



# GUIDANCE ON RAPID PROTECTION ASSESSMENTS

JULY 2018

The RPA is designed to gather critical data on emerging and escalating protection concerns and provide a quick overview of the protection situation in a given location. Information is gathered at the community level in relation to a specific scenario or set of circumstances.

- Objectives**
- **Identify immediate community-level protection concerns:** for relevant stakeholders with the goal of having an immediate life-saving or life-sustaining impact, either through programmatic delivery or advocacy
  - **Inform the initial protection response:** with particular focus on persons with specific needs, including CP and GBV, as well as to inform subsequent protection monitoring and technical assessments (including child protection and GBV) conducted by specialized interviewers with broader community participation.
  - **Conduct or update existing service mapping:** to ensure up-to-date information on available services and referral pathways.
  - **Inform guidance to non-protection humanitarian actors:** on how to provide assistance in a particular context in a manner consistent with protection principles.
- Methodology** Assessors use **observation, key informant interviews, focus group discussions** (disaggregated by age and sex) and/or community discussions to collect information related to protection.
- Staffing** Normally the RPA will be conducted by a team of 2-5 persons, balancing male and female staff, trained in the RPA tools and methodology. A team leader should be responsible for overseeing the deployment of the RPA, including selection of participants
- Tools** The methodology of the RPA is flexible to adapt to the possibilities and constraints of each protection situation, using a combination of models:
- **Direct Observation:** Structured observation of the location, which may involve asking simple questions of neighbors, shopkeepers or passers-by in order to understand what is happening—and not happening.
  - **Key informants:** Semi-structured interviews with individuals (normally 3-6 interviews) who have special knowledge of what is happening. Depending on the nature of the emergency, the matrix suggests which key informants are likely to be relevant.
  - **Focus group discussions:** Semi-structured group discussions (normally 2-4 FGDs) with groups of 10-15 persons grouped according to their sex and age.
  - **Community discussions:** Structured group discussions (normally 1-2 discussions) with groups of more than ten persons who are generally not grouped according to their sex and age. Used when it is not possible to organize focus group discussions or to help expedite comparing and analysing results from multiple FGDs. It provides more quantitative feedback around protection issues.

## RPA Direct Observation Tool

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Observer names(s)</b>	
<b>Location:</b>		<b>Interpreters (s):</b>	
<b>Time:</b>		<b>Observer organization(s)</b>	
<b>Kind of Site:</b>			

Themes	Guiding Questions	Notes
<b>1. Site Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has any civilian infrastructure been affected? Indicate type and extent (school, health centre, destroyed, temporarily used as shelter)</li> <li>What kind of shelter are people living in? Please provide details (overcrowding, separation of women/men).</li> <li>What is the state of other infrastructure?</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Population Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approximately how many displaced persons are here in comparison to the host population?</li> <li>Are there a disproportionate number of women or children?</li> <li>Are there elderly or injured people?</li> <li>Do people appear to show symptoms of trauma or psychosocial distress?</li> <li>Are there any population groups or demographics not seen in public places (i.e persons living with disability, young men)</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Access to services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there signs that humanitarian assistance is being distributed or services are available? Indicate who is distributing what assistance.</li> <li>Can any functioning health facilities be observed?</li> <li>Can a school be observed?</li> <li>Are there signs of individuals bringing water to the location? How far is the nearest watersource? And who usually brings the water?</li> <li>In case the location has communal bathing facilities or latrines, are there separate facilities for males and females?</li> <li>Is there a working light around toilet facilities/latrines?</li> <li>Is there a water source in the location? Are individuals waiting for long periods to access?</li> <li>Is there a place where children and young people meet to play or socialise</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Specialized protection needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What daily activities can you observe being done by the following groups during the visit? (Women, Men, Girls, Boys)</li> <li>What do you observe about other groups, such as elderly or people with disabilities during the visit?</li> <li>Are there signs of specific isolation or neglect of some persons or groups? Specify who and to what extent</li> <li>Can any care arrangements for persons with physical disabilities be observed?</li> <li>Can any care arrangements for separated and unaccompanied children be observed?</li> <li>Does the location of the school create risks for children?</li> </ul>	

