



## **Housing Land and Property in Humanitarian Emergencies**

### **The 2016-2018 WORKPLAN of the Housing Land and Property Area of Responsibility**



## *I. Introduction to the Housing Land and Property Area of Responsibility*

### ***HLP in emergencies: saving lives and enabling humanitarian action***

Housing, Land and Property (HLP) includes the full spectrum of residential, land and natural resource rights recognized by statutory law or customary practice. Common HLP issues in emergencies include: tenure discrimination leading to inequitable assistance; loss of legal documentation; access to land for shelter and livelihoods; access to natural resources, such as water; land and property conflicts; forced evictions; secondary occupation; land grabbing; restitution; and disinheritance, particularly of women and children. Addressing HLP issues early, comprehensively and effectively contributes directly to:

- **Saving lives and preserving dignity:** HLP disputes are the root cause of many conflicts, often resulting in significant death and displacement, even well after the formal end of hostilities. HLP issues are also common after natural disasters – tenure discrimination, evictions, land grabbing, disinheritance of widows, etc. In all emergencies, delays in accessing land and housing after crises puts people in life and health-threatening situations, undermines their dignity and can expose them to a range of protection risks.
- **Mitigating conflicts and disasters:** large scale disasters have demonstrated how inadequate land-use planning and weak protection of HLP rights (for instance tenure insecurity) increases the negative impacts of disasters on affected populations. Research from UNEP also shows that conflicts related to land and natural resources can re-emerge within the first five years after ‘peace’ if land and natural resource issues are not addressed<sup>1</sup>.
- **Enabling humanitarian action:** Access to safe, secure land is critical for several sectors of humanitarian assistance such as food security and livelihoods; emergency shelter; and camp coordination and camp management. Land and property documents are sometimes required as a pre-requisite for accessing relief aid, even though they may have been lost, destroyed or may never have been issued.

***The overarching goal of the global HLP AoR is to facilitate a more predictable, accountable and effective HLP response in the emergency/early recovery phase of complex emergencies, disasters and other humanitarian crises.***

### ***HLP: an Area of Responsibility within the Global Protection Cluster***

The Global Protection Cluster has a unique architecture, in which some recognised areas of protection expertise called ‘Areas of Responsibility’ are convened by designated Focal Point Agencies within the broader cluster. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) are the co-chairs of the Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Area of Responsibility (AoR).

The global HLP Area of Responsibility (thereafter global HLP AoR) is responsible for the coordination of HLP responses during the emergency/early recovery phase of a humanitarian crisis whereas the Solutions Alliance Rule of Law Working Group (with the support of UNHCR and IOM) is responsible for coordinating HLP in recovery and development work.

The HLP AoR brings together UN Agencies, Non-Governmental and other international organisations, research and academic institutions, donors, human rights and development agencies and representatives of relevant clusters<sup>2</sup> working to address HLP issues in emergency settings. There is no formal membership system; rather the global HLP AoR draws partners from a broad expert base and who subsequently contribute to its activities according to their respective priorities and resources.

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP (2009) From Conflict to Peacebuilding: the Role of Natural Resources and the Environment  
[http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/pcdmb\\_policy\\_01.pdf](http://postconflict.unep.ch/publications/pcdmb_policy_01.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Such as Shelter, CCCM, Food Security, Early Recovery and WASH clusters

Currently there is no dedicated HLP AoR funding. Unlike the Global Protection Cluster and other AoRs, the global HLP AoR does not receive un-earmarked funding for its activities; instead for most activities partners provide part of the required resources.

### ***Partnership as the cornerstone of global HLP coordination***

The HLP AoR has not functioned adequately for the past two years, with coordination and leadership being dormant. The members of the HLP AoR agreed on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2015<sup>3</sup> to reactivate the HLP AoR, under a new leadership structure with a revised scope. IFRC and NRC are currently developing a co-leadership arrangement for the global HLP AoR, with a senior advisor from each organisation supporting the role of global HLP AoR Joint Coordinators. It is expected that this shared-leadership approach will strengthen the coordination of the global HLP AoR and ultimately will help enhance HLP responses at country level.

In line with the Principles of Partnership, the global HLP AoR operates as an open and inclusive forum in which activities are conducted through broad consultations with the view of benefiting from the wide range of expertise within the HLP community. Partners are invited to participate in person or to call in to the regular meetings of the HLP AoR which are held on a bi-monthly basis in Geneva. This is an opportunity to jointly agree and review progress on the implementation of activities included in this work-plan. Partners can propose specific agenda items to provide for example a briefing on recent or planned field missions, training activities, etc. The global HLP AoR joint coordinators can also call ad hoc meetings, notably at the request of partners, on HLP issues, initiatives or contexts, which require more time for in-depth discussion, specific technical expertise, or knowledge of the situation on the ground.

