clusters and inputs from cluster members to drive a strategic agenda which has prioritised analysis (Pakistan), contributed to the development of strategy (Afghanistan), and provided guidance on advocacy issues to the HCT, HC and key duty-bearers (Iraq). When measured against the six functions of cluster coordination, clusters were strongest in supporting operations and delivering advocacy on the protection of civilians. Where the clusters were the weakest was in determining strategic priorities, and monitoring their performance.

**Aside from HRP submissions, very few UNHCR-led clusters had strategies or work plans in place, which negatively impacted on the ability of the cluster to prioritise its activities and monitor its work.** While the lack of strategy or work plan had varied impact, at their most extreme, there were occasions when protection clusters had not fulfilled the aspirations of their members or those of the TA. The reasons for this are both internal and external to the cluster and include weaknesses in cluster leadership, challenges associated with cluster membership and coherence of the cluster, and a lack of engagement with the HCT.

**AAP is frequently considered to be a seventh function of cluster coordination and is considered to be one of the weakest aspects of the TA.** Although protection actors naturally tend towards good practice accountability because protection and accountability are inextricably linked, the evaluation found no explicit or consistent evidence of promotion of AAP by the protection cluster. Engagement with communities during the field missions highlighted the variability of agency accountability mechanisms which suggest that there is still much progress to be made.

### 8.2 Predictability of field-level cluster coordination

**UNHCR has strengthened its resourcing of the cluster with an increase in the number of dedicated posts at field level, particularly in large, complex emergencies. However, there have been some challenges faced in recruiting the right people with the right skills at the right time.** At the time the evaluation was undertaken, UNHCR's DHRM was in the process of addressing some of the most important issues and it will be important for the outcomes of these initiatives to be monitored to ensure that they provide satisfactory solutions. It is important to note that the countries in which protection clusters exist and are not family duty stations are frequently insecure which exacerbates the challenges of attracting and retaining high-quality staff. Despite these difficulties, there is evidence to show that for the period under review and for clusters which have already been activated, UNHCR has had some measure of success in ensuring that cluster leadership has been in place. Where gaps have occurred, these have frequently been covered on an interim basis by UNHCR staff or by surge staff from standby rosters.

**UNHCR has made mixed progress in its collaboration with its core cluster partners, cluster co-leads and sub-clusters. Key issues that have affected progress include a lack of clarity around division of responsibilities and how to effectively manage relationships with national and local actors.** While UNHCR routinely draws on the support of partners to deliver predictable leadership, this can be compromised by a lack of clarity about the division of responsibilities between the lead and co-lead, and uncertainties surrounding the configuration and reporting of the FPC and its AoRs. This lack of clarity also extends to PoLR responsibilities which undermines the predictability of UNHCR's leadership. While it is recognised that NGO capacity strengthening would be a challenge for UNHCR, given the dynamic contexts in which it leads the protection cluster, post-WHS there is now far greater global consensus on the need to make a step-change in engagement with



national and local actors. What is lacking is progress towards achieving these aspirations. For other key interlocutors including UN Missions and government representatives, UNHCR has been relatively successful in its engagement although there is still scope for greater clarity on how to effectively manage these important relationships. Collaboration with local NGOs and civil society groups is an area that is considered to be a weakness of the international humanitarian system although because of this there is significant potential for UNHCR to play a leadership role among peer CLAs in setting an agenda for transforming engagement of national actors.

**There remains a high level of confusion in relation to UNHCR's CLA responsibilities which can compromise the neutrality of the cluster.** Despite all CLAs communicating the neutrality of clusters in 2009, the evaluation found an inconsistent understanding of this by UNHCR globally and in Country Offices. While UNHCR has provided guidance on how to support the clusters, there were examples during the field missions of senior country-level staff taking decisions that placed agency interests over those of the cluster. More positively, there was also an example of lessons being learned about the importance of reinforcing the separation between UNHCR and providing greater independence and support for cluster operations. A final factor that has an important influence on predictability is planning for transition and de-activation; as temporary constructs and with sustainable coordination in mind, it is incumbent on all CLAs to ensure that plans are in place for cluster transition and de-activation.

### 8.3 Leadership and coordination of the GPC

**The increase in UNHCR's funding for the GPC and the associated increase in dedicated posts have considerably strengthened both its capacity and its autonomy from UNHCR.** Support to the field remains a strategic priority for the GPC and the increase in the capacity of the Operations Cell has enabled it to strengthen and diversify its activities, including by establishing a CoP, supporting field clusters with IM, and the provision of training. Although there is scope for the GPC to strengthen its dissemination of these, they have been well-received by FPCs and demonstrate significant improvements in the quality of the support provided by the GPC.

**UNHCR has paid insufficient attention to performance monitoring which is negatively impacting both global and field-level accountability.** At the field level, CCPM is rarely undertaken by the FPCs and there is currently no means of tracking whether FPCs are operating effectively. At the global level, there is scope for the GPC to strengthen the monitoring of its own work plan to include an assessment of progress against its global influencing priority and the quality of its field support. While it would be challenging to develop relevant indicators, it will strengthen accountability. The challenge of oversight of performance is also true of cluster coordinators. While the GPC Operations Cell is well placed to contribute to this, there is currently no way for it to do so.

**There has been mixed progress made by UNHCR towards strengthening predictability which has an impact on the GPC's efficiency and effectiveness.** At headquarters level, there has been progress made in the engagement between the GPC Operations Cell and the AoRs and relationships have been strengthened as a consequence. Despite this, there continues to be a lack of clarity in the relationship between the GPC and AoRs which has an impact on the GPC's efficiency (duplication of functions) and operational effectiveness (working towards shared goals).

### 8.4 Protection mainstreaming and advocacy for the Centrality of Protection

**The evaluation highlighted the challenges UNHCR faces in trying to mainstream protection.** Traditional approaches to field-based protection mainstreaming such as the dissemination of checklists and guidelines frequently fail to embed protection across humanitarian response, and inter-agency groups such as the ICCG rarely prioritise protection. However, progress has been made. The smartphone app developed by the Task Team has significant potential for uptake, and there are some encouraging examples of demand-driven engagement between the protection cluster and other clusters. While mainstreaming was considered to be an essential part of the FPC's role, it was often de-prioritised due to limited resources or lack of time.



**The period under review was defined by the publication of the IASC protection policy which benefitted considerably from the guidance and support of UNHCR for which they deserve credit.** By emphasising the IASC commitment to prioritise protection and to contribute to collective protection outcomes, and by clearly outlining key responsibilities, the policy provides much-needed clarity for operationalising the centrality of protection. This is all the more important as the findings of the evaluation echo the sentiments expressed by successive STAIT missions, that there is considerable work to do by HCT to strengthen its leadership on protection. While there can be little doubt that protection is considered *'important'* by HC/HCTs, it is not yet *'central'* and this is the change that now needs to occur. UNHCR has an important role in supporting the HC/HCT but to do this it needs to routinely have in place the capacity and organisation to provide strategic guidance.

**The focus by UNHCR in IASC-related fora in the period under review has been to strengthen consensus on the importance for placing protection at the centre of humanitarian action.** The evaluation highlighted the shared nature of this responsibility, which went far beyond the GPC, and there has been a unity of purpose from senior UNHCR staff. This has the potential to be further strengthened by improving linkages between UNHCR's representatives in each of these fora. Looking to the future, it will be important for the GPC to ensure that in its advocacy, it is role-modelling the collective approach endorsed by the protection policy. There is scope to strengthen consultation with its international advocacy NGO allies who have significant resources and networks of their own that can be used to support advocacy on the centrality of protection.

## 9. Recommendations

*This section outlines a number of recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness of UNHCR's cluster leadership alongside the organisation, department or division that is required to take action. The recommendations are prioritised and a reference is provided which links each to the relevant part of the conclusion and evaluation findings section.*

UNHCR's leadership of the protection cluster has made an important contribution to strengthening global leadership and advocacy on the centrality of protection and has provided important support to field coordination and delivery of protection programming. During the period under evaluation, the GPC has been strengthened and has undergone a re-organisation, and there have been efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and predictability of leadership at the field level. While progress has been made, there is still action that UNHCR can take to strengthen the performance of the cluster.

Since many of the findings are of a systemic nature, the recommendations may also be relevant for other clusters.

### 9.1 Effectiveness of field-level cluster leadership and coordination

#	Description of recommendation	Who is responsible	Priority level
1	<b>Ensure each FPC has clear performance targets.</b> In line with IASC guidance, UNHCR as CLA should ensure that each FPC has specific performance targets that include a strategy with an associated work plan and a commitment to use the CCPM on an annual basis. This would demonstrate effective management of the cluster and strengthen accountability.	FPCs and UNHCR Reps	High
2	<b>Promote routine establishment of Strategic Advisory Groups (SAGs) in FPCs with a clear mandate.</b> UNHCR should promote the routine establishment of SAGs in FPCs that is representative of its members and has a mandate to set strategic direction, agree policy positions, manage disagreements and monitor progress.	GPC Ops Cell and FPCs	Mid

### 9.2 Predictability of field-level cluster leadership and coordination

#	Description of recommendation	Who is responsible	Priority level
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3	<b>Provide guidance to strengthen understanding of UNHCR's CLA responsibilities to Country Offices.</b> There is a need to strengthen understanding of UNHCR's CLA responsibilities to Country Offices. Guidance should be provided which outlines the responsibilities of Country Representatives in managing the performance of cluster coordinators, and describes their role in facilitating the work of clusters in a way that is consistent with their neutrality and that allows effective functioning.	UNHCR HQ and DIP	High
4	<b>UNHCR should initiate a discussion with the AoRs with the objective of strengthening guidance on PoLR.</b> The existing guidance on PoLR should be developed further to provide unambiguous and unequivocal delineation of PoLR responsibility within the Protection Cluster specifically. This delineation should allow for different modalities in different contexts but criteria for such should be specified in the guidance.	UNHCR and GPC Ops Cell	High
5	<b>Act on feedback to strengthen the diversity of the protection cluster through developing guidance on improving cluster engagement with local actors.</b> UNHCR should act on feedback, received during the consultations for the 2016-19 strategy, on the importance of strengthening the diversity of the protection cluster. As part of its commitment to supporting localisation, the GPC has included local NGOs in its new governance structure. It is now important for this shift in emphasis to move from the global to the local. Therefore, the GPC Operations Cell should engage with the GPC membership to develop guidance for how the cluster can transform the way in which it engages with local actors which should address issues of representation in governance structures, leadership, capacity development and access to funding.	GPC Ops Cell	High
6	<b>Ensure that FPCs routinely have MoUs in place with all co-leads.</b> To ensure clarity on the respective roles and responsibilities of protection cluster leads and co-leads, and in line with IASC guidance, UNHCR as CLA should ensure that FPCs routinely have MoUs in place with all co-leads.	FPCs and UNHCR Reps	Mid
7	<b>Improve accessibility of key country-level documents.</b> In order to strengthen local engagement in FPCs, UNHCR should routinely translate key country-level documents into relevant languages. At a minimum, the GPC Operations Cell should ensure that core documents are translated into French, Spanish and Arabic.	GPC Ops Cell and FPCs	Mid
8	<b>Provide guidance for protection clusters on engaging government.</b> UNHCR as CLA should develop non-prescriptive guidance for protection clusters providing an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of government engagement in protection clusters.	GPC Ops Cell	Low

### 9.3 Leadership and coordination of the GPC

#	Description of recommendation	Who is responsible	Priority level
9	<b>Undertake a strategic review of the GPC/AoR relationship.</b> UNHCR should initiate a process to strategically review how the GPC/AoR relationship is structured with a view to clarifying and strengthening collaboration and maximising effectiveness and efficiencies.	GPC Ops Cell	High
10	<b>Improve recruitment processes and strengthen performance management and capacity building.</b> It will be important to continue and conclude the process initiated by DHRM and DIP to review the protection cluster coordination job descriptions and create separate protection cluster coordination group in the functional groups. UNHCR should also promote the participation of GPC Operations Cell staff in 360° performance reviews for protection cluster coordinators. The Operations Cell should initiate an annual CCPM process across FPCs as a means of strengthening the GPC's targeting of field support and training.	GPC Ops Cell, Regional Bureaux, DIP and DHRM	High
11	<b>Revise membership of the Protection Programme Reference Group.</b> The membership of the Protection Programme Reference Group should be revised to include representation from NGOs which play cluster co-lead roles.	GPC Ops Cell	High
12	<b>Include key performance indicators in annual work plans.</b> The GPC Operations Cell should develop indicators to measure progress against the implementation of its annual work plan.	GPC Ops Cell	High

