



**Global Protection Cluster Mission  
Yemen  
1-9 October 2010**

**Background**

The Global Protection Cluster undertook a mission to Yemen, from 1-9 October 2010, in order to support the Yemen Protection Cluster at the national and sub-national levels. The Global Protection Cluster support mission (GPC mission) was in line with the role and responsibilities of global clusters to provide support to field clusters in the following areas: setting standards and policies on protection; identifying and disseminating good practices, and supporting the development of strengthened protection capacity.

**Participants**

Leonard Zulu, Global Protection Cluster Support Cell; Helene Ruud, Child Protection Area of Responsibility and Peter Ekayu Gender Advisor to the Humanitarian Country Team.

The Global Protection Cluster, within its limits of capacity, provides operational field support to Humanitarian Country Teams by:

- Undertaking support missions to assist in identifying protection gaps and developing strategies for response;
- Providing guidance and support for the mainstreaming of human rights, age, gender and diversity, and HIV/AIDS;
- Supporting advocacy on protection;
- Providing technical support and policy advice on protection issues;
- Strengthening the protection capacity of humanitarian actors and other stakeholders, including national and local authorities and affected populations, through training programmes;
- Supporting efforts to address specific protection concerns in a given country, and Participating in resource mobilizations for protection activities.

**Mission Objectives and Methodology**

The objectives of the mission, which are more fully contained in the attached Terms of Reference (annex 1), were as follows:

- 1) Review the performance and the scope of the protection cluster at the national and sub-national levels;
- 2) Provide support and guidance on the use of protection monitoring tools and intervention methods with the aim of strengthening the leverage of the protection cluster in promoting a human rights oriented agenda for the overall IDP operation;

- 3) Share lessons learnt and good practices from other IDP operations facing similar operational constraints relating to limited access to persons of concern due to insecurity, presence of land mines, and limited presence of any authority;
- 4) Assist the protection cluster in planning effective responses to the protection risks for the IDPs in the different potential settings foreseen e.g. protracted displacement situation, relocation, return to places of origin and new displacement;
- 5) Assess the utilities of the results of the IDP profiling, the Saada district profiling and the IDP policy/strategy for future planning;
- 6) Provide advice to protection cluster and participate in the Joint Initiative for Saada particularly to analyse the results and the conclusion with the protection cluster team (the mission did not have the opportunity to participate in this exercise).

The methodology of the mission was as follows:

1. Focused group consultations with protection cluster members, governmental counterparts and members of the humanitarian country team, individually and collectively, at the capital and field levels;
2. Based on the objectives organize discussion forums to share good practices on protection systems including monitoring/interventions/referrals/protection work through remote control;
3. At the end of the mission share findings and recommendations with key interlocutors.

## **Summary Observations of the Global Protection Cluster Mission**

### **Coordination**

The Yemen Protection Cluster represents a fairly good model, with a strong field presence, good interface with beneficiaries through community based protection networks that promote the participation of men and women. However, the mission observed the need for the Yemen Protection Cluster to work in a more integrated and harmonized manner, without prejudice to the work of specialized Areas of Responsibility, with a view of avoiding fragmentation of the Protection Cluster into separate and discrete entities that for all intents and purposes would wind up working totally independently. This will have the additional value of rationalizing and streamlining the coordination mechanism and reducing the proliferation of coordination meetings. In more detail the following issues relating to coordination were noted:

- There is a positive impetus amongst the members of the field protection clusters to coordinate effectively; however, the mission observed overlapping coordination mechanisms, conflation of protection issues on the humanitarian agenda leading to prioritisation and strategic focus challenges.
- The mission observed a weak interface between the national and sub-national clusters. National level intra-cluster coordination mechanisms risk fragmentation if the structure of the Protection Cluster is not fully integrated to ensure the requisite levels of synergy and coherence;

- Inter cluster coordination is present at the sub-national level, though it seemed to lack coherence and focus. At the national level, there seems to be limited capacity to effectively utilize the useful opportunity presented by the existence of the inter cluster coordination mechanism. As well as links with other clusters, focus on solving sectoral issues with other clusters should be enhanced;
- The mission did not observe a clear linkage between the Government coordination mechanisms and the cluster system;
- The mission noted the promising presence of community protection networks comprising members of host communities and IDPs. This seemed to hold potential to remotely deliver protection services to the affected population, especially as concerns IDPs outside camps.

