



Global Protection Cluster

GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER

RETREAT



2016

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

28-29 September 2016 at the Chateau de Penthes, Geneva

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Our world today- major trends

The Global Protection Cluster's situation analysis underpinning its [Strategic Framework 2016-19](#) sets out the context in which we work today. The scale of internal displacement today is unmatched since the Second World War, and it outstrips the rate of the world population's growth since measurements of internal displacement began in the early 90's. There has been an **upward trend in displacement due to conflict and violence** since 2011, and the figure now stands at 40.8m IDPs. **Disasters** have currently displaced around 19.2 million people in 113 countries ([IDMC reported figure for 2015](#)). In addition, the scale of displacement caused by **development** is believed to be even greater than conflict and natural disaster displacement, and operations already have to deal with development-induced displacement as part of complex solutions responses (e.g. South-East Myanmar).

Displacement is not only a humanitarian challenge but a complex political and developmental one (Secretary-General's report for the World Humanitarian Summit, [One Humanity, Shared Responsibility](#), para. 81). This is visible in the **multiple causes of displacement**, which include a growing lack of respect for international humanitarian law (Syria, Yemen), transnational criminal networks (Central America), environmental degradation (Philippines, Darfur), climate change (Lake Chad, Vanuatu), development (Myanmar, India), and disease outbreaks (Liberia, Sierra Leone). The link between internal displacement and its root causes and external displacement is often over-looked, particularly in operational terms. An example of this **displacement continuum** is visible in the drought in Ethiopia, which is causing migration to urban areas and internal displacement, which is in turn leading to external migration and to the use of smuggling and trafficking networks across the Arabian Peninsula and Europe. While the drivers and triggers of internal displacement are not inherently a humanitarian problem, the humanitarian system has been challenged to act faster and more effectively. Importantly, effectiveness is more and more understood in terms of **protecting the human rights of crisis-affected people** (for example, the [Report of the Secretary-General's internal review panel on UN action in Sri Lanka](#), from November 2012, criticized the UN's failure to do everything in its power to counter targeted attacks on civilians), with protection recognized as the purpose and outcome of humanitarian action (in a significant advance, in December 2013, the IASC adopted a Statement on the [centrality of protection](#) in humanitarian action at the Global Protection Cluster's initiative).

The **lack of solutions** for protracted displacement is particularly noteworthy where, on average, the duration of internal displacement is 17 years (Brookings-LSE Project on Displacement, [Ten years after humanitarian reform: How have IDPs fared?](#)). For this reason, three quarters of humanitarian funding in the last decade has gone to the same 20 countries, while six of the largest recipients have had humanitarian appeals for ten consecutive years. Defining in operational terms the end of displacement and disengagement is a recurrent issue. A target for reducing internal displacement by at least 50 percent by 2030 (Secretary-General's report for the World Humanitarian Summit, [One Humanity, Shared Responsibility](#), para. 83) has the potential of generating momentum if the necessary protection and policy safeguards are respected.



The Global Protection Cluster Retreat in 2016 brought together the highest number of participants to date with representatives from over 35 countries. The agenda for the retreat was developed in coordination with field clusters and intended to respond to their identified needs and areas for learning and exchange.

The two days covered a lot of ground through formal presentations, panels and interactive group sessions. Updates were provided on important initiatives such as the IASC Protection policy, the Humanitarian Program Cycle and Protection Information Management. Learning and innovation was shared from the field drawing on contexts including South Sudan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala and Libya. The retreat also had the pleasure of welcoming the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group and being hosted by Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, to a reception on the first evening.

The retreat provided much opportunity for network strengthening, learning, exchange and professional development. On the second day, break-out sessions in the morning and afternoon covered topics as varied as identification of atrocity crimes, innovative approaches to protection interventions and responses, cash-based interventions, call centre establishment in Erbil and climate change and disaster displacement. This provided participants with the opportunity to explore areas of individual interest and to learn from each other's experience in smaller groups.