### ***Country-level HLP coordination in new and protracted emergencies***

HLP forms part of the broader protection response to humanitarian emergencies and a dedicated HLP coordination mechanism is usually integrated in the architecture of country-based protection clusters and over the past two years in country-based shelter clusters (in disaster response). The HLP response may also be coordinated directly by the overall Protection Cluster with no distinct HLP grouping. HLP working groups facilitate efficient coordination of specialist HLP interventions, as well as ensure that HLP is effectively taken into account in other sectors of humanitarian assistance and included in the HCT's strategic development.

As part of the country-level cluster system, as of September 2015, HLP working groups are active in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic (CAR), Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Myanmar, Nepal, Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan and Ukraine. In countries where the cluster system is not formally activated or in countries where it has already been deactivated, as for example in Côte d'Ivoire, the Philippines, Burundi, Haiti, Kyrgyzstan, and Liberia, HLP interventions are coordinated through different types of mechanisms that are usually (co)-chaired by national stakeholders.

Subject to funding, the global HLP AoR provides support to HLP responses to emergencies around the world through: rapid deployments; advocacy to raise awareness on HLP issues and to mobilise resources; strategy development; facilitating the delivery of training; providing and helping to adapt guidelines and tools; and provision of remote technical assistance on HLP issues.

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<sup>3</sup> Minutes of the HLP AoR Meeting can be found on the dedicated HLP page on the GPC website

## II. Strategic objectives and work planned for 2016 - 2018

As the Global HLP AoR is being reactivated, the following key priorities were identified to guide the development of the HLP AoR workplan for 2016 - 2018:

- strengthen coordination between the global HLP AoR and field-based HLP groups and partners;
- strengthen coordination and collaboration between the global HLP AoR and the Global Protection Cluster, the Global Shelter Cluster and the Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster and reinforce efforts to help raise awareness around HLP in these clusters;
- share more actively information on the support available from the global HLP AoR;
- ensure that essential tools and guidance for emergency HLP response are available and accessible;
- explore ways to establish stand-by HLP capacities to provide direct support for country-level HLP responses;
- engage in more targeted and robust global level advocacy and donor engagement on HLP; and
- improve awareness about HLP in emergencies and build capacity of humanitarian actors.

These priorities fed into the discussion with the Global Protection Cluster (GPC).

For **2016-18**, HLP AoR partners have agreed to work collectively to achieve the following two strategic objectives:

- (i) Improved global support to HLP coordination and response in humanitarian emergencies***
- (ii) Enhanced global attention to HLP through donor engagement, advocacy and awareness raising across clusters.***

In addition, ongoing efforts to improve global level HLP AoR management will continue throughout the time period of the work-plan. These efforts include:

- organization of regular global-level meetings;
- maintaining HLP AoR contact listings;
- mapping of partners' HLP activities and capacity;
- mapping of country-level HLP coordination mechanisms;
- outreach to new partners with HLP expertise;
- circulation of activity updates; and
- revising and updating the HLP AoR online portal on the website of the GPC.

The 2016-2018 priority deliverables are summarized in the table below and discussed in the subsequent pages. For each output gaps and priorities for 2016-18 will be highlighted.

Strategic Objective 1 Increased global support to HLP coordination and responses in humanitarian emergencies	Strategic Objective 2 Enhanced global attention to HLP through donor engagement, advocacy and awareness raising
1.1 HeLP-desk 1.2 HLP Rapid response capacities 1.3 HLP Coordination Toolkit 1.4 HLP Training	2.1 HLP Advocacy 2.2 Donor Engagement on HLP 2.3 Awareness Raising of HLP across clusters

## ***Strategic Objective 1: Increased support to HLP coordination and responses in humanitarian emergencies***

### **Output 1.1: HLP AoR Website revised and regularly updated**

The HLP AoR Website (<http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/areas-of-responsibility/housing-land-and-property.html>) has not been updated since 2012. The HLP AoR will make the necessary revisions and regularly update the information.

### **Output 1.2: HeLP-desk is re-activated and fully functional**

An HLP HeLP-desk was activated in 2012 but has not been functional. To improve the support provided to field-based humanitarian actors, the global HLP AoR will re-activate and manage the HeLP-desk, which will comprise volunteer HLP experts on stand-by to provide remote technical assistance in response to requests from field-based actors. HeLP-desk experts will provide an initial response within 48 hours. The HeLP-desk will form part of the broader help-desk function of the Global Protection Cluster.