## 9.4 Protection mainstreaming and advocacy for the centrality of protection

#	Description of recommendation	Who is responsible	Priority level
13	<b>Strengthen advocacy on the centrality of protection.</b> UNHCR should strengthen its advocacy on the centrality of protection by more formally including key partners and allies in the preparation of advocacy products. The GPC Ops Cell should set out a process for engaging with a small group of key advocacy partners.	GPC Ops Cell and FPCs	Mid
14	<b>Strengthen coordination of engagement and advocacy on IDP protection across the agency.</b> UNHCR's interlocutors with the IASC bodies are located in different divisions of the organisation and there is scope to strengthen the links between the Chief of the Inter-Agency Coordination Service, the Director of DESS, the coordinator of the GPC, the coordinator of the Global Shelter Cluster, and the Coordinator of the Global CCCM Cluster for the purpose of coordinating engagement and advocacy on IDP protection.	Executive Office, GPC Ops Cell, DIP, DESS, ICS, DER, DPSM	Low

**Part 3:**  
**Annexes**

## Annex 1: Evaluation terms of reference

### 1. Introduction to the Evaluation

#### Background

1. The Cluster approach was introduced in 2005 within the wider context of humanitarian reform in a process led by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC). The Cluster approach was designed in recognition of the fact that a lack of adequate coordination had previously hampered the relevance, timeliness, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian response. Defined as the designated responsibility for multi-actor sectoral coordination (typically to a single humanitarian agency but in some cases to two co-lead agencies), the approach was intended to improve emergency response through greater predictability and accountability, as well as stronger partnership between and among humanitarian actors. The Cluster approach includes nine areas of sectoral coordination and two common service clusters that enable the other sectors, as well as four Areas of Responsibility (or AoRs) within the Global Protection Cluster (GPC), in recognition of the unique coordination needs in this specialised area.<sup>113</sup>

2. UNHCR is the lead agency for the protection cluster and the AoRs within the Global Protection Cluster, and the AoRs' respective Focal Point Agencies are: Child Protection (UNICEF); Gender-Based Violence (UNFPA/UNICEF); Housing, Land and Property (IFRC/NRC); and Mine Action (UNMAS). UNHCR is also co-lead of the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster (CCCM) with IOM, as well as co-lead of the Emergency Shelter cluster with IFRC.

3. The Cluster approach is organised as a two-tiered structure, involving roles and responsibilities both at global and country levels. Each Cluster has either a designated Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) or a pair of co-CLAs, which are drawn from the humanitarian community both at the global level as well as in countries where the Cluster approach has been activated. At the global level, the CLAs are led by Global Cluster Coordinators (GCCs) or Cluster Co-Coordinators, and they are responsible for strengthening system-wide preparedness, technical capacity and operational support to respond to humanitarian situations, and for ensuring predictable leadership, accountability and partnership.

4. Clusters are activated only in those humanitarian emergencies where there is an identified gap in the enabling environment warranting clusters' activation and when justified around an identified need. Cluster activation is based on the following four criteria:

- ✓ Trigger event in the form of a new large-scale emergency or sharp deterioration and/or significant change in an existing humanitarian situation;
- ✓ Evaluation of national response and coordination capacity and/or national response to appropriately meet needs;
- ✓ Where humanitarian needs justify a multi-sectoral approach that the existing coordination and response mechanisms can no longer adequately address;
- ✓ The size of the operational presence (i.e., the number of actors and complexity of response) requires a sector-specific coordination mechanism if this does not already exist.

Clusters are activated if all the above criteria are applicable and are deactivated when all the activation criteria are no longer fulfilled.

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<sup>113</sup> The sectoral Clusters, and their respective Cluster leads are: Nutrition (UNICEF), Health (WHO), Water and Sanitation (UNICEF), Food Security (WFP/FAO), Education (UNICEF/Save the Children), Emergency Shelter (UNHCR/IFRC). The Cross-cutting Clusters are: Camp Coordination/Management (UNHCR/IOM), Protection (UNHCR), and Early Recovery (UNDP). The common service Clusters, and their respective Cluster leads are: Logistics (WFP) and Emergency Telecommunications (WFP).

5. CLAs are responsible for acting as the “provider of last resort when gaps arise in the sectoral area corresponding to their cluster. The “provider of last resort” concept denotes that CLAs are responsible for “ensuring that cluster members agree on operational strategy and clearly defined joint results, identify gaps, and prioritise and mobilise capacities to meet these gaps. Where necessary and depending on access, security and availability of funding. CLAs must be ready to ensure the provision of services required to fulfil critical gaps.”<sup>114</sup>

6. Since its inception, the cluster system has undergone reform, and the Transformative Agenda (TA) calls for agencies to improve cluster coordination. In 2011, the TA was the outcome of a review of humanitarian reform led by the IASC Emergency Relief Coordinator, and is a “high-level commitment by agencies to change and improve the collective response to emergencies.” The TA focuses on leadership, coordination and accountability to affected populations in the context of complex emergencies.

7. By designating a crisis a Humanitarian System-Wide Level 3 Emergency, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC), in coordination with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Principals, aims to mobilise the resources, leadership and capacity of the humanitarian system to respond to exceptional circumstances. An L3 declaration means that the IASC affirms that those crises require a system-wide mobilisation to significantly increase the scale of the response and improve the overall effectiveness of assistance; it is not a designation of the severity of humanitarian conditions.

#### UNHCR’s leadership role of the Protection Cluster

8. As a result of the TA, UNHCR committed to improve its leadership and coordination capacity in field operations. In concrete terms, this meant ensuring solid leadership, the deployment of experienced cluster coordinators in IDP situations, dedicating posts to this function and participating in joint needs assessments. In January 2013, an update on the TA clarified that the TA is not limited in application to L3 emergencies, but also to “other emergencies whatever the magnitude.”

9. The Global Protection Cluster includes more than 20 UN agencies and NGOs, and as the Lead Agency, the Coordinator is a UNHCR staff member. The GPC Steering Committee (SC) was established in 2012 to help ensure that the GPC functions effectively, fulfils its strategic objectives, and addresses relevant issues appropriately. It is chaired by the Global Cluster Coordinator. The Global Protection Cluster Operations Cell is staffed by UNHCR, DRC and ProCap, and is dedicated to field support. The GPC coordinates closely with the other clusters led by UNHCR (CCCM and Shelter).

10. The Global Protection Strategic Framework 2012-2015 sets forth a vision to meet the challenges of ensuring that the GPC and the other clusters respond to the needs of the country-level clusters.<sup>115</sup> To do so the GPC has refocused on strategic and operational gaps analysis, planning, assessment and results, and its mission is “to facilitate a more predictable, accountable and effective response by humanitarian, human rights and development actors to protection concerns within the context of humanitarian action in complex emergencies, disasters and other such situations.” The GPC strategic objectives for the period 2012-2015 are to increase support to the field and to increase global engagement on protection issues, adopting the IASC definition of protection, which is “all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee laws).” In order to implement the strategic objectives, the GPC committed to establishing a GPC Operations Cell, to revising the GPC structure to be commensurate with tasks, and to improve coordination through strategy, work plan, communication and meetings.

<sup>114</sup> See: Operational Guidance on the concept of “Provider of Last Resort”, IASC, 2008; Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at Country Level, IASC 015. <http://www.refworld.org/docid/4986da912.html>

<sup>115</sup> [http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/assets/files/about\\_us/GPC\\_Strategy\\_2012\\_2014-EN.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/assets/files/about_us/GPC_Strategy_2012_2014-EN.pdf)



11. The GPC has revised its strategic framework in an extensive consultation process carried out through 2015. The Strategic Framework 2016-19,<sup>116</sup> which is endorsed by the Emergency Relief Coordinator, responds to the recommendations of the Whole of System Review of protection in humanitarian action and other reviews by focusing the GPC on field support, innovation and inclusiveness of national and non-traditional partners.

12. There are 28 active protection clusters as of June 2016, of which UNHCR is the lead in 21. The majority of the active protection clusters are in the service of complex emergencies, and UNHCR is the cluster lead in the vast majority of those. In situations involving protection clusters in response to natural disasters the cluster lead is usually UNICEF or OHCHR. These situations may differ from conflict-induced displacement in terms of programming and context. A detailed list of current protection clusters is in Annex 1.

13. The IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination stipulates six core functions of a country-level cluster:

- (i) **Support service delivery** by: providing a platform that ensures service delivery is driven by the Humanitarian Response Plan and strategic priorities; and developing mechanisms to eliminate duplication of service delivery.
- (ii) **Inform the HC/HCT's strategic decision-making** by: preparing needs assessments and analysis of gaps (across and within clusters, using information management tools as needed) to inform the setting of priorities: identifying and finding solutions for (emerging) gaps, obstacles, duplication and cross-cutting issues; and formulating priorities on the basis of analysis.
- (iii) **Plan and implement cluster strategies** by: developing sectoral plans, objectives and indicators that directly support realisation of the overall response's strategic objectives; applying and adhering to common standards and guidelines; clarifying funding requirements, helping to set priorities, and agreeing on cluster contributions to the HC's overall humanitarian funding proposals.
- (iv) **Monitor and evaluate performance** by: monitoring and reporting on activities and needs; measuring progress against the cluster strategy and agreed results; and recommending corrective action where necessary.
- (v) **Build national capacity** in preparedness and contingency planning.
- (vi) **Support robust advocacy** by: identifying concerns, and contributing key information and messages to HC and HCT messaging and action; and undertaking advocacy on behalf of the cluster, cluster members, and affected people.

14. The terms of reference of cluster coordinators at the field level include advocating for protection mainstreaming in the humanitarian response; establishing coordination mechanisms, ensuring coordination with government counterparts and other relevant authorities; ensuring timely and effective needs assessments and ensuring that the protection cluster covers all identified protection needs of the affected population. The model terms of reference are included as Annex 2.

#### Previous Reviews, Evaluative and Learning Activities

15. In 2006, UNHCR undertook a lessons learned and effective practice workshop with regard to UNHCR's role in support of inter-agency response to situations of internal displacement. In 2007, UNHCR undertook a series of real-time evaluations of the IDP operations in Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Somalia, and Uganda.<sup>117</sup> The countries were chosen because all except Chad had rolled out the cluster approach in

<sup>116</sup>[http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/assets/files/about\\_us/GPC\\_strategy/gpcstrategicframework.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/assets/files/about_us/GPC_strategy/gpcstrategicframework.pdf)

<sup>117</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/46a4ad450/real-time-evaluation-unhcrs-idp-operation-eastern-chad.html>;  
<http://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/46ea97fe2/real-time-evaluation-unhcrs-idp-operation-democratic-republic-congo.html>;  
<http://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/46a4ae082/real-time-evaluation-unhcrs-idp-operation-liberia.html>;  
<http://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/46e927652/real-time-evaluation-unhcrs-idp-operation-somalia.html>;  
<http://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/46c1b8b92/real-time-evaluation-unhcrs-idp-operation-uganda.html>

the initial phase of UNHCR's role as cluster lead. A real-time evaluation of the operation for IDPs in Kenya was undertaken in 2008.<sup>118</sup> Recommendations from these evaluations included:

- ✓ Clarifying the roles of provider of last resort and “first point of entry”;
- ✓ Urging the government to expand its engagement in the cluster approach, particularly with regard to protection, and with regard to urban IDPs;
- ✓ Strengthening inter-cluster coordination mechanisms;
- ✓ Expanding partnerships with national actors, including governments and national human rights NGOs;
- ✓ Defining roles more clearly with OCHA, and clarifying the roles of UNICEF and UNFPA with regard to child protection and GBV within the protection cluster;
- ✓ Developing a closer working relationship with OHCHR and ICRC;
- ✓ Monitoring the impact of operational activities undertaken by the protection cluster, ensuring reporting to donors and seeking greater engagement of donors;
- ✓ Reviewing staffing to ensure more effective field presence, and more senior field presence, and that field staff should seek further support and training from the global cluster.

16. The IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation in 2010,<sup>119</sup> found that coverage of humanitarian needs had improved in some thematic areas, specifically including protection; that gaps in humanitarian assistance were better defined; and that duplications had been reduced. The ability of humanitarian actors to learn had been increased by peer review mechanisms, and there was more predictable leadership. However, challenges included that clusters often excluded national and local actors and failed to build on existing coordination and response mechanisms. In some cases, poor cluster management and facilitation prevented clusters from reaching their full potential, and clusters could be process- rather than action-orientated. A further challenge was inter-cluster coordination. These findings are similar to those of the real-time evaluations carried out by UNHCR in 2007.