At the conclusion of the retreat the GPC Coordinator thanked the participants for their active engagement and the presenters for sharing their insights. The retreat is not able to, or designed to, cover every topic but succeeded in addressing those issues that are most likely to affect the operation of protection clusters in the coming year. It further succeeded in sharing tools and innovations for continuing to place protection at the centre of humanitarian action and ensuing appropriate funding to do so.

PROGRAMMING



Protection Strategy in the Funding Cycle

Carol Batchelor, *Director of the Division of International Protection, UN High Commissioner for Refugees* highlighted the multiple causes of displacement and the need to address causes and find solutions, part of the reason for the first ever United Nations Refugee Summit, which will lead to a 'Global Compact' by 2018. The High Commissioner recognises that as a protection agency UNHCR works across the spectrum of issues related to displacement. This continuum demands a more holistic and situational approach, whereby responses to IDPs and refugees are mutually reinforcing and at the same time result in broader protection dividends. Globally, the protection sector is programming over \$1bn through Humanitarian Response Plans and accountability is essential to demonstrate how these funds are used. Questions about programming protection, designing services, collecting, analysing, sharing and the use of information are critical and need to be better addressed across sectors.

Liz Eyster, *Chief of the IDP Section at UNHCR* and **Brooke Lauten**, *Advocacy Advisor at the Norwegian Refugee Council in Geneva* outlined the purpose behind the newly endorsed IASC Protection Policy. In a statement issued in December 2013, the Principals of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee affirmed that all humanitarian actors have a responsibility to [place protection at the center of humanitarian action](#). As part of preparedness efforts, immediate and life-saving activities, and throughout the duration of a crisis and beyond, it is thus incumbent on Humanitarian Coordinators, Humanitarian Country Teams and clusters to ensure that "protection of all persons affected and at-risk [informs] humanitarian decision-making and response, including engagement with States and non-State parties to conflict." The IASC has committed to a system-wide and comprehensive response to conflict and disasters. This response is driven by the needs and perspectives of affected persons, with protection at its core.

People are often subjected to violence, abuse, coercion and deprivation during armed conflict. Experience shows that parties to conflict often violate the principles of distinction, proportion and precaution in the conduct of hostilities. The IASC's approach to protection emphasizes that under international law authorities at all levels of government hold the primary obligation and responsibility to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of persons on their territory or under their jurisdiction. In armed conflict, non-State armed groups, although not party to international humanitarian law (IHL) treaties, are bound to respect IHL – including the fundamental obligation to distinguish between civilians and fighters in the conduct of hostilities and the obligation to take all feasible precautions to protect the civilian population and civilian objects under their control against the effects of attacks. It is furthermore increasingly accepted that *de facto* authorities as well as non-State armed groups controlling territory and exercising government-like functions have certain human rights obligations.

In armed conflict, other situations of violence and disasters, international and national humanitarian organizations have a crucial role to play in offering their services to help prevent and to alleviate human suffering. A strategic, comprehensive and collective approach to protection in humanitarian response can



enhance the overall ability of humanitarian actors to analyze, prioritize and respond effectively to violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, including the risks and consequences of violence, abuse, coercion and deprivation occurring in humanitarian crises.

The [IASC Protection Policy](#) defines the centrality of protection in humanitarian action, as per the December 2013 statement of the IASC Principals, as well as the process for its implementation at country level. In doing so, it seeks to reinforce complementary roles, mandates and expertise of all relevant actors. Specifically, the policy emphasizes an IASC commitment to prioritize protection and contribute to collective protection outcomes, including through the development of an HCT protection [strategy](#) – about which the GPC has issued guidance – to address the most critical and urgent risks and violations. It also underlines the need to implement this commitment in all aspects of humanitarian action and across the [Humanitarian Programme Cycle](#). As such, the collective IASC roles and responsibilities in placing protection at the center of humanitarian action are explained, with due consideration for mandates and expertise and in line with humanitarian principles.