## RPA Direct Observation Tool

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does the state of the school building create risks for children?</li> <li>Does the location of bathrooms create risks for women and girls?</li> <li>Does the location of the water point create risks for women and girls?</li> </ul>	
5. Physical Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there signs that people in the location could be in danger for any reason?</li> <li>Are there signs that individuals have been killed or are being mourned?</li> <li>Are there any signs of limitations of movement for the population or your access to the area, such as roadblocks, checkpoints?</li> <li>What government institutions function normally in the area?</li> <li>Are there signs of risks from natural hazards?</li> <li>Are there signs of immediate threats to safety (i.e. fire, UXO/ERW, open water)?</li> </ul>	
6. Social Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there signs of tensions between groups in the population (i.e. displaced and host)?</li> </ul>	
7. Other concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any other concerns observed</li> </ul>	

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Interviewer names(s)</b>	
<b>Location:</b>		<b>Interpreters (s):</b>	
<b>Time:</b>		<b>Interviewer organization(s)</b>	
<b>Key Informant</b>			
<b>Name:</b>		<b>Title/Role/Organization:</b>	
<b>Gender:</b>		<b>Age:</b>	

### Example introduction

“Hello my name is XX and I work for XX (organization). We are trying to understand better the situation here so that we can better protect people or ask persons with authority to do it. I would like to ask you some questions about the situation here. Your participation is voluntary and you can choose not to answer any or all of the questions. Any personally identifiable information that you provide will be kept strictly confidential. However, if you agree to participate, your responses will help us to better understand the protection-related challenges and will enable us to try to address them, if solutions are available in your area. Do you agree with the interview?”

Guiding Questions		Notes
<b>1. Site Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What civilian infrastructure has been affected, if any, in this place?</li> <li>• What kind of shelter are people living in? Please provide details (overcrowding, separation of women/men).</li> <li>• What is the state of other infrastructure?</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Population Details</b>	<p>Are there persons from the following groups present in this location?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persons with disabilities</li> <li>• Persons with other chronic illness including mental health problems</li> <li>• Destitute older persons</li> <li>• Older persons providing care to a household</li> <li>• Single heads-of-household</li> <li>• Child-headed household</li> <li>• Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)</li> <li>• Persons traumatized by the events of the emergency</li> <li>• Children not attending school</li> <li>• Other, (explain)</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Access to services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What main services are available or needed here (health, nutrition, education, food, child support, women’s services, persons with disabilities, legal assistance, psychosocial support, other)?</li> <li>• Are there any specific obstacles or problems in accessing services?</li> <li>• Who is more affected by obstacles or barriers to assistance (age, gender and identity)?</li> <li>• How do the families get by? What are their subsistence means/strategies? Are there negative coping strategies?</li> </ul>	

## RPA Key Informant Tool

<p><b>4. Specialized protection needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the main risks or challenges faced by women and girls in your community? Men and boys? Persons with disability and elderly?</li> <li>• What percentage of population lost essential identity documents?</li> <li>• Are there any children in this location without parents or other family members taking care of them? If so, with whom are they staying?</li> <li>• Are there any care arrangements for persons in need, e.g. unaccompanied children, elderly, persons with disabilities?</li> <li>• What activities do adolescent boys and girls including youth engaged in?</li> <li>• In your opinion, which persons are affected most by the situation in this place?</li> <li>• Are there any problems of housing, land and property, e.g. evictions?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5. Physical Safety</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the causes of death and injury of the population?</li> <li>• Is the population able to move freely and safely in and out of the location?</li> <li>• Have mines or ERWs been found here?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>6. Social Cohesion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there signs of tensions between groups in the population (i.e. displaced and host)?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>7. Other concerns</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any other concerns you would like to raise?</li> </ul>	

## RPA Focus Group Discussion Tool

<b>Date:</b>		<b>Facilitator(s):</b>	
<b>Location:</b>		<b>Interpreters (s):</b>	
<b>Time:</b>		<b>Note Taker(s):</b>	
<b>FGD Number:</b>		<b>How were participants identified:</b>	