### **Partnerships**

The mission observed a positive level of engagement and collaboration between the field level humanitarian actors and government counterparts. However, government counterpart participation in protection cluster activities at the national level is not always consistent and systematic, especially concerning the participation of senior technical level officials from the Executive Units responsible for IDPs and Ministry responsible for Human Rights.

The capacity of national non-governmental organizations to take on cluster responsibilities and proactively implement cluster activities is limited.

### **Integration of Cross- Cutting Issues**

The mission observed the need to prioritise cross-cutting issues into the work of the protection clusters, especially age, gender and diversity. In addition, HIV/AIDS prevention and response as well as environment protection strategies have not been fully integrated in the humanitarian response.

The application of the gender marker and comprehension of its utility are still relatively weak, though, concerted efforts are being made by the humanitarian country team with the support of the newly arrived Gender Advisor.

### **Trafficking**

This was noted as an issue of concern that needs to be addressed within the context of the IDP operation in Yemen. This issue needs to be addressed by the humanitarian actors and clearly linked to long term development objectives.

### **Needs Assessments**

Needs assessments contain limited disaggregated and differentiated needs of women, men, boys, and girls. This is in the main due to the fact that a comprehensive and joint inter-cluster needs assessment has as yet to be undertaken;

The protection needs assessment does not highlight gender dimensions such as the influence of gender roles and social-cultural norms and beliefs, which exacerbate pre-existing vulnerabilities.

### **Contingency Planning and Preparedness**

The mission observed that contingency planning and preparedness had not been prioritised notwithstanding the current precarious protection and security environment.

### **Transition to Recovery**

The coordination linkage between the Protection and Early Recovery Clusters is weak due to the need for a clear definition of the early recovery agenda in Yemen. In addition, there has been limited strategic dialogue and elaboration of a common action plan between the two clusters. It was clear to the mission that effective leadership from the early recovery cluster is an essential prerequisite for this linkage to be realized.

### **Mine Action**

The mission noted the limited occurrence of Mine Risk Education as well as effective mine action coordination and clearance activities which are concentrated under governmental entity. This was a major issue of concern by all humanitarian actors as well as IDPs who highlighted it as a major return obstacle.

### **Prevention and Response to Gender Based Violence**

Limited priority and attention to gender-based violence (GBV) issues at the field level clusters, attributed to the cultural sensitivity surrounding GBV and limited technical capacity on GBV programming. The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on GBV have been rolled out, but there is a major gap in application. The real challenge lies in adapting and contextualizing these standards, within the limited window of opportunity provided through humanitarian action. National level discussions are ongoing on the establishment of a GBV Area of Responsibility. This should be managed carefully to ensure that there is no duplication and increase in the number of meetings in which the same people attend cluster and sub-cluster meetings and discuss the same issues. The Protection Cluster may also wish to explore other options that would not entail the establishment of a fully fledged GBV AOR.

### **Child Protection**

The mission observed coherent coordination mechanisms at the national level. There is a dedicated coordinator in place and the government partner on child protection, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MOSAL), has taken on the role as co-chair. All the major Child Protection agencies participate in the coordination mechanism. The working group has a good basis for streamlining and strategizing its work in the evaluation of the coordination mechanism and the child protection assessment which were both recently undertaken. There is a need to develop a work-plan, and ensure that the plans for the national level and two coordination mechanisms at sub-national level are harmonized. In Amran, the mission was concerned with the discontinuation of the field presence of the Child Protection Area of Responsibility Focal Point Agency to be replaced by periodic mission visits from Sana'a. In Haradh, the mission observed that the child protection focal point had multiple responsibilities, in addition to the core coordination function.

### **Protection Mainstreaming**

The mission observed that protection concerns were not systematically mainstreamed into the activities of other clusters and humanitarian actors.

The mission did not observe clear measures relevant to the prevention and response to sexual exploitation and abuse.

### **IDP Profiling**

The mission noted the excellent work done by the IDP profiling team and encourages the Protection Cluster and other Clusters to utilise the results of the exercise.