17. The recommendations of the IASC evaluation were to:

- ✓ Identify existing preparedness, response and coordination mechanisms and support them;
- ✓ Strengthen cluster management and implementation modalities;
- ✓ Focus on strengthening the quality of humanitarian response;
- ✓ Focus on resources for cluster approach at the local level;
- ✓ Provide sufficient funding for cluster mechanisms; strengthening the role of provider of last resort; and
- ✓ Resolve outstanding policy issues at the global level, including links to peacekeeping and political missions.

18. Several evaluations of clusters have been undertaken in the last years: UNICEF undertook an evaluation of its cluster lead agency role for the Nutrition, WASH and Education sectors in 2012-2013;<sup>120</sup> WFP undertook an evaluation of its role as cluster lead in the logistics sector in 2011-2012;<sup>121</sup> and WFP and FAO undertook an evaluation of the food security cluster in 2013-2014.<sup>122</sup>

19. In 2013, the GPC commissioned a study on protection funding in complex humanitarian emergencies.<sup>123</sup> The study found that “value for money” is difficult to show in the context of protection, as protection is labour-intensive, and generally longer-term interventions are needed. These interventions are not seen as “life-saving” in the same way that healthcare, nutrition and water and sanitation services are, which in turn makes it more difficult to ensure consistent funding. It is also more difficult to demonstrate in

<sup>118</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/research/evalreports/48e5d90d2/lessons-learned-unhcrs-emergency-operation-internally-displaced-persons.html>

<sup>119</sup> <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/system/files/documents/files/Cluster%20Approach%20Evaluation%202.pdf>

<sup>120</sup> [http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index\\_CLARE.html](http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_CLARE.html)

<sup>121</sup> <https://www.wfp.org/content/joint-global-logistics-cluster-evaluation-terms-reference>

<sup>122</sup> <https://www.wfp.org/content/faowfp-joint-evaluation-food-security-cluster-coordination-humanitarian-action-terms-reference>

<sup>123</sup> <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/protection-funding-study-final-report-1.pdf>

quantifiable terms impact of protection interventions. In some instances, protection is not given sufficient emphasis in consolidated appeals, and at the country level, the cluster system can be competitive. The study found that the protection cluster had particular challenges related to the complexity of the subject matter and the sub-structure of the AoRs.

20. In 2015, the IASC undertook an independent whole of system review of protection in the context of humanitarian action<sup>124</sup> The review found a “significant gap between rhetoric and reality on protection,” and found weaknesses in the protection architecture. The report noted that the introduction of the protection clusters has raised the profile of protection and put protection mainstreaming on the agenda of other clusters, but that the protection cluster was performing inconsistently, and that UNHCR had not invested enough in cluster lead responsibilities.

21. The review addressed several recommendations to UNHCR and the GPC, including that the GPC Coordinator should be 100% dedicated to the GPC rather than also having other UNHCR responsibilities, and that the GPC staff should include NGO staff and UN staff dedicated to supporting protection clusters in the field. The review also recommended that the areas of responsibility within the GPC should be more integrated into an overall, agreed approach at the global and field level, and that SOPs should be developed to clarify roles, responsibilities and accountabilities between the GPC and the AoRs at both HQs and the field level.

## 2. Rationale for the Evaluation

22. During the 2013 High Commissioner’s Dialogue on Protection challenges, which focused on protecting the internally displaced, the High Commissioner committed to conducting an evaluation of UNHCR’s role in the protection cluster leadership. The evaluation of UNHCR’s performance in the GPC does not seek to duplicate the Whole of the System Review described in paragraphs 20 and 21, but rather to focus on UNHCR’s performance as CLA, at both global and country levels. The strategic framework for 2012-2015 sets out broad strategic objectives that can be assessed:

- ✓ Increasing support to the field; and
- ✓ Global engagement on protection issues.

23. UNHCR has invested considerable human and financial resources in fulfilling its CLA role since the cluster approach was rolled out in 2006, in implementing the Transformative Agenda. The Whole of the System Review has been completed, and recommendations are being implemented. Thus, it would be an opportune time to take stock of good practices and lessons learned, including on delivery of protection and mainstreaming of protection. A central theme of the 2016-2019 Strategic Framework of the GPC is ensuring the centrality and mainstreaming of protection. The overall strategic objectives are:

- ✓ protection is central to humanitarian action; and
- ✓ protection response is timely, of high quality and relevant.

### Subject of the Evaluation

24. This evaluation seeks to generate evidence regarding the extent to which UNHCR has effectively performed its CLA role, both at the county and global level. The focus will be on learning how the protection clusters at field level are supported by the GPC, and what lessons have been learned by UNHCR in field CLA situations.

### Users and Expected Uses of Evaluation Results

25. The primary users of the evaluation include HQ and country-level UNHCR staff and managers participating in cluster activities; senior managers of UNHCR, including in the Department of International

<sup>124</sup> [http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/final\\_whole\\_of\\_system\\_report.pdf](http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/final_whole_of_system_report.pdf)

Protection (DIP), the Division of Programme Support and Management (DPSM), the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply (DESS) and the regional Bureaux; the staff and managers of partner agencies participating in cluster activities at HQ and field level; and donors. By looking at UNHCR's track record of performance as the CLA, the agency will learn from past good practices and see what may not have worked in order to improve coordination and outcomes moving forward. The evaluation will strive for a mix of accountability (historic and summative) and learning (forward-looking and formative).

26. Secondary users include UNHCR's operational partners in the protection cluster and other collaborative entities. Since the protection cluster covers priority protection issues in complex emergencies, many readers beyond UNHCR are expected to reference this evaluation.

27. The absence of baseline data, which is often difficult to obtain in humanitarian settings, can prevent effective monitoring and evaluation. This evaluation should also yield recommendations on establishment of baseline data and monitoring going forward.

28. The evaluation will be placed in the public domain, and donors, member states and academic institutions will have access to the final publication.

### **3. Objectives and Purpose**

29. As noted above, the strategic objectives of the GPC include increasing support to the field and increasing global engagement on protection issues. The evaluation will assess to what extent these objectives are being achieved. A key inquiry of the evaluation will be whether UNHCR has the capability to fulfil this role with regard to the cluster, including assessing what good practices exist and what lessons can be learned from experience thus far. The evaluation is also expected to provide qualitative and quantitative evidence that can be used by UNHCR for advocacy efforts at the global, regional and country levels.

30. The focus on UNHCR's leadership role in the GPC and in country-level clusters aims to examine the effectiveness of sectoral coordination and inter-sectoral coordination, and ways to improve in the future, so as to further improve outcomes at the field level, and the level of protection and assistance to concerned populations. To attain this, the evaluation will examine the track record of achievements and challenges of the cluster at global and field level with regard to coordination, capacity building, support to the field and mainstreaming protection.

31. The evaluation will be participatory and collaborative in approach with an emphasis on informing future implementation in UNHCR. Persons of Concern will be included in the research methods, e.g. via focus groups and individual interviews. When possible, they will be informed of the findings and recommendations of the evaluation.

### **4. Scope**

32. The scope of this evaluation is UNHCR's role as a protection CLA at both the global and field level and the impact of UNHCR's interventions at both levels, covering the period 2012-2015, and taking into account the evolution of the GPC in that timeframe. Therefore, the evaluation will look at UNHCR's leadership and coordination of the GPC, and leadership and coordination at the field level, as well as the performance of other roles envisaged by the TA.

33. The evaluation will also examine, to the extent possible, the impact of the clusters in selected field visits, by assessing the effect of the protection interventions on the human rights of concerned populations. The evaluation will go beyond the IASC cluster approach evaluation, and it will include and emphasise the

views of concerned populations. The countries selected for field missions will be elaborated at the inception phase.

### Limitations

34. Limitations on data collection may be imposed by security constraints in many of the locations where the protection cluster has been activated. The same constraints may also limit the availability and quality of monitoring data. As the protection cluster is activated in many different contexts, data may not be easily comparable across the spectrum.

35. Donors are increasingly advocating for the use of impact evaluations in the humanitarian sphere. There are challenges to measuring the impact of protection impacts, particularly where there is not a comparator group, or where one is defined retroactively. Although it may be difficult to assess the impact of the GPC and the protection clusters at country level, the evaluation will attempt to gauge the outcomes for concerned populations.

## **5. Key Evaluation Questions and Criteria**

36. The criteria for evaluation of UNHCR's leadership of the protection cluster at the global and field levels include relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence/connectedness, coverage and impact. The critical questions are how effectively and predictably UNHCR has led the cluster at the field level; and how the GPC has supported the field clusters. What issues and factors enabled or impeded UNHCR's coordination of the Protection Cluster and performance of other roles envisaged by the TA? The results of this evaluation will attempt to illuminate strengths and shortcomings.

### Evaluation Questions

37. The questions should be geared to informing the evidence base at both the global and operational levels, and the questions below will be refined at the inception phase. The questions will focus on the protection cluster at the field level.

### Relevance

**Key Evaluation Question:** To what extent has UNHCR's leadership enabled better support to delivery of protection in cluster situations and to ensuring the centrality of protection in programmes?

#### Possible sub-questions, field level

- a. Have the tools developed assisted in needs assessment and analysis?
- b. What is the balance between coordination and delivery in terms of staffing and financial resources? What should this balance be?
- c. How can the work of UNHCR as CLA and UNHCR's delivery of protection be disaggregated?

#### Possible sub-questions, global level

- d. To what extent have recommendations from the previous evaluations been implemented?
- e. How relevant is the support of the GPC to field operations?

### Coverage

**Key Evaluation Question:** To what extent has the GPC enhanced coverage of protection needs, both geographically and in programme terms, through enhanced coordination?

#### Possible sub-question, field level

- a. How does UNHCR manage its dual role in situations where there is a CLA role and a refugee mandate?

Possible sub-question, global level

- b. Has the Senior Emergency Leadership Roster been useful in enabling the deployment of skilled protection cluster coordinators?

Efficiency

**Key Evaluation Question:** How effectively have the resources that have been made available to UNHCR been used in operations utilising the cluster approach?

Possible sub-question, global level

- a. What level resources are necessary at the global and field level?

Possible sub-questions, field level

- b. How effectively does the cluster work in situations that are under-funded?
- c. How has protection been mainstreamed, particularly with regard to the other clusters?
- d. How is UNHCR's engagement with IDPs linked to cluster leadership roles?

Effectiveness

**Key Evaluation Question:** To what degree has the GPC contributed to improved emergency response through greater predictability, accountability and strengthened partnership?

Possible sub-questions, field level

- a. How has UNHCR fulfilled its "provider of last resort" role when identified gaps have not been addressed?
- b. To what extent is the participation of affected communities and local actors included in planning and delivery of protection?

Possible sub-questions, global level

- c. Is there evidence of organisational change to ensure greater predictability, accountability and strengthened partnership?
- d. How effectively has UNHCR ensured the centrality of protection and accountability for protection as CLA?

Coherence/Connectedness

**Key Evaluation Question:** How clearly linked has the GPC's approach been with other relevant initiatives and partners, including the Emergency Directors Group (EDG)?

Impact

**Key Evaluation Question:** How well is UNHCR equipped to ensure that the protection CLA responsibilities will result in long-term coordination for enhanced response capacity?

Possible sub-questions, field level

- a. What are the results of the Clusters operations at the country level? Has the capacity of national actors been enhanced?
- b. To what extent did the lessons derived from previous evaluations and/or experiences inform decision-making?
- c. What has been the impact of capacity building activities at the global and country level? To what extent are national actors included in cluster activities and follow up?

Possible sub-question, global level

- d. To what extent is the GPC coordinating with the EDG?

Coordination



**Key Evaluation Question:** Has UNHCR provided competent guidance and appropriate leadership in its coordination role?

Possible sub-questions, field level

- a. Has the protection cluster promoted synergies to ensure the centrality of protection and avoided duplications, gaps and resource conflicts at the country level?
- b. What are the main coordination products?
- c. How do coordination mechanisms work at the field level? Do they detract from staff ability to deliver protection and assistance?
- d. What inter-cluster coordination mechanisms to enhance synergies have been put in place with the other clusters led by UNHCR?
- e. How effective is the co-leadership model at the field level?

Possible sub-questions, global level

- f. Has UNHCR developed predictable global collaboration with other UN agencies and with NGO partners?
- g. To what extent have the GPC and field level clusters worked effectively with partners at global and country level?
- h. What inter-cluster coordination mechanisms to enhance synergies have been put in place with the other clusters led by UNHCR?