The policy is intended to support and build on the IASC’s Policy on the [Protection of Internally Displaced Persons](#) (1999). It also seeks to complement other initiatives in support of protection, particularly the United Nations (UN) [Human Rights Up Front Initiative](#) (HRUF). Humanitarian actors must also strictly adhere to the IASC commitments related to Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA): this means working proactively to prevent and protect affected persons from any abuse by humanitarian actors themselves.

Ignacio Leon, *Chief of Planning and Monitoring Section at OCHA* called for concerted advocacy efforts within the Humanitarian Programme Cycle through prioritization, a sound strategy and fundraising. Thereby he recognized the crucial outcomes of the World Humanitarian Summit that call for collective plans as well as localization of the humanitarian response.

Vesna Vukovic of the *Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)* presented CERF funding mechanisms. CERF receives voluntary contributions year-round to support humanitarian partners. CERF’s partnerships include national and international NGOs, Governments and the Red Cross Red Crescent movement; with 554 partners in total. Funding is provided for health care, water and sanitation, protection, food assistance,

livelihood support and shelter. UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies are encouraged to apply for grants and loans. CERF funding is divided into two windows: (1) the Rapid Response funds help support life-saving, humanitarian activities in initial stages of an emergency. Approximately two thirds of CERF grant element is allocated to rapid response. (2) The “underfunded emergencies grants” are allocated twice a year to selected countries from the underfunded emergencies window. Requests are submitted to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC). Criteria for drafting funding proposals can be obtained through the [partner resource section](#) on the CERF website. CERF also provides dedicated [training](#) to support prioritization and strategic use of funds.

Kathrine Starup, of the *Danish Refugee Council* laid out the work of the Protection Information Management (PIM) Initiative, led by UNHCR and DRC in collaboration with other protection information stakeholders in the humanitarian community. PIM is based on [eight principles](#) for the purpose of improving the decision making, efficiency, and lifesaving protection measures. ([LINK](#))

Integrated Protection Programming

Martin Suvatne, *Head of Core Competencies Unit at NRC* opened the session exploring how the constituent elements of “protection” can work better together across clusters to address the needs of populations of concern in an holistic manner.

Anne-Sophie Laenkholm, Protection Advisor at the *European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO)*, introduced the new [ECHO Protection Policy](#) and underscored from a donors perspective—providing examples from Syria and Mauritania—the need to systematically integrate protection into humanitarian action.

Michael Copland, *Coordinator of the Child Protection AoR* led by UNICEF, reminded participants that collective efforts through integrated programming increase quality and coverage of the response and should integrate local systems. **Bruno Donat**, *Director of the UNMAS office in Geneva*, and **Kelly McAulay**, *UNMAS* stressed how UNMAS coordinates Mine Action work through the Protection Cluster through close collaboration and consultations with partners.

Guillaume Simonian, *Inter-Agency Focal Point, WHO Health Emergency Programme, World Health Organisation* and **Linda Doull**, [Global Health Cluster](#) Coordinator, outlined four interrelated concepts which promote the right to health, i.e. availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality. Their presentation underscored the critical need to adopt a people-centred approach, incorporate protection principles and promote meaningful access to health services. They promoted four pathways for integrated programming, including joint field advocacy efforts, joint missions, inclusion of health as a discussion stream in the GPC on-line community of practice and joint work on an HRUF Action Plan. They also called for a zero tolerance policy on attacks on healthcare facilities.

Guilhem Ravier, *International Committee of the Red Cross*, provided an update on the revision process of the 2009 ICRC [Professional Standards in Protection Work](#). The process involves extensive and broad consultation with various stakeholders working in particular on human rights and international humanitarian law in the field. Focus is placed on the revision and redeveloping of the four areas; i.e. Monitoring and evaluation; managing sensitive protection information; engaging UN peacekeepers and other multinational forces, and non-stated armed actors; as well as countering Violent Extremism (CVE)/Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE). Finalization of the Standards is envisaged for 2017 followed by broad dissemination across sectors through various channels.

SHARING FIELD EXPERIENCES



Humanitarian Liaison Working Group

In a special session at the GPC Retreat, Norway concluded its two-year chairmanship of the Humanitarian Liaison Working Group (HLWG). HLWG Members recognized the commitment of the Permanent Mission of Norway to bringing protection issues to the Group. The chairmanship has now been passed over to Ambassador Peter Sørensen and his team at the Permanent Delegation of the European Union.