### **Summary of Focused Group Consultation with the Yemen Protection Cluster (Sana'a, Amran and Haradh) and the ADRA Managed IDP Community Centre.**

The GPC mission organized structured focus group consultations with members of the national level Yemen Protection Cluster as well as the sub-national level Amran and Haradh Field Protection Clusters. The focus group consultations were held on 2 October (Sana'a), 4 October (Amran) and 5 October (Haradh). The Protection Cluster members highlighted the following main issues of concern to the mission:

1. Issuance and re-issuance of civil identity documentation;
2. Limited gender based violence prevention and response activities on account of entrenched traditional customs and values that make protection work in this area of concern a major challenge (SOPs had been developed and some training undertaken). There were also concerns expressed with regard to the referral of GBV cases. The humanitarian workers felt that there was no effective lead on GBV issues;
3. Some Mine Risk Education is taking place, but there is still need for comprehensive coverage, especially considering that a number of IDPs are spontaneously returning to former areas of conflict. In addition, it was felt that mine clearance activities were not comprehensive enough in coverage, especially in areas of return where there is limited humanitarian access. Participants informed that there was no clearly defined plan of action to address the issue of mines and explosive remnants of war. There is also limited support to survivors. The field Protection Cluster members also expressed a general feeling that no concerted action has been taken to galvanize mine action coordination;
4. In the Amran field operation there is limited field presence of agencies, apart from WFP and UNHCR, other agencies have relocated to the capital. However, in Haradh there is a good representation of humanitarian agencies;
5. Coordination is a major challenge. Opinions were expressed that the meetings need rationalization as some humanitarian actors use them as information sharing or gathering forums without contributing much to gap analysis and prioritisation. In addition, NGOs also expressed their concern with the existing coordination in the field operations which they opined at times leads to duplication of assistance delivery;
6. The field protection cluster coordination activities focus on information sharing, however, the government led inter-sectoral coordination mechanism, chaired by the Executive Unit on IDPs, usually identifies gaps and priorities;
7. Mental health support and referral mechanisms are very limited, partly on account of the fact that there is limited capacity in the country and access to available services is fee based;
8. Field Protection cluster and national protection cluster linkage needs strengthening;
9. Humanitarian access constrained for security reasons and the presence of check points, including those operated by tribal militias;

10. Capacity building on the implementation of the cluster approach, IDP protection standards, GBV prevention and response and durable solutions were requested (it is also worth noting that humanitarian workers may need support on how to identify specific capacity development needs through the deployment of technical experts);
11. In Amran there were concerns expressed on the limited participation of the IDPs in the drawing-up of the 12 point assistance criteria;
12. Overcrowding in accommodation facilities; high rentals, irregular evictions from accommodation is a major issue of concern for IDPs outside camps. This may be a factor in the increased incidents of domestic violence and depression;
13. HIV/AIDs prevention and response strategies are not fully available, the issue is considered taboo (“haraam”) on account of traditional customs and values;
14. Negative impact on the environment due to firewood collection in the Haradh location;
15. Expressed need for guidance on monitoring returns of IDPs, especially in a context where there is limited humanitarian access and significant spontaneous movements to areas of origin;
16. Participation of national authorities, especially from concerned government line Ministries such as health, education and Executive Units, in the work of the protection cluster needs to be enhanced;
17. The majority of the IDPs are accommodated outside camps in locations sprawled across a wide area making monitoring and delivery of protection and assistance services difficult;
18. Limited access to basic services, which are constrained by discriminatory practices and the demand for fees, especially as concerns health institutions. In addition, matriculation certificates have not been issued to some children who then can not access education and in some instances the requirement for school uniforms leads to exclusion of IDP children without financial means to purchase them;
19. A range of examples on remote protection management were provided from the Somalia Operation which can be adapted in the context of Yemen.

### **Summary of the GPC’s Participation in the 2011 Yemen Humanitarian Action Plan**

On 3 October the GPC mission participated in the review of the 2011 Yemen Humanitarian Action Plan (YHAP). The meeting was convened to validate the 2011 YHAP strategic objectives and outline key indicators. The members of the GPC mission took the floor on a number of occasions making suggestions to the humanitarian country team to consider the following:

1. **Protection Mainstreaming**: The GPC mission recommended to the HCT to explicitly state in the YHAP that it was a requirement for protection to be mainstreamed in all the activities of the clusters. To this end, the mission specifically suggested that the phrase “protection mainstreaming” be inserted in the text of objective 1;
2. **Insertion of Protection Language**: The GPC mission, working together with Protection Cluster members, including Representative of the Cluster Lead Agency (UNHCR) as

well as other participants; successfully managed to strengthen the protection content of the strategic objectives;

3. **Elaboration of Indicators for the Strategic Objectives:** The GPC mission joined one of the three working groups constituted to consider each of the three strategic objectives and come up with measurable indicators. This work was completed and reviewed by the HCT and incorporated into the 2011 YHAP.