## 6. Methodology

38. The evaluation will employ a mixed-methods approach, including qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as an extensive document and literature review. Mapping of the current monitoring data, multiple case study analysis and other comparative qualitative analysis techniques are suggested. As only a limited number of field visits will be possible, a survey of country-level clusters will be an important component of the methodology.

39. Key informant interviews will be an important component throughout the evaluation. Interviews and focus group discussions with stakeholders including relevant UNHCR staff, national authorities, NGOs, affected populations and host communities are encouraged as a data source. Consultations will ensure that diverse groups from affected populations are included, including men, women, boys, girls, and persons with vulnerabilities. Data from the different sources will be triangulated against secondary data to ensure rigour in the findings.

40. The evaluation will use the documents including the GPC Strategic Framework 2012-2015, and the GPC Strategic Framework 2016-19, as well as the background documentation regarding the consultations that led to those strategic frameworks, the GPC Work plans, the 2015 reference model for cluster coordination at country level, and the Evaluation Terms of Reference key questions as the analytical reference points against which to draw conclusions about the performance and outcomes of the cluster approach. The evaluation team will further refine the methodology and evaluation questions following the initial desk review and key informant interviews in an inception report. The inception report will specify the evaluation methodology, the refined focus and scope of the evaluation, including the evaluation questions, the sampling strategy and the data collection instruments.

## 7. Evaluation Work Plan

### Organisation and Conduct of the Evaluation

41. The evaluation will be managed by PDES and undertaken by a qualified institution, company or consortium, or organisation that is familiar with UNHCR's mandate, as well as its protection and programme

role and functions. The period to be covered by the independent evaluation team includes the 2012-2015 UNHCR programme cycle.

42. Norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group will be applied. The guidelines and methods set by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) should be followed. Evaluation criteria formulated by the OECD/DAC and widely used in humanitarian evaluations will be included.

43. A reference group will be convened to guide the process, including providing substantive and technical feedback on drafts of the inception and final reports, and identifying appropriate country operations for field missions. This group will include UNHCR staff from the Global Protection Cluster, the CCCM Cluster and the Emergency Shelter Cluster, regional Bureaux, as well as staff from UNICEF, UNFPA, UNMAS, OCHA, NRC, partner agencies and donors.

44. The evaluation should provide clear evidence and findings in a way that captures the complexity of protection concerns. The evaluation will be conducted in a staged approach, the first stage being an evaluability assessment to map data evaluability and constraints.

The most salient element of the evaluability pertains to the quality and availability of reliable data and access to stakeholders. Moreover, the ability to establish reliable baselines in rapidly evolving situations or among fragile communities of recently displaced people can make it difficult to measure impact.

45. The evaluability assessment will include a detailed stakeholder analysis to identify priorities and areas of concern to stakeholders, and will also explore the logical framework or frameworks and the results frameworks behind the global and country-level clusters.

46. The Inception Phase will also focus on refining the evaluation questions, defining methods, and detailing the delivery system and plan. It will also develop (a) the theory of change/logic to be used to gauge UNHCR's performance, and (b) determining whether it will be possible – and if so, how to assess the impact of the cluster for persons of concern.

47. The inception report should elaborate a detailed plan for the conduct of the evaluation, and provide an opportunity for the evaluation team to clarify any issues arising from the ToR. The inception report should include:

- a. A preliminary analysis of the context, intervention and stakeholders;
- b. Detailed evaluation methodology, including, if necessary, sampling strategy and qualitative comparative methods and any quantitative methods;
- c. A refined set of evaluation questions, if necessary;
- d. An evaluation matrix, setting out how each of the evaluation questions will be answered (criteria, proposed methods and data sources);
- e. A detailed schedule of activities and deliverables, designating who has responsibility for each.

48. The data collection and analysis phase will employ a mixed-method approach and will include a literature review as well as interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders including relevant UNHCR staff at HQs and country level, national authorities, NGOs, donors and affected populations. An important part of the methodology will be a survey to determine where and how UNHCR is engaged as CLA at the country level. Several country visits are envisaged in order to observe cluster activities. The selection of countries will take into account geographic representation, characteristics of the CLA arrangements, scale of need and funding response, and will be elaborated upon in the inception phase. Other country programmes will be subject to a desk review, including a survey and follow-up telephone and/or Skype interviews. Suggested countries include Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Sudan.

## Deliverables and Timeframes

49. The evaluation should be completed within eight months, from August 2016 to March 2017. The preparation phase is envisaged to take one month, the inception phase one month, the data collection phase four to five months and report writing one month.

50. The products include finalized terms of reference, an inception report, data collection toolkit (including questionnaires, a survey of stakeholders, interview guides, focus group discussion guides), a final evaluation report, an evaluation brief and a PowerPoint presentation of the findings. The executive summary of the evaluation report should be translated into French.

The proposed timeline for the deliverables for this evaluation is as follows:

Activity	Deliverable
ToR drafted	ToR finalized and Call for proposals Issued.
Call for proposals issued	Consultancy firm expression of interest.
Recruitment of consultants	Bids evaluated, Tender Awarded.
Initial desk review and briefing of consultants by PDES management team	Draft Evaluation plan with revised ToR, methodology and evaluation design
Comprehensive desk-based document analysis. Evaluability Assessment Selection of field visits	Evaluability Assessment
Focus group discussion/interviews between consultants and PDES, reference group, Geneva-based stakeholder interviews; preparation and reporting of initial findings; finalization of data collection tools	Inception report
Data collection; field visits	Presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations at stakeholder workshops.
Preparation of the first draft of the report	Revised draft report and recommendations
Review and analysis to comments.	Final report and recommendations
Preparation of revised final report and recommendations	Evaluation Brief
Dissemination of final report and recommendations through external stakeholder workshop	PowerPoint presentation Senior Management HQ Organisation of workshops and discussion on findings

51. In line with good evaluation practice, effective mechanisms are required to ensure that UNHCR's investment in this evaluation and the recommendations deriving from it will lead to improvements in the quality and impact of the organisation's work. In consequence, a formal management response will be required within two months of publication of the final report. The procedures and details setting out the requirements for the management response will be detailed in the forthcoming revision of UNHCR's evaluation policy.

## **Annex 2: Evaluation framework**

See overleaf.

Evaluation Questions/Sub-questions	Indicators	Data sources	Analytical methods
<b>KEY EVALUATION QUESTION 1: How effectively has UNHCR led and coordinated the Protection Cluster at field level?</b>			
<p>1.1 How well has UNHCR, as the protection cluster lead agency, performed the six core functions of cluster coordination at field level?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support service delivery</li> <li>• Inform HC/HCT strategic decision-making</li> <li>• Plan and implement cluster strategies</li> <li>• Monitor and evaluate performance</li> <li>• Build national capacity</li> <li>• Support robust advocacy (including mainstreaming of protection)</li> </ul> <p>What are the key factors that have facilitated and/or hindered UNHCR in performing the six core cluster coordination functions?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of performance against the IASC six core functions of cluster coordination, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Protection strategies</li> <li>○ Advocacy activities at national and sub-national levels addressing various stakeholders</li> <li>○ Support to the HC/HCT</li> <li>○ Timely and appropriate needs assessments and gap analysis</li> <li>○ Coordinated reporting on progress made by the protection cluster in achieving agreed results</li> <li>○ Preparedness/contingency planning</li> <li>○ Mechanisms to prioritise interventions and support cluster members to fill gaps in assistance</li> <li>○ Building the capacity of national actors</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with protection cluster/sub-cluster coordinators and members</li> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR field staff</li> <li>• Field-level workshops</li> <li>• Interviews with other cluster coordinators and inter-cluster coordinator</li> <li>• Country-level document review (e.g. strategy, needs assessments, preparedness plan, advocacy documents)</li> <li>• Interviews with HC, HCT members, donors, peacekeeping mission counterparts</li> <li>• Review of IAHE and STAIT mission reports</li> <li>• Protection monitoring and reporting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the evidence assessment tool</li> <li>• Analysis of spokes exercise from field-level workshops</li> </ul>
<p>1.2 In what ways has UNHCR created an enabling environment for AAP in the protection cluster and in inter-cluster fora?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that UNHCR/IASC guidance/technical support on AAP for protection clusters is being used</li> <li>• Evidence that the protection cluster takes account of AAP when prioritising funding and interventions</li> <li>• Evidence that UNHCR has raised issues relating to AAP in inter-cluster fora, including the HCT</li> <li>• Evidence that UNHCR's field-level advocacy messaging is based on data/feedback from accountability mechanisms</li> <li>• Evidence that affected populations have been involved in the planning and delivery of protection interventions</li> <li>• Evidence that the protection cluster collects, reports and uses age, gender and diversity disaggregated data to prioritise interventions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR staff, protection cluster coordinator, protection cluster members and HCT</li> <li>• Survey of protection clusters</li> <li>• Protection cluster and HCT documents</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with persons of concern</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the evidence assessment tool</li> <li>• Context analysis</li> </ul>

<b>KEY EVALUATION QUESTION 2: How predictably has UNHCR led and coordinated the Protection Cluster at field level?</b>			
2.1 To what extent has UNHCR provided timely and adequate (human and financial) resources to perform the six core functions of cluster coordination?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level and required profile of resources (i.e. Cluster Coordinator, support and information management; disaggregated capital vs field) provided by UNHCR to Protection Clusters</li> <li>• Emergency deployments (including commitments made under the IARRM and trends in standby partners/mechanisms in support of the GPC/FPC)/efficiency (i.e. time between request and deployment)/profile and reasonable continuity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR and protection cluster staff</li> <li>• Survey of protection clusters</li> <li>• Analysis of funding and human resource allocation</li> <li>• Profile of protection coordinators</li> <li>• Analysis of deployments – speed of deployment, appropriateness of candidates</li> <li>• Analysis of staffing presence /continuity</li> <li>• ProCap deployment records and reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the evidence assessment tool</li> <li>• Quantitative staffing assessment</li> </ul>
2.2 To what extent has UNHCR developed predictable collaboration and coordination with UN agencies, NGOs and other key partners (in particular those not participating in the protection cluster meetings) to further protection priorities?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of the effectiveness of country arrangements with cluster co-facilitators</li> <li>• Evidence of collaboration between protection clusters and AoRs</li> <li>• Evidence of inter-cluster collaboration</li> <li>• Evidence of coordination with key non-cluster partners</li> <li>• Evidence that protection cluster and AoR interventions create synergies and avoid duplication or gaps</li> <li>• Evidence that protection cluster and sub-cluster policies and strategies are consistent and mutually reinforcing</li> <li>• Evidence of effective collaboration with NGOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR staff</li> <li>• Interviews with cluster co-lead agencies, NRC staff, protection cluster staff, AoRs</li> <li>• Interviews with partners, such as ICRC, MSF, key donors, key national NGOs, and government counterparts</li> <li>• Interviews with UN Mission and peacekeeping staff</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the evidence assessment tool</li> <li>• Country context analysis</li> </ul>
2.3 What factors have influenced and contributed to UNHCR's capacity to act as 'provider of last resort' (when identified gaps have not been addressed by other cluster members or AoRs)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that protection clusters and sub-clusters have mechanisms in place to identify unmet needs</li> <li>• Evidence that UNHCR and AoRs proactively seek to address unmet needs as provider of last resort</li> <li>• Evidence of challenges with fulfilling the provider of last resort role</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR staff, protection cluster coordinators, sub-cluster coordinators, AoR staff</li> <li>• ProCap deployment reports</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the evidence assessment tool</li> </ul>
<b>KEY EVALUATION QUESTION 3: How effectively and predictably has UNHCR led and coordinated the Global Protection Cluster?</b>			
3.1 To what extent has UNHCR fostered coherent coordination and collaboration with and within the GPC, including with and between AoRs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that the GPC is well embedded in UNHCR structures at headquarters level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR and GPC staff</li> <li>• Interviews with AoR staff, OCHA</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that GPC's relationship with other parts of UNHCR has supported its functioning (esp. Inter-agency and DIP)</li> <li>• Evidence of GPC support and relationship to each of the AoRs</li> <li>• Evidence that GPC and AoR policies and strategies are consistent and mutually reinforcing</li> </ul>		evidence assessment tool
3.2 To what extent has UNHCR coordinated and/or contributed to support from the GPC to the field Protection Clusters?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of support provided by the GPC and by UNHCR to protection clusters (e.g. toolkit, field missions by UNHCR and GPC staff, targeted comments)</li> <li>• Evidence that GPC tools, including the Protection Cluster Toolbox, have assisted in needs assessment, analysis and capacity building at the field level</li> <li>• Evidence of effective ways of working between UNHCR and OCHA/NRC in the deployment of ProCap, (and other standby partners/mechanisms in support of the GPC/FPC)</li> <li>• Evidence that lessons learned from 2012-15 strategy and recommendations from previous evaluations informed GPC's 2016-19 strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR and GPC staff at global and field levels</li> <li>• Survey of protection clusters</li> <li>• Analysis of deployments from relevant rosters</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the evidence assessment tool</li> </ul>
3.3 To what extent has UNHCR fostered collaboration between the GPC and IASC Task Teams/Working Groups and represented the GPC in inter-agency fora?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of UNHCR engagement in IASC working groups and task teams and inter-agency fora on protection issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR, GPC, EDG and IASC representatives</li> </ul>	
3.4 To what extent has UNHCR provided timely and adequate (human and financial) resources to the GPC?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level and profile of resources (i.e. Cluster Coordinator, support and IM) provided by UNHCR to GPC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with GPC and UNHCR staff</li> <li>• Analysis of expenditures from FOCUS</li> <li>• Trends in use of ProCap and other rosters for GPC purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quantitative staffing assessment</li> </ul>
<b>KEY EVALUATION QUESTION 4: To what extent has UNHCR as cluster lead agency advocated for the centrality and mainstreaming of protection at global and field levels?</b>			