Ambassador Hans Brattskar, *Permanent Representative of Norway to the UN* and other International Organisations at Geneva, facilitated a panel discussion sharing field experiences. The panel comprised of **Pablo Zapata**, *Syrian Protection Cluster Coordinator*, **Caelin Briggs**, *co-coordinator of the South Sudan Protection Cluster*, and a *representative from the Syrian American Medical Society (SAMS)*.

Providing an example of the evacuation of humanitarian workers in July 2016 in South Sudan, Caelin Briggs, emphasized the importance of ongoing communication and information sharing among partners and the criticality of coordination for the humanitarian response. **Pablo Zapata**, *cluster coordinator in Syria*, highlighted the critical need for humanitarian access, a common framework for humanitarian actors, field based consultative processes and the importance of civil documentation.

Mohamed Katoub, from the [Syrian American Medical Society](#) (SAMS), reflected on his experience working with health workers in Syria. Due to the ongoing war and attacks on healthcare facilities, 90% of doctors have left the country, health care services are inaccessible and medications are of bad quality. The failing health system leaves in particular women vulnerable. He therefore stressed the need for well-trained health staff to ensure the right to health and essential medical assistance as well respect for international humanitarian law which prohibits attacks on medical facilities.

Julien Herrera, *Protection Cluster Coordinator in Iraq*, outlined protection risks and concerns for more than 3.4 million internally displaced in Iraq where providing access to safety remains a key challenge due to ongoing violence, high contamination, multiple displacement and lack of alternatives. He underscored the importance of contingency planning for Mosul and the critical need for coordinated efforts.

Ambassador Peter Soerensen, closed the session thereby sharing with participants a future outlook on the Working Group focus themes: sustaining education during emergency situations; meeting the needs of refugees and migrants on migratory routes; and the issue of unaccompanied minors related protection concerns. ([LINK](#))

Stories from the Field

Grainne O'Hara, *Director of Protection Services at the Regional Bureau for the Middle East and North Africa, UNHCR*, chaired a panel discussion on field experiences. The panel consisted of **Dalia Aranki**, [Protection Standby Capacity Project \(ProCap\)](#) deployee to the Yemen Protection Cluster, **Guelnoudji Ndjekoukosse**, *Protection Cluster Coordinator UNHCR Democratic Republic of Congo*, **Enrique Valles-Ramos**, *head of the National Office in UNHCR Guatemala* and **Bridget Forster**, *UNMAS Libya*.

Panellists reflected on their experiences in difficult and often hostile operational circumstances where destruction of property, attacks of hospitals and diminishing livelihoods leave increasing numbers of internally displaced in urgent need of life-saving assistance. Often, financial and operational constraints impede on response capacity. Panellists underlined how frameworks for protection, dedicated funding, coordination beyond clusters and common language can strengthen the response capacity. Further, they underscored the need for innovative approaches to finding solutions, innovative programming that speak to local customs and practices, the critical need to reach out to HC and to draw on the resources of special representatives whilst maintaining continuous dialogue with the government and human rights bodies.

Good Practices in Protection

Ingrid MacDonald, *Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team*, outlined the main challenges of the protection sector and the leadership surrounding it. She underlined the importance of clear division of roles and responsibilities among actors and negotiations conducive to the context. Providing a positive example of the implementation of the humanitarian response plan in Iraq, she noted the meaningful impact of empowering humanitarian actors by supporting the leadership through mentoring programmes, the promotion of a collective approach to leadership, the need to respect partnership principles through and the importance of providing a platform for regular and relevant discussions on protection concerns that are being followed up on.