The following critical issues were also raised during the 2011 YHAP review meeting:

1. **Humanitarian access:** The HCT and the HC should continue to pursue this enabling and imperative issue of concern. It was underlined that humanitarian response monitoring activities are impaired in areas where access is limited, especially as concerns areas of potential returns or where spontaneous return movements have already occurred;
2. **Spontaneous returns:** In light of the above, the HCT expressed its continuing concern with the safety and well-being of persons who have returned to areas of origin or moved to areas closer to their areas of concern;
3. **Remote Coordination and Management:** The HCT underlined the need for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the undertaking of monitoring activities, including protection work in areas with limited or no humanitarian access;
4. **Capacity Building of National Actors:** The HCT stressed the need for capacity development of national actors, including the national staff of agencies and the support of Global Clusters was encouraged;

It is important to note that the 2011 Yemen Humanitarian Action Plan will be shared with Global Clusters during the Headquarters review period that has been planned to take place from 4-8 November 2010. The Global Protection Cluster and Areas of Responsibility Focal Point Agencies will, as usual, participate in this review process.

### Country Level Recommendations

1. The Yemen protection cluster should focus its activities on protection gaps identification and response prioritisation. To this end, it should limit information sharing by identifying alternatives such as a more effective use of electronic communication, written updates and periodic dedicated information sessions.

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster with the Cluster Coordinator taking the lead.

2. To pursue the efforts of strengthening linkages between the Yemen Protection Cluster and its field based sub-national Protection Clusters in Amran and Haradh. To this end, it is highly recommended that field protection clusters should attend national level meetings at least once every quarter. In turn, the national protection cluster members should as a team visit the field at least twice a year;

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster

3. The national level protection cluster and sub-national protection clusters should harmonise workplans. The national level protection cluster should mainly focus on strategic direction as its core function and the sub-national level protection clusters on the delivery of protection services in the field;

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster

4. As there is no permanent UNICEF presence in Amran, it is recommended that Save the Children chair the child protection coordination group there supported by UNICEF.

**Action:** Yemen Child Protection AoR

5. Remote Protection Management, Coordination and Delivery can be enhanced through the current community based protection networks; focusing on their proper training and acquisition of practical experience;

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster and HCT members represented on the Cluster;

6. Enhance evidence based protection programming through undertaking a comprehensive protection needs assessment and putting in place reporting and monitoring mechanisms.

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster

7. Undertake systematic application of the gender marker and capacity building on gender sensitive needs assessments.

**Action:** Gender Advisor (Gencap)

8. Strategy on prioritisation and integration of cross-cutting issues into protection work, in particular gender, ageing, disabilities and HIV/AIDS, should be elaborated by the HCT;



**Action:** HCT and relevant Cross-Cutting Issues Focal Points; Gender Advisor with the Support of Global Cross-Cutting Issues focal points;

9. Establishment of GBV AoR in Yemen only in a situation in which a dedicated AOR coordinator is assigned to ensure viability of the AOR .

**Action:** GBV actors in Yemen;

10. Implementation of Sexual, Exploitation and Abuse Secretary-General's Guidelines

**Action:** OCHA supported by the Gender Advisor (GenCap)

11. Yemen Protection and Early Recovery Clusters should hold a strategic dialogue and agree on a common action plan. Global Protection and Early Recovery Clusters should support this meeting;

**Action:** Yemen Protection and Early Recovery Clusters and Global Protection and Early Recovery Clusters

12. Advocacy for the government of Yemen counterpart, Executive IDP Unit, to designate a specialized technical functionary to ensure consistent and systematic institutional participation in the activities of the Yemen Protection Cluster at the national level.

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster

13. Advocacy for governmental technical staff from the Executive Unit to attend coordination skills and IDP protection training. To this end, a local training capacity, for sustainability purposes, should be developed in Yemen;

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster

14. Child Protection AoR to provide dedicated English language proficient human resource capacity to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour (MoSAL) to ensure effective coordination and co-chairing of the CP AoR.

**Action:** UNICEF and MoSAL

15. Strengthening of the participation of IDPs outside camps and the affected population in protection cluster activities. Women and men should participate on an equal and meaningful basis.