<p>4.1 What factors have been important to UNHCR coordination and advocacy for the centrality of protection at global level?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of UNHCR (as protection cluster lead agency) engagement on transformative agenda discussions</li> <li>• Evidence of GPC engagement with stakeholders (including other clusters) on ensuring the centrality of protection</li> <li>• Evidence of regular EDG/IASC engagement on issues of protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder workshop</li> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR staff</li> <li>• GPC monitoring of progress in achieving strategic objectives</li> <li>• Interviews with GPC, EDG and IASC representatives</li> <li>• Document review, including EDG and other meeting minutes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of decision-making criteria that led to strategy formulation</li> <li>• Context analysis</li> </ul>
<p>4.2 To what extent has UNHCR represented protection cluster views and advocated for the mainstreaming of protection at inter-cluster coordination fora and the HCT? What factors have shaped UNHCR advocacy for the centrality of protection at field level?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence that the UNHCR Representative and/or protection cluster coordinator have raised protection concerns and the mainstreaming of protection in inter-cluster and inter-agency fora, including HCT, peacekeeping mission meetings, humanitarian response planning meetings and inter-cluster coordination bodies</li> <li>• Evidence that other clusters, including UNHCR-led clusters, are mainstreaming protection</li> <li>• Evidence that mainstreaming of protection is reflected in humanitarian needs overviews and humanitarian response plans</li> <li>• Evidence of protection as a standing HCT agenda item, the existence of an HCT protection strategy and prioritised issues for advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews with UNHCR and AoR staff, cluster members, OCHA, HC, HCT, donors and peacekeeping missions (where relevant)</li> <li>• Document review, including HCT and inter-cluster coordination meeting minutes, humanitarian needs overviews and humanitarian response plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparative qualitative analysis through use of the evidence assessment tool</li> </ul>

## Annex 3: Documents reviewed

*This annex presents: (i) a list of documents reviewed during the evaluation; (ii) a summary of reports and grey literature referred to during the evaluation by type and field mission, and; (iii) a summary of country-specific reports that were reviewed for the field missions and desk reviews.*

### (i) Literature reviewed during the evaluation

- Arensen, M. (2016) *If we leave, we are killed: Lessons learned from South Sudan Protection of Civilian Sites, 2013-16*, International Organisation for Migration & Confederations Suisse.
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- GPC (2017) *The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action, a review of field and global clusters in 2016*.
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- GPC (2016) *GPC Community of Practice (CoP) – End of Year Report*.
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- GPC (2015a) *Global protection cluster strategic framework 2016-19 consultations at the Global Protection Cluster Retreat*, 30 September 2015.
- GPC (2015) *Global protection cluster strategic framework 2016-19 consultations in Nigeria*, 5-13 August 2015.
- GPC (2015), *Global protection cluster strategic framework 2016-19 consultations in the Asia-Pacific Region*, 23rd October, 2015.
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- GPC (2015), *Global protection cluster strategic framework 2016-19 consultations with the Ukraine Operation*, September 2015.
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- GPC (2015) *Global protection cluster strategic framework 2016-19 consultations with WFP*, Rome, 19 October 2015.
- GPC (2015) *Guidance on the humanitarian programme cycle for protection clusters*.
- GPC (2014) *Protection mainstreaming training package*.
- GPC (2013) *Diagnostic tool and guidance on the interaction between field protection clusters and UN Missions*, Draft, July 2013.
- GPC (2012) *Strategic Framework, 2012-14*.
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- OCHA (2016) *Global Overview of Coordination Arrangements in 2016, Global Analysis*, October 2016.
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- Richardson, L & Ververs, M. (2015) *Evaluation of the support provided by the global nutrition cluster to national coordination platforms*.
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UNHCR/OCHA (2014) *Joint UNHCR-OCHA note on mixed situations coordination in practice*

UNHCR/OCHA (2014) *Summary conclusions from discussions between UNHCR and OCHA on protection and internal displacement*, April 2014.

UNICEF (2015) *Cluster Coordination Guidance for Country Offices*. New York: UNICEF.

### (ii) Summary statistics for document review of GPC, IASC and UNHCR grey literature

Author	Description	#
AoRs	ToR, strategies and reports	23
GPC Advocacy	Advocacy alerts, SOP public messaging	5
GPC Community of Practice	Statistics, updates and reports	3
GPC Guidance notes	Advocacy, toolbox, donor dialogue, helpdesk, mainstreaming, training	6
GPC Support Mission	2010-2013, 2014-2017	17
GPC Protection Mainstreaming	Guidance documents and checklists	10
GPC Retreat	Meeting summary and online survey	4
GPC Task Teams	ToRs, policies and updates	8
GPC Work plans	2011, 2012, 2013, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017	8
IASC Working Group	Summary meeting minutes and documents	10
IASC Protection	Task team progress report	4
IASC EDG	EDG summary notes	8
OCHA	Cluster Coordination Protection Monitoring reports	5
ProCap	End of Mission Reports	15
ProCap	Annual reports, appeals, newsletters and training reports	13
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>139</b>

### (iii) Summary statistics for country-based document review

Author	Description										TOTAL
		Afghanistan	Pakistan	DRC	South Sudan	Honduras	Iraq	Nigeria	Philippines	Other countries	
Humanitarian country team	Humanitarian Needs Overview	3		1	4		2	2			12
	Humanitarian Response Plan	20	1	1	4	1	2	2	1		32
	Protection strategy				1		2			4	7
	Protection advocacy documents	2			1		2				5
Field protection cluster	Protection cluster strategy	3	2	1	4	1	10	2	3	8	34
	Protection cluster advocacy		5	1	3		16	4	5		34
	Protection cluster reports and updates		44	3	27	4	13	3	7		101
	ProCap reports & GPC support mission	1		1	3		1	5			11
	Protection co-leadership	2			2						4
	Cluster performance monitoring	4									4
	Cluster transition and exit		1						4		5
	Protection and accountability						1				1
	Protection mainstreaming	8		2				1			11
	Protection training			1							1
	AoR strategies, reports and advocacy	18			18		10		1		47
	Protection retreats and reflections	1	1		2			2	1		7
UNHCR	Protection reports and updates	7		2	2	5	18	1			35
Government	Protection strategies and reports		1								1

OCHA	Humanitarian context and updates	5	4	1	4	1	4		1		20
	Protection reports										0
	Common Humanitarian Fund	13			1		2				16
Other clusters	Reports and strategies					1			1		2
Peacekeeping	Protection reports and strategies	13			3						16
NGOs	Protection advocacy and reports	1			5		2				8
Other	Reports not listed above	24	5	4	2	6		2	3		46
<b>TOTAL</b>		125	64	18	86	19	85	24	27	12	460

## Annex 4: People consulted

*This annex presents a list of persons consulted during the different phases of the evaluation.*

### Headquarters and Geneva consultations (81)

Dina Abou Samra, Policy Advice and Planning. Section, Policy Development and Studies Branch, OCHA

Louise Aubin, Deputy Director, Division of International Protection, UNHCR

Greg Balke, Senior Advisor ODMS, UNHCR, Geneva

Katy Barnett, former Child Protection AoR Coordinator 2009-2016

Carol Batchelor, Director, Division of International Protection, UNHCR

Axel Bisschop, Deputy Director, Africa Bureau, UNHCR

Liz Bloomfield, Programme Manager-Protection, Humanitarian Policy & Practice, InterAction

Giorgia Brignone, Global focal point (Geneva), OHCHR

Stuart Brooks, HLP Sub-Cluster Coordinator Iraq, NRC

Aurelian Buffler, Chief, Policy Advice and Planning Section, Policy Development and Studies Branch, OCHA

Marlies Bull, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, Policy Development and Studies Branch, OCHA

Joel Charny, Director, NRC USA

Jennifer Chase, GBV AoR Coordinator

Michael Copland, Child Protection AoR Coordinator

Steven Corliss, Director, Division of Programme Support and Management, UNHCR

Dana Cristescu, Cashcap, GPC Operations Cell, UNHCR

Daisy Dell, Director, Regional Bureau for Asia, UNHCR

Sebastiaan Der Kinderen, Country support technical advisor, protection and rule of law, IRC

Shane Doherty, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA

Yasmine Elbehiery, Protection Officer – Field Support, GPC Operations Cell, UNHCR

Natacha Emerson, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, ProCap. OCHA

Ann Encontre, Deputy Director, Regional bureau for Africa, UNHCR

Liz Eyster, Chief of Section, Division of International Protection, UNHCR

Kemlin Furley, Head, Policy and Field Support and June Shirato, Senior Legal Officer, Regional bureau for Europe, UNHCR

Nicole Gaertner, BPRM

Eva Garcia Bouzas, Head, GPC Operations Cell, UNHCR

Benedicte Giaever, Director, NorCap

Betsy Greve, Principal Officer, Evaluation Service, UNHCR

Rachel Hastie, Protection Team Leader, Global Humanitarian Team, Oxfam

Christine Heckman, former GBV AoR Rapid Response Team

Belinda Holdsworth, Chief, IASC Secretariat

Melissa Horn, OFDA

Yukiko Iriyama, Senior Protection Officer, Regional Bureau for the Americas, UNHCR

Ayaki Ito, Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Asia, UNHCR

Arafat Jamal, Head, Inter-Agency Coordination Service, UNHCR

Bekim Kajtazi, Protection Information Management Officer, GPC Operations Cell, UNHCR

Erik Kastlander, Chief, Global Cluster Coordination Unit, UNICEF

Ajmal Khybari, Senior Policy Officer, Regional BBureau for MENA, UNHCR

Daniel Ladouceur, ProCap

Anne-Sophie Laenkholm, Global Thematic Coordinator – Protection, ECHO

Brian Lander, Deputy Director, WFP Geneva

Brooke Lauten, Protection Coordinator, NRC

Janey Lawry-White, former GBV AoR Coordinator 2011-2012

Jessica Lenz, Senior Program Manager, InterAction

Damian Lilly, Chief of Protection, UNWRA

Caterina Luciani, Associate Staff Development Officer, DHRM, UNHCR

Ingrid Macdonald, Deputy Director, Senior TA Implementation Team, STAIT

Ralph Mamiya, Team Leader, Protection of Civilians team, DPKO

Rachel Manning, Senior Donor Relations Officer, Donor Relations and Resource Mobilisation Service, UNHCR



Khelia Mbisamakoro, Mine Action AoR Coordinator, UNMAS

Roberto Mignone, Deputy Director, DESS, UNHCR

Terry Morel, Director, Division of Emergency and Supply Services, UNHCR

Milton Moreno, Operations Manager (Colombia Station), Regional Bureau for the Americas, UNHCR

Helen Morris, Senior Policy Development and Evaluation Officer, Evaluation Service, UNHCR

Panos Moutziz, Director, Senior TA Implementation Team, STAIT

David Murphy, Protection Mainstreaming Task Team Co-Chair/OCHA

Julian Murray, Independent Consultant

George Okoth-Obbo, Assistant High Commissioner-Operations, UNHCR

Gergey Pasztor, Protection Mainstreaming Task Team Co-chair, IRC

Daniel Pfister, Deputy Chief of Staff, OCHA

Claire Putzeys, Office of Policy and Resource Planning, BPRM

Daniela Raiman, Senior Policy Officer, CCCM Cluster, UNHCR

Roberto Ricci, Chief, Emergency Response Section, OHCHR

Dalia Rogemond, Protection Officer and Project Manager, GPC Operations Cell, UNHCR