Focus Group Composition		
<b>Sex:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female	<b>Target Population:</b>
<b>Age groups:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Children/adolescents (15-18) <input type="checkbox"/> Adults (19-49) <input type="checkbox"/> Elders (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in Camps <input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in Settlements <input type="checkbox"/> IDPs living with host families or privately in rural areas <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict-affected host population
<b>Total Number of participants:</b>	_____	
<b>Location/Village:</b>	<b>District:</b>	<b>Governorate:</b>
Residential characteristics (fill out the relevant):	Name of village/town/city (if relevant): District within city (if relevant): Name of settlement (if relevant): GPS coordinates (if possible)	

### Example introduction

- Explain clearly the aim and nature of the FGD (e.g. “we are here to collect some information on the experiences and opinions of people, who have been affected by displacement; this collection of information is part of a larger national data collection/research, with the aim to better understand the impact of displacement and how to bring about its resolution”).
- Introduce yourself, as the facilitator, the note taker(s), and translator; clarify what your roles are.
- Clarify the intended use of the FGD outcomes and what is expected of the participants; (e.g. “the information we collect will be used by many different organizations working with IDPs; the collection of information is not linked to any specific project and we can’t offer you anything for your participation, besides our appreciation!”).
- Explain that participants will remain anonymous; (e.g. “we do not note your names and they will not appear anywhere in the information filed”).
- Set the ground rules for the discussion; (e.g. “we are interested in opinions and experiences of everyone present, so do give time and space to each other to contribute”, “please, raise your hand, if you wish to contribute, so we can organize the discussion”, “do avoid parallel discussions, as that will make it very difficult for the note taker to capture the discussion”, “do respect the opinions of others, we are interested in all different views, even if they don’t represent everyone in the community” etc.).
- Explain how the participants will receive feedback.
- Ask for permission to take notes and, if relevant, to record the discussion.

### To be read to respondent at the start of the interview

“Hello my name is XX and I work for XX (organization). I would like to ask you some questions about the protection-related challenges you and your household may be facing. Your participation is voluntary and you can choose not to answer any or all of the questions. Any personally identifiable information that you provide will be kept strictly confidential. However, if you agree to participate, your responses will help us to better understand the protection-

related challenges you face and will enable us to try to address them, if solutions are available in your area. Do you agree to take part of the FGD?"

Themes	Guiding Questions	Observation Notes
<b>1. Population Details</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When, how, and from where were people displaced?</li> <li>• Do you anticipate more people from your area of origin to come?</li> <li>• Do you know when people might come? Why did they not leave with you?</li> <li>• What are your future intentions?</li> <li>• Are you aware of any elderly, disabled or injured people?</li> <li>• Are you aware of any unaccompanied or separated children?</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Access to services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the main problems you encounter in terms of health, education, food, water, or other needs? Can you rank those problems?</li> <li>• Who is more affected by obstacles or barriers to assistance (age, gender and identity)?</li> <li>• Are you aware of where to access any of the following services (health, nutrition, education, food, child support, women’s services, persons with disabilities, legal assistance, psychosocial support, other)?</li> <li>• How do the families get by? What are your subsistence means/strategies?</li> <li>• Who provides support to UASC, the elderly, child headed households, people living with disabilities and single mothers.</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Specialized protection needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the main risks or challenges faced by women and girls in your community? Men and boys?</li> <li>• Do you and your family members have their Identification papers (IDs, Birth Certificates and Marriage form)? If not, why? Do you know how to get it?</li> <li>• Do you know where to go to register the child? If Yes, how many children obtained the birth certificate since the displacement?</li> <li>• Do young children face any unique risks or threats?</li> <li>• Are children able to attend school?</li> <li>• Are there any other groups (youth, older persons, persons with disabilities) that experience extraordinary risks or challenges?</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Physical Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In which situations do you not feel safe? Mention incidents you know of (not necessarily personal).</li> <li>• Have persons in the community been killed, injured or harmed by the war (airstrikes, shelling, landmines, etc.)?</li> <li>• Has anyone you know personally experienced or witnessed violence recently?</li> <li>• Have you heard of any one being restricted in their movement to other places? What were the circumstances?</li> </ul>	