Evaluation of the Clusters

Helen Morris, *Senior Evaluation Office, UNHCR*, provided an overview of the protection cluster leadership evaluation, to which UNHCR has committed itself with the objective of reviewing its success in promoting the centrality of protection in humanitarian action in the field. The evaluation is being undertaken by a group of independent consultants and to be delivered by May 2017. Broad consultations will engage personnel beyond the cluster system. Field missions are foreseen for six clusters operation countries including: Pakistan, Iraq, DRC, Nigeria, Sudan and Afghanistan/or Myanmar and will take place from November to early next year. The mission focus will be on accountability and learning, to provide a gap analysis and the way forward. The process will be overseen by a reference group composed of UNCHR, OCHA, UNICEF and NGO and recommendations will be reviewed by the management and by field personnel.

INNOVATION MARKETPLACE

FIVE PANELS COVERED THE FOLLOWING TOPICS:



Community of Practice

Yasmine el-Behiery, *Global Protection Cluster* and Lauren Parater, *UNHCR Innovation*

INTRODUCTION to the [GPC community of practice platform](#): The community of practice was born out of field consultations that informed the GPC Strategic Framework 2016-2019. It has a focus on engagement with an overall objective of exploring innovative approaches to protection interventions and responses.

The platform is easy to use, user driven, and privacy can be easily customized at every level. It is about the power of collective knowledge and how to work smarter together.

How does it do this?

- The community puts you in touch with like- minded colleagues and peers
- Allows you to share your experiences and learn from others
- Allows you to collaborate and achieve common outcomes
- Validates and builds on existing knowledge and good practice
- Provides an opportunity to innovate and create new ideas

OVERVIEW of the platform: The platform hosts a closed space for registered cluster coordinators and co-facilitators and a separate exchange space for registered members. These exchange spaces help members directly interact with one another, share knowledge, hold group conversations to solicit and exchange feedback as well as ideas, with an overall objective of co-building good practices. Up-to-date policy and technical guidance, training material as well as stories and practices from the field is available for members and form a rich resource library of practical tools and practices.

To ensure efficient and effective management of information traffic on the platform, regular and customized dashboards are run on a regular basis.



➔ Feedback & action points

- Platform to be available in French and Spanish
- Facilitate the exchange of policy guidance from various operations on HCT strategies and mapping tools, HPC material, etc.
- Provide a printed publication of 'Stories and Practices from the Field' in a number of languages to ensure a wider outreach, including to local partners and donors
- Reach out to other clusters/sectors to participate in the community of practice
- Provide an updated Coordination Toolkit for protection cluster coordinators, which would also include an Information Management Toolkit
- The involvement of Cashcap, Information management, the GPC Operations Cell as well as AoRs, task teams, and PROCAPs as moderators
- Request for a harmonized approach to the community of practice (avoid the proliferation of similar platforms within the protection structure)

Cash-Based Interventions

Dana Cristescu, *CashCap Advisor to the GPC*

The discussion focused on protection outcomes and the support the GPC Operations Cell offers in the rolling out of cash and protection tools developed under the 2014-2015 ECHO-funded Enhanced Response Capacity (ERC) grant managed by UNHCR. In discussions good practices and lessons learned on cash and protection from the field were gathered that will feed into development of tips sheets on CBIs and protection. Existing resources and Guidance on Cash-Based Interventions on IDPs are available on the [GPC website](#).

Call Centre

Charlotte Lancaster, *UNOPS Erbil*

The Iraq Internally Displaced Persons Information Centre presented its community-centred call centre which provides life-saving information by placing affected populations at the heart of response. The call centre initiative is one of the largest UN inter-agency projects and staff has been trained to respond the critical needs of the community, including adequate referral of victims of gender-based violence and human rights violations. The call centre receives currently more than 400 calls per day.

Protection Mainstreaming Toolkit

Adrien Muratet, *IRC/GPC Task Team-Protection Mainstreaming*

The GPC Task Team on Protection Mainstreaming shared an update on the toolkit development led by the Task Team, OCHA and IRC. The innovation market presented an opportunity to obtain feedback from clusters using the tool who requested more condensed materials with less "protection jargon".