Simon Russell, GPC Coordinator, UNHCR

Monica Sanchez-Bermudez, Information, Counselling and Legal Assistance, NRC

Craig Sanders, Deputy Director, Division of Programme Support and Management

Alexandra Schmitz, APO – Communication Strategy, GPC Operations Cell, UNHCR

Julia Schtivelman-Watt, Head of Service (ACMS) Division of Human Resource Management, UNHCR

Tanja Schuemer, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, IASC Secretariat

Jun Shirato, Senior Legal Officer, Regional Bureau for Europe, UNHCR

Tristen Slade, Counsellor (Humanitarian), Australian Permanent Mission to the UN

Victoria Sukhanova, Programme Officer, Resource Management Unit, DIP, UNHCR

Valentin Tapsoba, Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNHCR

Anh Thu Duong, First Secretary, Humanitarian Affairs, Swiss Permanent Mission Geneva

Volker Turk, Assistant High Commissioner-rotection, UNHCR

Miguel Urquia, Senior Emergency Shelter Coordinator, UNHCR

Laurie Wiseberg, ProCap deployee 2013

Leonard Zulu, Head of Legal and Policy Section, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNHCR

### **Afghanistan field mission (30)**

Ajmal Ahmadzai, Mine Action Sub-Cluster Coordinator, UNMAS

Safiullah Amarkhail, Child Protection Sub-Cluster Co-lead, Save the Children

Sayed Anwar Osmani, Assistant Protection Officer, Mazar, UNHCR

Charlotte Ashley, OCHA Cluster Coordination Support Unit Lead

Ramesh Bhusal, WASH Coordinator (UNICEF)

Mark Bowden, HC/RC/DSRSG, Afghanistan

Elisabetta Brumat, Senior Protection Officer (IDPs)

Gift Chatora, Head of Sub-Office, Mazar, OCHA

Farid Dastgeer, Child Protection Officer, Mazar, UNICEF

Fiona Gall, Director, ACBAR

Deputy Head of Officer, UNAMA Human Rights

Pia Jensen, ES/NFI Coordinator (UNHCR)

Thelma Kelechi Osili, Protection Officer, Mazar, UNAMA

Abdul Khaliq Zazai, Country Director, Accessibility Organisation for Afghan Disabled

Gwendoline Marsh, ex-APC Coordinator

Andrii Mazurenko, Information Management, UNHCR

Marco Menestrina, ECHO Technical Advisor

Niaz Muhammad Awan, GBV Sub-Cluster Coordinator, UNFPA

Alex Mundt, Assistant Representative (Protection), UNHCR

Marguerite Nowak, Refugee/Returnee Chapter (UNHCR)

Dr. Rik Peepkorn, WHO Country Representative

Fiamma Rupp, Child Protection Sub-Cluster Coordinator, UNICEF

Abdul Saboor Qadri, Head of Office, Balkh Province, DoRR

Gabriel Schickl, Programme Manager, ACBAR

Dan Tyler, Regional Protection and Advocacy Advisor for Asia, NRC

Zafeer Uddin, UNAMA Human Rights

Malangyar Ulfatullah, FSAC Coordinator (FAO)

Wahid Ullah Shinwar, Oxfam Humanitarian Programme Manager  
 Francesca Vigagni, Protection Officer, Mazar, UNHCR  
 Matthijs Zeilstra, Afghanistan Protection Cluster Coordinator, UNHCR

### **Pakistan field mission (59)**

Khalid Abbas, FDMA (PC Meeting)  
 Colonel Abdullah, TDP Secretariat, Pakistan Military  
 Laljan Afridi, Sawera (PC Meeting)  
 Mukhtar Ahmad, EHSAR (PC Meeting)  
 Sohail Ahmad, Child Protection Officer, UNICEF, Peshawar  
 Wisal Ahmad, AHO (PC Meeting)  
 Masood Ahmed, ACTED (PC Meeting)  
 Pervaz Akhtar, Sanjh Preet (PC Meeting)  
 Shah Alam, Hashoo Foundation (PC Meeting)  
 Nohweat Ali, M&E Officer, TRK (PWG Bannu)  
 Wajahat Ali, Senior Protection Coordinator, IRC  
 Fazal Amam, Umeed (PC Meeting)  
 Waheed Anwar, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, OCHA, Peshawar  
 Shaista Atta Ullah, Protection Mainstreaming lead, OCHA Peshawar  
 Shaista Attaullah, Humanitarian Affairs, Peshawar, OCHA  
 Aisha Ausari, Madadgaar (PC Meeting)  
 Sajid Ayaz, Child Protection Officer, PVDP (PWG Bannu)  
 Adnan Bin Junaid, Country Director, IRC  
 Caroline Birch, ECHO (PC Meeting)  
 Neil Buhne, Pakistan HC/RC  
 Sarah Coleman, Chief of Child Protection, UNICEF  
 Sarah Coleman, UNICEF CP Chief  
 Naeem Gaul, ECHO (PC Meeting)  
 Naman Gilliani, Program Manager, Qatar Charity (PWG Bannu)  
 Inna Gladkova, Protection Officer, UNHCR  
 Farid Gul, GBV Sub-Cluster Coordinator, UNFPA  
 Muhammad Harood, Sanjh Preet (PC Meeting)  
 Habibul Hassan, HRCP (PC Meeting)  
 Saida Imayet, ITAC (PC Meeting)  
 M Danish Iqbal, District Admin Officer, SRSP (PWG Bannu)  
 M Javed, Aman (PC Meeting)  
 Rafiullah Khalil, IRC (PC Meeting)  
 Amjad Khan, M&E Officer, Majaz Foundation (PWG Bannu)

Bilal Khan, Assistant Chief Operations, Child Protection and Welfare Commission, Social Welfare, GoP Peshawar  
 Kamran Khan, Project coordinator, Age & Disability Task Force, HelpAge International  
 Khalid Khan, Director General, FATA Disaster Management Agency, Peshawar  
 Nargis Khan, Policy and Communication Advisor, PHF  
 Ana Maria de Asis-Leal, Programme Specialist for Humanitarian Affairs, UNFPA  
 Oscar Mundia, Head of Office, UNHCR Peshawar  
 Penelope Laetitia Muteteli, Protection Cluster Coordinator Peshawar, UNHCR  
 Ahmad Narrat, AHO (PC Meeting)  
 Hadia Nusrat, Gender Equality Advisor for UN Country Teams (Afghanistan and Pakistan), UN Women  
 Hadia Nusrat, UN Women (seconded) GHA  
 Naem Qazir, Sharaed (PC Meeting)  
 Atif Quddus, PRDP (PC Meeting)  
 Muhammad Raman, PRSP (PC Meeting)  
 Indrika Ratwatte, Representative, UNHCR  
 Aybad Shah, HOPE (PC Meeting)  
 Umar Shah, Shared (PC Meeting)  
 Norena Shaheen, Livelihood Officer and Protection Focal Point, IDEA (PWG Bannu)  
 Johann Siffointe, Deputy Representative, UNHCR  
 Lubna Tajik, Programme Analyst, UNFPA  
 Tareq Talahma, OCHA Head of sub-office, Peshawar  
 Hifsa, TRE (PC Meeting)  
 Iofan Ul Din, Program Manager, Prepared (PWG Bannu)  
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 Heli Uusikyla, OCHA Head of Office, Islamabad

### **DRC field mission (44)**

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 Alexandra Blason, RRMP Coordinator, UNICEF  
 Guy Bleoue, Country Director, Danish Refugee Council  
 Herman Chelo, ECHO  
 Nicolas Coutin, Roving Senior Protection Officer, ProCap/GPC

Ernest Dabire (Dr.), WHO, Health Cluster Coordinator

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Alain Decoux, Head of Unit Humanitarian Funds, OCHA

Marijke Deleu, former protection policy advisor, Oxfam

Rokya Diakite, North Kivu Protection Cluster Coordinator, UNHCR

Ann Encontre, Regional Representative, UNHCR

Alphonse, Focal Point for the protection cluster, JUJITEGEMEE

Priya Gajraj, UNDP Representative, HCT member UNFPA Goma (SGBV cluster)

UNHabitat Goma (Shelter cluster)

UNMAS Goma (Mine Action Cluster)

UNICEF: GTPE and GTAMS

Chloe Jaffres, Protection Project Manager, Intersos

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Melanie Kesmaecker, Protection Programme Lead, Oxfam

Mme. Diene Kieta, UNFPA Representative/Coordination du Groupe de Travail Violence Basée sur le Genre, membre HCT

Francois Landiech, Premier Secrétaire, Ambassade de Suede, DRC

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Cluster Leads UNICEF, Nutrition, Education, WASH, Kinshasa DRC

Aurore Mathieu, Humanitarian and Protection Policy Advisor, Oxfam

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Ms. Hiroko Nagao, UNMAS Groupe de Travail Lutte Anti-mine coordonnée conjointement

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Guelnoudji Ndjekoukousse, Protection Cluster Coordinator, UNHCR

Guy Onambebe, Food Security Cluster Coordinator, Eastern DRC

Mr Papy, CCLAM Ministre de l'Intérieur RDC, Head of the MRE dept, Cellule de Coordination de Lutte Anti-mine

Mr Rein Paulsen, Chef de Bureau, OCHA

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Taban Chris Duke, Head of Protection, Humanitarian Development Consortium

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Tom Harrison-Prentice, Technical Expert, ECHO, South Sudan

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Marisol Calix, IOM

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Juan Wilfredo Castennanos, CONADEH, San Pedro Sula

Katherine Catamuzkany, Country Director, NRC

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Child Fund, Tegucigalpa (PWG FGD)

Cecilia Ganoza, IOM (PWG meeting)

Dr Ubaldo Herrera, Casa Alianza

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 Lorena Nieto, Protection Officer/PWG coordinator, Tegucigalpa, UNHCR  
 Erlin Palma, OCHA (PWG meeting)  
 Marvin Pineda, Children International (PWG meeting)  
 Sphere Project, Tegucigalpa (PWG FGD)  
 Martha Reyes Lira, Director Mayors Children Women and Family Office San Pedro Sula  
 Karla Rivas, Eric-SJ (PWG meeting)  
 Jessie Sanchez, Casa Alianza (PWG meeting)  
 Isis Saucedo, CIPPDV  
 Pamela Silva, Directorate for children family and adolescents, DINAF  
 OHCHR, Tegucigalpa (PWG FGD)  
 Trocaire, Tegucigalpa (PWG FGD)  
 UNFPA, Tegucigalpa (PWG FGD)  
 WFP, Tegucigalpa (PWG FGD)  
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 Lincoln Villanueva, Director, CONADEH, Tegucigalpa  
 Julio Vindel, IOM (PWG meeting)  
 World Vision, Tegucigalpa (PWG FGD)  
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 John Drollinger, GBV Sub-Cluster Co-lead, IMC  
 Richard Evans, Shelter Coordinator, UNHCR  
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 Sara Rijavec, Mine Action Sub-Cluster Coordinator, UNMAS  
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Vian, Director, Erbil Joint Crisis Coordination  
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### **Nigeria desk review consultations (10)**

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Peter Lundberg, Deputy Humanitarian  
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Brigitte Mukanga Eno, Deputy Representative and  
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Maclean Natugasha, Senior Programme  
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Vincent Omuga, Humanitarian Affairs Officer,  
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Anil Raghuvanshi, Child Protection in Emergencies  
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Joe Read, Independent Consultant  
Rafaelle Robelin, shelter/NFI & CCCM sector  
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### **Philippines desk review consultations (9)**

David Carden, OCHA Head of Office  
Luiza Carvalho, Humanitarian Coordinator  
Eilish Hurley, PC Coordinator Tacloban  
Arjun Jain, Head of UNHCR Ops  
Atty. Cecilia Jimenez, National Director of  
Commission on Human Rights (CHR)  
Anne Landouzy, PC Coordinator, Manila  
Roberto Mignone, National PC Coordinator  
(Roving)  
Sophie Muller, PC Coordinator, Manila  
Yasser Saad, Deputy Representative



## Annex 5: Focus group discussion guidelines

*This section presents focus group discussion guidelines developed by the evaluation team for the evaluation field visits.*

### SECTION ONE: OVERVIEW

#### Purpose of GPC Evaluation Community Engagement on AAP

The evaluation methodology recognises that it will be extremely difficult to attribute community perspectives on protection issues directly to GPC functionality.<sup>125</sup> For this reason, community interaction will be used to look at good practice accountability in protection programming. The evaluation will specifically seek to visit projects where UNHCR partners/Protection Cluster partners are implementing interventions with what is considered to be strong AAP approaches.<sup>126</sup>

As the methodology includes sex- and age-disaggregated discussions, the methodology will focus on equality of participation: so whether participation in programme design and implementation, access to information, and knowledge of and access to feedback mechanism are equally available across men, women, boys and girls. An adapted participatory ranking will be used whereby participants will be asked to show by raising 1-5 fingers their level of participation. Within each sex- and age-disaggregated group, responses will be collated for each question and then the average per group can be compared to the other groups to provide a quick snapshot quantitative understanding of equality of participation.