## RPA Focus Group Discussion Tool

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have you observed any children in your family being exposed directly to the war?</li> <li>• Do you know if any children were injured or affected by conflict, mines or UXOs?</li> </ul>	
5. Social Cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How are relations between the host community and IDPs?</li> <li>• Have you noticed other points of tension in the community?</li> </ul>	
6. Other concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there any other concerns you would like to share today?</li> <li>• Do you have any potential recommendations or solutions you would like to raise?</li> </ul>	



## RPA Structured Community Discussion Tool

To address data analysis challenges while retaining the idea of focus group discussions, a more structured community discussion approach can be defined:

- A series of statement is developed in order to cover Protection Cluster’s main concerns. Discussions will be structured around the recording of agreement level for each of the statements. It is best used when focused on one specific area of concern.
- The statement should be read exactly as it is written to the group. It is important that all groups understand the same statement.
- A maximum of 3 minutes will be given for the group to find a consensus on a level of agreement.
- If after 3 minutes, no agreement can be found, then the “no agreement” box should be ticked and reasons for disagreement to be documented.
- This will help obtain better quantitative data around protection issues.

Structured Community Discussion Composition		
<b>Sex:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female  <input type="checkbox"/> Both Male and Female	<b>Target Population:</b>
<b>Age groups involved:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Children/adolescents (15-18) <input type="checkbox"/> Adults (19-49) <input type="checkbox"/> Elders (50+)	<input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in Camps <input type="checkbox"/> IDPs in Settlements <input type="checkbox"/> IDPs living with host families or privately in rural areas <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict-affected host population
<b>Total Number of participants:</b>	_____	
<b>Location:</b>	<b>County:</b>	<b>State:</b>
Residential characteristics (fill out the relevant):	Name of village/town/city (if relevant): District within city (if relevant): Name of settlement (if relevant): GPS coordinates (if possible)	

Please rate from the following each of the statement read:

- 5 – Strongly Agree
- 4 – Agree
- 3 – Undecided
- 2 – Disagree
- 1 – Strong Disagree

When recording outcome, please record if the group agree or disagree. If there was a disagreement, please note reasons:

1. Young and older persons in the group were not able to agree
2. One person the group was strongly disagreeing with the others
3. Opinions were polarized in two groups
4. People have different understanding of the statement

Themes	Statements	Observation Notes
1. Population Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ It was easy to leave our area of origin</li> <li>▪ We did not face any obstacles in accessing our current location</li> <li>▪ In our community in the last month, unaccompanied or separated children were taken care of by adults or caregivers</li> </ul>	

## RPA Structured Community Discussion Tool

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In our community in the last month, persons with disability or those with vulnerabilities and specific needs were taken care of by caregiver</li> </ul>	
<b>2. Access to services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In our community in the last month, there were access to health, education, food, water and shelter.</li> <li>• In our community in the last month, women and children had equal access to assistance.</li> <li>• In our community in the last month, unaccompanied or separated children were taken care of by adults or caregivers</li> <li>• In our community in the last month, persons with disability or those with vulnerabilities and specific needs were taken care of by caregiver</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Specialized protection needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In our community, all persons (women, girls, men and boys) faced no risks or challenges to protection.</li> <li>• In our community, civil registration documentation such as birth, ID cards, marriage and death certificates were easy to obtain.</li> <li>• In our community, we had easy access to the civil registration office.</li> <li>• In our community, children are being recruited into armed forces</li> <li>• In our community, there have been child marriages?</li> <li>• In our community, specific groups (youth, older persons, persons with disabilities) do not experience extraordinary risks or challenges?</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Physical Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In our community, we feel safe.</li> <li>• In our community, there has been no risk or injury due to airstrikes, shelling, landmines, etc.</li> <li>• In our community in the past month, no one has personally experienced or witnessed violence</li> <li>• In our community, there has been no restriction of movement (roadblock, checkpoint detention)? What were the circumstances</li> <li>• In our community in the past month, many children have been injured or affected by conflict, mines or UXOs</li> </ul>	
<b>5. Social Cohesion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In our community, we get along well with the host community.</li> <li>• In our community in the past month, there has been no points of tension in the community</li> </ul>	