Big Data/Social Media

Professor Geoff Gilbert, *Human Rights Centre, University of Essex*

Researchers from Essex University presented their research project on big data and social media in humanitarian crisis. The project aims at tackling the global challenge of forcibly displaced people through boosting the prediction capability by the setting up of a visual database. The GPC Retreat provided researchers with an opportunity to gather useful insights on challenges, views and ideas of humanitarian field workers.

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS



Identification of Atrocity Crimes

Gillian Kitley, *Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide*

Gillian Kitley outlined eight common risk factors conducive to atrocity crimes set out in the framework of analysis for atrocity crimes and the responsibility of all actors to prevent the later. She stressed the importance of baseline risk assessment for which the HRUF initiative provides a meaningful framework and the inevitable need of continuous monitoring of the situation, including potential triggering factors.

Climate Change and Disaster Displacement

Atle Solberg, *Nansen Initiative*

The Nansen Initiative through regional consultations, has repeatedly identified the need to develop new and innovative tools to generate better data, research and analysis on cross-border disaster displacement. Presenters highlighted the importance of understanding the complex causes, dynamics and magnitude of disaster displacement and underscored the need of strengthening laws and policies addressing displacement, disasters and climate change through consolidated efforts.

Protection Information Management

Bekim Kajtazi, *GPC* and **Brennan Webert**, *DRC*

Among the main activities of GPC in Protection Information Management during the 2016 year, were the PIM training and the preparations on the development of the Information Management Toolkit for the Protection Clusters.

On behalf of GPC, DRC developed the PIM Training and conducted four trainings covering some 12 operations. In the first part of the presentation, a comprehension explanation of how the materials and training are structured and the achievements of the training program to date were provided.

The second part of the session provides insight into the Information Management Toolkit (IMT) at the Protection Cluster(s) level. There is a great and urgent need for standardized IM tools for protection in the clusters. This will be addressed through strengthened cooperation with protection information management officers (PIMOs) from the AoRs and the field protection cluster PIMOs.

Key points from the session:

➔ PIM Trainings:

- There is a need for PIM training in the operations that did not have the opportunity to participate in the previous training. The colleagues from the MENA region had participated in the PIM training and shared their positive experience and the immediate impact that the training had in their daily activities.
- Further, the need was identified to involve other clusters in training to foster better understanding of PIM as well as coordination and collaborations across sectors.
- The PIM training material should be made available in other languages i.e. Arabic, French, and Spanish

➔ Information Management Toolkit:

- There is clear need for standardized IM tools which will enhance PIMOs work in the field. Standard tools provide consistency on the support that PIMOs provide to the Cluster Coordinators, but also will enable consistent and coordinated data sharing in a predictable and protection principled approach, based on the PIM principles.
- Some field clusters requested IM mission support. The GPC remains committed to providing such support based on the identified needs and priorities, considering a large number of field clusters.
- Exchange of ideas and experiences on the tools and methods for conducting IM in the field can also be provided through the newly launched Community of Practice portal.

Solutions

Nina Schrepfer, *UNHCR Somalia*

Nina Schrepfer, Protection Coordinator in Somalia, outlined the importance of prioritizing durable solutions early on as a protection priority in the HRP, in HCT Protection strategies and in UNDAFs. Continuous evidence-based advocacy underscored by grounded data and analysis collaboratively collected as well as a strong network of partnerships had been conducive to the success of their advocacy efforts in Somalia.

GBV Response

Jennifer Chase, *UNFPA*

Jennifer Chase, GBV AoR coordinator outlined the main principles of the [Guidelines for Integrating the Gender-Based Violence Interventions into Humanitarian Action](#). The Guidelines had been revised in 2015 and support humanitarian stakeholders in fulfilling their responsibility to protect all those affected by crisis, by reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery. The Guidelines are currently being rolled-out in several pilot countries.



Remarks by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Filippo Grandi, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, welcomed to a reception on the first evening a wide range of participants from more than 35 countries. He expressed his appreciation and gratitude to participants who shared their experiences thereby highlighting protection challenges in difficult operational circumstances. He thanked participants for their strong commitment to prioritize protection in the humanitarian response and encouraged inclusive partnerships.



Global Protection Cluster