#### Specific Principles for UNHCR Evaluation Team

- FGDs are “semi-structured”; interviewers should not read the questions as a list, but rather the questions are a guidance to allow conversation to flow naturally
- For this evaluation purpose “people from similar backgrounds or experiences” will be understood as sex and age-disaggregated
- Groups: Older Adolescent girls/young women:<sup>127</sup> 15-24, Older Adolescent boys/young men: 15-24, Women: over 25, Men: over 25

*Note: 15-24 is UN “youth definition” and it is important to allow young people the opportunity to speak honestly which normally cannot be done in front of the older generation. It is generally considered appropriate to engage adolescents aged 15 and above are generally okay to interview: CPIE Minimum Standards and other ethical guidelines strongly dissuade interviewing younger children unless there is no other way that particular information can be obtained due to the very high risk of doing harm, and then only by evaluators highly experienced in child protection issues.*

*WHO Scientific and Research Group ethics of child participation: Parents and guardians have a legal and ethical responsibility to protect very young and dependent adolescents and to provide them with preventative and therapeutic care. If the results of an assessment will lead to an improvement in preventative and therapeutic care then parents/guardians should not oppose assessment. Parents/guardians generally do not have the legal power to overrule older (mature/competent) adolescents who wish to participate. (but local law and parents’ understanding of parental rights should be respected). The goal of the assessment must be to obtain information that is relevant to adolescents’ health needs and well-being and it must relate to information that could not reliably or accurately be gained from adult sources. The risk of conducting assessment must be considered low in comparison with benefit that will be obtained with the information.*

<sup>125</sup> There was an initial intention to ascertain protection needs from men, women, boys and girls and triangulate this understanding with country-level protection cluster strategies to contextualise the relevance of those strategies and resulting activities. However, the pilot mission in Afghanistan highlighted the challenges with this approach given the uniquely different needs communities have based on being displaced (or not) from different places, at different times, and in different conditions, resulting in different protection needs.

<sup>126</sup> As this methodology was only adapted after the pilot mission in Afghanistan, only five countries will be included.

<sup>127</sup> In some contexts it is appropriate/necessary to speak with married adolescent girls/young women and unmarried adolescent girls/young women separately.

**(1) Logistics considerations***UNHCR Country Office preparation*

Find a Protection Cluster partner willing to host a visit to a project with self-identified good accountability practices willing to host a visit from the evaluation team as per the intention, methodology, and logistics as set out in this note. *It should be noted by UNHCR and explained to the project partner that the evaluation team is not conducting an evaluation of the partner or the project, but simply attempting to collect good practice examples of accountability in practice within protection programming. There is no need for concern on behalf of the partner and the evaluation team will be willing to share the findings with the project partner for their learning and support.*

*Preparation and set up*

- maximum 10 people of the same demographics (sex and age as per above) per group
- a quiet, private area where the group is comfortable and where other people do not wander in or out or interrupt
- same polite rules as in a workshop, evaluation staff and translators to turn off mobile phone and give full attention to the group for the duration of the FGD<sup>128</sup>
- the evaluation team and the translators to be fully conversant and comfortable with the FGD questions before the FGD starts

*Introduction - explain at beginning:*

- who we are (introduce everyone), and we greatly appreciate everyone's time – it will take approximately one hour
- what we are doing and why
- no one has to participate if they do not want to, and no one has to answer any questions they do not want
- that this will not lead to immediate further assistance but will be able to inform future programming
- that we will be taking notes only as we want to remember what people are telling us, but everything is anonymous and we are not recording peoples' names: the information gathered will all be anonymous and will only go to UNHCR or their partners to help them improve their assistance and protection in the future
- *generally, the provision of small snacks and drinks is appreciated*

*General rules*

- the FGD should be conducted in the language people are most comfortable with
- the translator to translate everything that everyone says (even if it is a repetition of other comments)
- only one person should be running the FGD even if there are other people there translating or taking notes – this should be clear before the FGD starts
- do not give information you are not clear on
- do not read out the list of questions – this is a *discussion*, not an interview – so be flexible, jump around the questions, as long as the majority are covered it is fine
- if some people are not comfortable with the ranking section, or do not understand it, do not force the issue – make an estimate of the average score of those that do participate and note the number who have abstained.

**(2) Ethical considerations**

The quality of data we collect depends on

- ✓ **What we ask** – what questions are we asking?

<sup>128</sup> Note that these rules apply to the evaluation team and the translators, NOT to the participants. An FGD is not a workshop and we treat FGD participants with respect as community members who are freely giving their time to talk with us, not as staff members.

- ✓ **Who** we ask – are we asking women/men/boys/girls separately - *what about other key vulnerable groups such as PwD, how do we ensure their opinions are heard? What about different ethnic, religious, caste, linguistic or tribal groups?*<sup>129</sup>
- ✓ **How** we ask – are we asking questions in a compassionate/respectful manner?
- ✓ **How** we record, collate, analyse and interpret the information collected
- Do no Harm.
- Children – see above - CPIE Minimum Standards and other ethical guidelines strongly dissuade interviewing younger children unless there is no other way that particular information can be obtained due to the very high risk of doing harm: even then we would need to ensure all members of the team including all translators have extensive experience in child protection matters and that is not feasible within this evaluation.
- PwD and/or other minority, excluded, or vulnerable groups – how will we make sure their voices are heard?
- What if recent or ongoing abuse is reported during the FGD? Specifically, as we are asking about protection issues: the Facilitator/Translator should know in advance at what point they will suspend the FGD and secure assistance for a recent survivor – if this comes up during the discussion – and to know from local staff where such assistance is available.

### (3) Recording considerations

Everyone takes notes in different ways. However, all FGDs should be written up against the agreed template of FGD questions (see below).

## SECTION TWO: SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY

### *Introduction (10 min)*

1. Introduce yourself and the reason you're there (who, what data will be used for, we appreciate peoples time, nobody has to participate or answer any questions, everything will be kept confidential, anyone can leave at any time, we will be making notes but not writing down people's names or who said what).
2. Ask participants to introduce themselves by name and, if youth group, their age (record the ages- don't need to record the names).

### *Questions*

1. **Tell me what you know about this project [project X by organisation X] introductory question (15 mins)**
  - a. What information do you have about the implementing organisation?
  - b. What do you know about the project – (aims, activities, duration, budget)?
  - c. Who is the project seeking to reach/target?

**PARTICIPATORY RANKING – 1-5 WITH FINGERS: 1 BEING LOW AND 5 BEING HIGH**

2. **How have you participated in the project? (15 mins)**
  - a. How involved were you in the project design?
  - b. How equally were different members of the community (men, women, boys, girls, PwD etc) involved in the project design?
  - c. In what ways are you involved in the implementation of the project?
  - d. How equally are different members of the community (M, W, B, G, PwD etc.) involved in implementation?
  - e. Have you been involved in monitoring the project – how?
  - f. How equally are different members of the community (M, W, B, G, PwD etc.) involved in the monitoring

<sup>129</sup> We cannot ask for separate FGDs with these demographics but we should ask UNHCR partner staff who are setting up the FGDs to a) try and make them as inclusive as possible and b) ensure we are able to speak 1-on-1 with any representative of distinct groups such as a representative of a local PwD group

**PARTICIPATORY RANKING – 1-5 WITH FINGERS: 1 BEING LOW AND 5 BEING HIGH**

- 3. How easy is it to feedback to organisation X, ask questions, or make a complaint?** (15 mins)
- Can you tell me the different ways you can provide feedback [to organisation X]? If so, how? (hotline, helpdesk, staff in community, through community leader, complaints boxes etc). Which do you prefer?
  - Have you provided any feedback or made any complaints?
  - How easy is it for different members of the community (men, women, boys, girls, PwD etc) to give feedback?

**PARTICIPATORY RANKING – 1-5 WITH FINGERS: 1 BEING LOW AND 5 BEING HIGH**

- 4. If you have provided feedback, what has been the response? Have changes been made to the project as a result of the feedback provided by the community?** (15 min)
- How was the response given to you?
  - Did the response/action taken satisfy your question / complaint?
  - Do you think questions/complaints from all members of the community are equally listened to?

**PARTICIPATORY RANKING – 1-5 WITH FINGERS: 1 BEING LOW AND 5 BEING HIGH**

**5. Wrap-Up**

- Thank people for their time.
- Ask if anyone has any questions for us [allow those questions to be answered if even they are questions asking for more services, more help, but do not respond with any promises].
- Once the FGD is finished, ensure that UNHCR and/or the IP will follow up with any specific issues raised by any individual.

## Annex 6: Online survey questions

*This section presents the questions developed by the evaluation team for the online survey, followed by a summary of the quantitative survey results.*

### A. Online survey questions

**1. Which of the following options best describes your role in the cluster (please select a single answer)?**

- Cluster Coordinator (UNHCR)
- Cluster co-lead/co-facilitator
- AoR/Sub-cluster lead
- Protection cluster member

**2. In what region are you based (please select a single answer)?**

- Middle East
- Europe
- Africa
- Asia
- Americas

**3. How would you describe the organisation that you are representing in the protection cluster (please select one option from the list)?**

- International NGO
- National or local NGO
- UN agency
- National or local authority

**4. How would you assess the performance of the protection cluster against the following six core functions of cluster coordination (please fill in one box in each row)?**

	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor
1. Has agreed strategic priorities for the cluster AND sub-clusters and addressed duplication					
2. Has engaged with the HC/HCT to inform decision-making on protection-related issues					
3. Has developed a strategic plan for the protection cluster with objectives and measurable indicators					
4. Has identified advocacy issues and undertaken advocacy activities on protection					
5. Has monitored the implementation of the protection cluster strategy and reported on results					
6. Has put protection contingency planning and preparedness in place					

**5. How successfully has the protection cluster promoted an enabling environment for accountability to affected people (please fill in one box in each row)?**

	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor
1. By advocating for and applying mechanisms for cluster members to					

consult and involve affected people in decision-making					
2. By advocating for and supporting cluster members to receive, investigate and act on complaints received from affected people about the assistance they receive for the cluster members					
3. By promoting the engagement of cluster members with people in a manner that is sensitive to age, gender, and diversity					
4. By promoting the IASC Preliminary Guidance note on protection and AAP within the cluster					
5. By advocating for members of other clusters to routinely adopt actions 1 – 4 above in their programmes					
6. By promoting collective mechanisms of accountability within the Inter-cluster coordination team and Humanitarian Country Team					

Please list other ways in which the cluster has promoted AAP and how successful they have been  
 [comment box here]

**6. How would you assess UNHCR's ability to get the right cluster coordinators at the right time for the right duration (please select one option for each row)?**

	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor
1. Capacity of the UNHCR cluster coordinator (the right person)					
2. Avoiding gaps in staffing (at the right time)					
3. Occupying the post for a reasonable period of time (for the right duration)					

**7. Do you think that the way the field protection cluster is currently set up, with the cluster coordinator responsible for oversight of the four sub-clusters (housing land and property, mine action, child protection, gender-based violence), is the optimal configuration?**

- Yes
- No

If you answered 'No', how do you think the structure could be strengthened?  
 [comment box here]

**8. The existence of a cluster and AoRs/sub-clusters adds an additional layer of complexity. How successful do you think the protection cluster has been at country level in ensuring that its different parts coordinate between themselves and in defining a single strategy for the cluster as a whole (please select the option that most closely matches with your experience)?**

- Very successful
- Successful
- Unsuccessful
- Failed

**9. What role do national actors (governmental and non-governmental) play in your protection cluster (please select the role played by each from the options provided)?**



Co-leadership    Co- facilitator    Member    Observer    Do not participate

Participation of local/national NGOs in the cluster at country level

Participation of local/national NGOs in the sub-national level cluster

Participation of government in the cluster at national level

Participation of government in the sub-national cluster

How appropriate do you consider government participation to be, given the potential for sensitivities about protection-related issues, particularly in conflict-affected countries?