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster

16. The good practice of having IDP community centres, such as the one on Sana'a should be replicated in the main IDP hosting communities, and access to these centres actively facilitated. To this end, professional Arabic/English interpreters should also be made available to facilitate communication with humanitarian workers who are not proficient in Arabic;

**Action:** Yemen Protection Cluster

### Global Level Recommendations

1. Protection mainstreaming workshop to be organized in Yemen, during which an all cluster checklist should be elaborated for implementation by the clusters in the country humanitarian operation;

**Action:** Global Protection Cluster (Support Cell and AOR, including Protection Mainstreaming Task Force) and Yemen Protection Cluster;

2. Cluster Coordination and Implementation of the Cluster Approach Training of Trainers Workshop to be held during the first quarter of 2011

**Action:** Global Protection Cluster- Task Force on Learning;

3. UNHCR staff on the Protection and CCCM Clusters (2 national level, 2 Amran sub-national level and 2 Haradh sub-national level and 2 from the Sa'daa) to be nominated by the Representation to participate in the Tri-Cluster Training planned for Jakarta Indonesia in February 2011;

**Action:** Global Protection Cluster Support Cell

4. The Global Protection Cluster to participate in the inter-cluster support mission. The GBV AOR should participate in this mission to review the response approach on GBV issues,

**Action:** Global Protection Cluster Support Cell

5. Inter-Cluster Support Mission to closely look at the current inter-cluster coordination mechanism in its forthcoming mission to Yemen planned for November 2010;

**Action:** Inter-Cluster Support Mission to Yemen

6. Review GBV humanitarian activities in Yemen to ensure that they are action oriented and have an impact in the field, including with regard to the existing referral mechanism and adaptation of the IASC GBV Guidelines to the local context,

**Action:** Global GBV AOR (UNFPA/UNICEF) and the GBV actors in Yemen;

7. Enhancement of Mine Risk Education and scoping of mine action and coordination needs;

**Action:** UNICEF concerning Mine Risk Education and UNMAS for the scoping of Mine Action and Coordination Needs;

8. Key protection tools should be identified and translated into Arabic and disseminated as soon as possible, especially the IDP Protection Handbook;

**Action:** Global Protection Cluster

## Yemen Protection Cluster Resource Requirement Recommendations

### Long Term Deployments

1. **Dedicated Cluster Coordinator:** To deal with cluster coordination activities as more fully contained in the generic TORs of Cluster Coordinators;

**Action:** Cluster Lead Agency;

2. **National Assistant:** To deal with follow-up activities and communication in Arabic to ensure that external protection advocacy for IDPs (inside and outside camps) is timely and sustainable;

**Action:** Cluster Lead Agency

3. **Information Management Officer:** To manage and maintain protection information for the Yemen Protection Cluster membership;

**Action:** Cluster Lead Agency;

4. **Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AOR):**

**Dedicated Coordinator AOR:** Maintenance of the current arrangement.

**National Assistant:** to deal with follow-up activities and communication in Arabic to ensure that external protection advocacy for IDPs (inside and outside camps) is timely and sustainable;

5. **GBV AoR coordinator: At the time of establishment of the GBV AoR**

### Short Term Deployments

1. **Technical Expert on Ageing and Disabilities:** There is a need for a comprehensive strategy to bring together the discrete ageing and disabilities interventions that are being undertaken into a coherent programme of action;

**Action:** Global Protection Cluster (En route deployment scheduled for November-processing of TORs and visa entry formalities and requirements to be initiated immediately);

2. **Technical Expert on GBV:** There is a need to operationalize the current GBV standard operating procedures, improve training of humanitarian workers to be more at ease dealing with this issue of concern;

**Action:** Global GBV Area of Responsibility in cooperation with Gender Advisor (Gencap);

3. **Technical Expert on MHPSS:** to review the existing mental health and psychosocial activities in Yemen and elaborate an appropriate strategy in close cooperation with the HCT.

**Action:** MHPSS XCI Focal Point, Global Health Cluster and Global Protection Cluster;

4. **Technical Expert on HIV/AIDS:** There is a need to strengthen HIV/AIDS prevention and response activities in the humanitarian response and link it to the national HIV/AIDS programme;

**Action:** HIV/AIDS XCI Focal Point, UN AIDS and Global Protection Cluster

5. **Technical Expert on Mine Action:** There is a need to undertake a mine action and coordination scoping mission;

**Action:** Global Mine Action Area of Responsibility Focal Point Agency (UNMAS)

6. **Training Expert for Protection Cluster Coordination:** There is a need to strengthen protection cluster leadership and coordination

**Action:** Global Protection Cluster.