### **Output 1.3: Field guidance and operational support provided**

The global HLP AoR will provide proactive and reactive technical assistance to field HLP AoRs on implementation of standards and policies. This will also include dialogues between the global HLP AoR Coordination Cell and field sub-cluster coordinators and co-facilitators, organized on an ad hoc basis and the sharing of information on recent development and initiatives.

### **Output 1.4: Strengthened HLP capacity at global and field level**

Partners in the HLP AoR have developed useful training materials which provide a strong basis for initial capacity building on HLP. These have been used to deliver trainings at both global and country levels and positive feedback was received in all cases. Therefore, partners agree that the best approach is to build on existing resources, rather than developing new training courses. Between 2016 - 2018, HLP AoR partners will continue to carry out their respective training agendas, while contributing to a collective AoR training initiative aimed at finalizing a basic HLP training for shelter practitioners that will be rolled out in collaboration with the Global Shelter Cluster. The HLP AoR also continues contributing to the activities of the GPC Learning Task Team.

### **Output 1.5: Improved coordination on HLP issues and activities**

Recent emergencies have revealed critical gaps in coordination and response guidance. Partners in the global HLP AoR have developed various guidelines to support HLP interventions at country level. Such activities will be shared, collated and relevant guidance will be provided to support field level HLP issues. The HLP AoR will meet bi-monthly until the end of 2015 and then on a quarterly basis. Ad hoc meetings will be called when needed. The membership of the HLP AoR will be expanded. Coordination with the Global Protection Cluster (and its AoRs), the Global Shelter Cluster and the Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster will be strengthened. In addition, coordination with the Solutions Alliance Rule of Law Working Group will also be undertaken to ensure complementarity and avoid linear approaches.

### **Output 1.6: Increased HLP Rapid Response Capacities**

Rapid HLP deployment capacity is a critical gap within the broader humanitarian system. No HLP AoR partner has dedicated surge capacity to deploy HLP experts. There is no stand-alone HLP stand-by roster or even an HLP component in existing rosters. In order to develop and strengthen HLP rapid response capacities, the global HLP AoR will continue to explore avenues to support field sub-cluster through expert deployment.

## ***Strategic Objective 2: Enhanced global attention to HLP through engagement with donors, advocacy and mainstreaming***

### **Output 2.1: More robust global level advocacy on HLP**

Global level advocacy will be carried out through several partnerships, including with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing, particularly with regards to issues of tenure insecurity in emergency contexts. The HLP AoR will also focus its advocacy efforts in collaboration with the Solutions Alliance Rule of Law Working Group and will organize a joint event in 2016 on HLP from emergency to development. At the same time, as part of its support functions to field-based HLP coordination and responses, the global HLP AoR will provide assistance for country-level advocacy initiatives.

### **Output 2.2: Enhanced donor awareness and engagement on HLP**

Over recent years, several donors have shown an interest in HLP issues and have provided country-level funding to HLP programming in humanitarian responses. These experiences need to feed upstream into global-level discussions with donors in order to raise further awareness of HLP issues in emergencies. During 2016-2018, the HLP AoR through the GPC Donor Task Team and other avenues, will establish a dialogue with interested donors, through technical briefings on HLP issues. These discussions will be based upon a briefing note on the importance of addressing HLP issues in humanitarian responses.

### **Output 2.3: HLP awareness in other Clusters and sub-Clusters**

The cross-cutting nature of HLP issues means that many sectors of humanitarian assistance are affected, thus close collaboration with other global Clusters and AoRs is critical. The HLP AoR will collaborate more actively with the Global Protection Cluster, the Global Shelter Cluster, the Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management Cluster, the Global WASH Cluster and the Global Early Recovery Cluster. Sector-specific tools will be developed. The global HLP AoR will also engage more actively with the AoR on Gender Based Violence to address the linkages between GBV issues and access to HLP rights by women and girls. All mainstreaming activities of the HLP AoR feed into the work of the GPC Task Team on Protection Mainstreaming.

## CONTACT

**Laura Cunial**

ICLA Adviser

Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)

Email : [laura.cunial@nrc.no](mailto:laura.cunial@nrc.no)

Phone : +41(0)798942917

**Victoria Stodart**

Senior Officer - HLP

IFRC

Email : [victoria.stodart@ifrc.org](mailto:victoria.stodart@ifrc.org)

Phone: +41 (0) 797 084 821