[comment box here]

**10. What proportion of the members in the protection cluster you attend (NOT the AoRs/sub-clusters) are national or local actors (please select a single option from the list)?**

- 0-25%
- 25-50%
- 50-75%
- 75-100%

**11. How effective do you consider efforts made by the protection cluster to mainstream protection to be in challenging and changing the behaviour of the humanitarian community (please select one option from each row - if the approach has not been used by the cluster, please select the box 'the cluster has not used this approach')**

	Extremely effective	Effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Ineffective	Failed	The cluster has not used this approach
1. The preparation of sectoral guidance and checklists						
2. Training of protection cluster members or members from other clusters						
3. Targeted coaching and/or mentoring of national/international staff						
4. Proposal screening and review for other clusters						
5. Review of pooled funding/Humanitarian Response Plan submissions						
6. Support for the design of cross-sectoral assessment methodologies						

Please indicate any other efforts not mentioned above and specify how effective you think they are  
[comment box here]

**12. Overall, how would you assess the effectiveness of the protection mainstreaming efforts of your protection cluster (please select one option)?**

- Excellent
- Good
- OK
- Poor

- Very Poor

**13. How would you assess the effectiveness of your protection cluster's capacity building efforts for each of the different stakeholders (please select one option)?**

	Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor
1. National and local NGOs					
2. National and local government					
3. International NGOs					
4. Other clusters					

**14. Overall, how would you assess the efforts made by your protection cluster in advocating for the centrality of protection (please select one option from each row or select 'I don't know')?**

	Very successful	Moderately successful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Unsuccessful	Failed	I don't know
1. Advocacy undertaken by the protection cluster to change the behaviour/attitudes/actions of the humanitarian community to improve the situation of those affected by conflict (internal)						
2. Advocacy undertaken directly by the protection cluster to change the behaviour/attitudes/actions of external actors (government's/military/others) to improve the situation of those affected by conflict (external)						
3. Efforts made by the protection cluster to escalate advocacy issues to the Humanitarian Country Team to pursue at a national or international level						

**15. To what extent have the following aspects of the IASC policy on protection/Centrality of Protection been adopted by the Humanitarian Country Team in the country in which you're based (please select one option from each row. If you don't know, please select 'I don't know')?**

	This is the case for our HCT	This is not currently the case for our HCT	I don't know
1. A light-touch HCT protection strategy (in addition to a more comprehensive cluster strategy)			
2. A document outlining advocacy priorities for HCT			
3. Inclusion of protection as an HCT standing agenda item			
4. Engagement of the protection cluster in briefing the HC (or HC/RC)			

**16. Please make two recommendations to strengthen the effectiveness and predictability of UNHCR's leadership of the protection cluster (please write them in the boxes below).**

Recommendation 1

Recommendation 2

## B. Quantitative survey results

Data based on 241 respondents

**1. Which of the following options best describes your role in the cluster (please select a single answer)?**

Role in the cluster			
AoR/Sub-cluster lead	Cluster co-lead/co-facilitator	Cluster Coordinator (UNHCR)	Protection cluster member
9.1%	4.6%	12.4%	73.9%

**2. In what region are you based (please select a single answer)?**

Region				
Africa	Americas	Asia	Europe	Middle East
41.9%	8.3%	22%	3.3%	24.5%

**3. How would you describe the organisation that you are representing in the protection cluster (please select one option from the list)?**

Organization in the protection cluster			
International NGO	National or local authority	National or local NGO	UN agency
31.5%	3.7%	30.7%	34%

**4. How would you assess the performance of the protection cluster against the following 6 core functions of cluster coordination (please fill in one box in each row)?**

1. Has agreed strategic priorities for the cluster AND sub-clusters and addressed duplication				
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor
17.4%	42.7%	26.1%	11.2%	2.5%

2. Has engaged with the HC/HCT to inform decision-making on protection-related issues					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
20.3%	41.9%	24.9%	10.0%	2.1%	0.8%

3. Has developed a strategic plan for the protection cluster with objectives and measurable indicators					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
19.1%	36.9%	26.6%	13.7%	3.3%	0.4%

4.Has identified advocacy issues and undertaken advocacy activities on protection					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
19.9%	35.7%	22.4%	15.8%	5.8%	0.4%

5.Has monitored the implementation of the protection cluster strategy and reported on results					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
13.7%	34.0%	29.0%	17.4%	5.4%	0.4%

6.Has put protection contingency planning and preparedness in place					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
14.1%	27.8%	29.0%	22.8%	5.8%	0.4%

**5. How successfully has the protection cluster promoted an enabling environment for accountability to affected people (please fill in one box in each row)?**

1. By advocating for and applying mechanisms for cluster members to consult and involve affected people in decision-making				
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor
12.0%	39.8%	24.9%	17.8%	5.4%

2. By advocating for and supporting cluster members to receive, investigate and act on complaints received from affected people about the assistance they receive from the cluster members					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
14.1%	29.0%	31.1%	18.3%	7.1%	0.4%

3. By promoting the engagement of cluster members with people in a manner that is sensitive to age, gender, and diversity					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
22.0%	32.8%	28.6%	11.6%	4.1%	0.8%

4. By promoting the IASC Preliminary Guidance note on protection and AAP within the cluster					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
11.2%	32.4%	32.0%	16.2%	6.6%	1.7%

**5. By advocating for members of other clusters to routinely adopt actions 1 - 4 above in their programmes**

Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
9.5%	33.6%	29.5%	19.1%	6.2%	2.1%

**6. By promoting collective mechanisms of accountability within the Inter-cluster coordination team and Humanitarian Country Team**

Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
14.5%	32.8%	26.6%	16.2%	8.7%	1.2%

**6. How would you assess UNHCR's ability to get the right cluster coordinators at the right time for the right duration (please select one option for each row)?****1. Capacity of the UNHCR cluster coordinator (the right person)**

Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
27.8%	37.8%	14.1%	11.2%	7.9%	1.2%

**2. Avoiding gaps in staffing (at the right time)**

Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
10.4%	39.0%	29.5%	12.0%	7.9%	1.2%

**3. Occupying the post for a reasonable period of time (for the right duration)**

Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
14.5%	43.6%	27.8%	7.5%	4.6%	2.1%

**7. Do you think that the way the field protection cluster is currently set up, with the cluster coordinator responsible for oversight of the four sub-clusters (housing land and property, mine action, child protection, gender-based violence), is the optimal configuration?**

Yes	No	No response
69.7%	27.4%	2.9%

**8. The existence of a cluster and AoRs/sub-clusters adds an additional layer of complexity. How successful do you think the protection cluster has been at country-level in ensuring that its different parts coordinate between themselves and in defining a single strategy for the cluster as a whole (please select the option that most closely matches with your experience)?**

Very successful	Successful	Unsuccessful	Failed	No response
9.1%	61.8%	20.7%	5.0%	3.3%

**9. What role do national actors (governmental and non-governmental) play in your protection cluster (please select the role played by each from the options provided)?**

Participation of local/national NGOs in the cluster at capital level				
Co-leadership/Co-facilitator	Member	Observer	Do not participate	No response
10.8%	65.1%	8.3%	8.7%	7.1%

Participation of local/national NGOs in the sub-national level cluster				
Co-leadership/Co-facilitator	Member	Observer	Do not participate	No response
12.9%	64.7%	7.1%	7.5%	7.9%

Participation of government in the cluster at national-level				
Co-leadership/Co-facilitator	Member	Observer	Do not participate	No response
12.4%	25.3%	12.0%	39.8%	10.4%

Participation of government in the sub-national cluster				
Co-leadership/Co-facilitator	Member	Observer	Do not participate	No response
13.7%	29.0%	14.5%	32.8%	10.0%

**10. What proportion of the members in the protection cluster you attend (NOT the AORs/sub-clusters) are national or local actors (please select a single option from the list)?**

0-25%	25-50%	50-75%	75-100%	No response
23.7%	26.6%	30.3%	14.5%	5.0%

**11. How effective do you consider efforts made by the protection cluster to mainstream protection to be in challenging and changing the behaviour of the humanitarian community (please select one option from each row - if the approach has not been used by the cluster, please select the box 'the cluster has not used this approach')?**

1. The preparation of sectoral guidance and checklists						
Extremely effective	Effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Ineffective	Failed	The cluster has not used this approach	No response
5.8%	47.3%	15.8%	4.1%	2.1%	15.8%	9.1%

2. Training of protection cluster members or members from other clusters						
Extremely effective	Effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Ineffective	Failed	The cluster has not used this approach	No response
10.4%	42.7%	18.7%	8.3%	2.9%	8.3%	8.7%

3. Targeted coaching and/or mentoring of national/international staff						
Extremely effective	Effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Ineffective	Failed	The cluster has not used this approach	No response
6.2%	34.0%	19.9%	9.5%	5.4%	14.9%	10.0%

4. Proposal screening and review for other clusters						
Extremely effective	Effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Ineffective	Failed	The cluster has not used this approach	No response
6.6%	35.3%	22.0%	7.5%	1.7%	16.2%	10.8%

5. Review of pooled funding/Humanitarian Response Plan submissions						
Extremely effective	Effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Ineffective	Failed	The cluster has not used this approach	No response
12.0%	37.8%	19.5%	8.7%	4.6%	7.9%	9.5%

6. Support for the design of cross-sectoral assessment methodologies						
Extremely effective	Effective	Neither effective nor ineffective	Ineffective	Failed	The cluster has not used this approach	No response
8.7%	39.8%	19.1%	7.1%	5.4%	9.5%	10.4%

12. Overall, how would you assess the effectiveness of the protection mainstreaming efforts of your protection cluster (please select one option)?

Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very Poor	No response
10.8%	45.6%	20.3%	11.6%	3.7%	7.9%

13. How would you assess the effectiveness of your protection cluster's capacity building efforts for each of the different stakeholders (please select one option)?

1. National and local NGOs					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
10.4%	36.9%	22.8%	15.4%	5.4%	9.1%

2. National and local government					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
7.1%	22.0%	26.6%	24.9%	7.5%	12.0%



3. International NGOs					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
13.7%	35.7%	23.2%	10.0%	6.6%	10.8%

4. Other clusters					
Excellent	Good	OK	Poor	Very poor	No response
5.0%	31.1%	23.7%	19.9%	6.2%	14.1%

**14. Overall, how would you assess the efforts made by your protection cluster in advocating for the centrality of protection (please select one option from each row or select 'I don't know')?**

1. Advocacy undertaken by the protection cluster to change the behaviour/attitudes/actions of the humanitarian community to improve the situation of those affected by conflict (internal)						
Very successful	Moderately successful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Unsuccessful	Failed	I don't know	No response
9.5%	48.5%	12.4%	8.7%	5.8%	5.0%	10.0%

2. Advocacy undertaken directly by the protection cluster to change the behaviour/attitudes/actions of external actors (government's/military/others) to improve the situation of those affected by conflict (external)						
Very successful	Moderately successful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Unsuccessful	Failed	I don't know	No response
7.1%	36.9%	18.3%	10.8%	8.7%	8.7%	9.5%

3. Efforts made by the protection cluster to escalate advocacy issues to the Humanitarian Country Team to pursue at a national or international level						
Very successful	Moderately successful	Neither successful nor unsuccessful	Failed	Unsuccessful	I don't know	No response
14.9%	43.2%	14.1%	4.6%	6.6%	6.6%	10.0%

**15. To what extent have the following aspects of the IASC policy on protection/Centrality of Protection been adopted by the Humanitarian Country Team in the country in which you're based (please select one option from each row. If you don't know, please select 'I don't know')?**

1. A light-touch HCT protection strategy (in addition to a more comprehensive cluster strategy)			
This is the case for our HCT	This is not currently the case for our HCT	I don't know	No response

28.2%	18.3%	39.8%	13.7%
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## 2. A document outlining advocacy priorities for HCT

This is the case for our HCT	This is not currently the case for our HCT	I don't know	No response
32.4%	18.3%	36.1%	13.3%

## 3. Inclusion of protection as an HCT standing agenda item

This is the case for our HCT	This is not currently the case for our HCT	I don't know	No response
38.2%	15.4%	32.0%	14.5%

## 4. Engagement of the protection cluster in briefing the HC (or HC/RC)

This is the case for our HCT	This is not currently the case for our HCT	I don't know	No response
41.9%	14.9%	29.0%	14.1%