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CHILD PROTECTION AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY



STRATEGY 2020 – 2024

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FOREWORD



In 2018 approximately 50 million children in humanitarian crises¹ needed protection services and interventions. Children are amongst the most vulnerable in crises situations, exposed to life-threatening risks, extreme violence, abuse, physical and sexual exploitation, separation from their families, abduction or military recruitment. Even where they are not directly targeted children witness violence, experience terror, and deal with uncertainty and anxiety daily. The lasting effects can be both physical and emotional, impacting heavily on children's learning, behavior, and emotional and social development. Humanitarian emergencies also deprive children of access to health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education and other basic needs.

Given the horrendous impact of such situations on children, including those fueled by the climate emergency, and the complex needs of children in humanitarian emergencies it is imperative that child protection in emergencies is prioritized, adequately funded and well-coordinated to ensure an effective, timely and efficient response. The Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) is specifically focused on enhancing child protection coordination and response in humanitarian contexts. This includes ensuring that the efforts of national and international actors to protect children are coordinated to achieve maximum quality and impact. Working through coordination groups is critical to respond at scale and achieve system wide improvements for the current environment.

Led by UNICEF, the Child Protection AoR is very much a community, with a wide, diverse and active membership of national and international organizations committed to supporting and providing the coordination of child protection response and prevention activities in humanitarian crises.

The CP AoR maintains the capability to rapidly deploy coordination, information management and technical experts to new and protracted crisis. It provides guidance materials and supports capacity development initiatives to strengthen coordination

and build local capacity. Help desks operating in four different languages provide in-country staff with rapid support and guidance. It works in close partnership with other leading child protection actors and the wider protection community, strengthening protection analysis and supporting a more holistic response, including prevention and preparedness activities. The CP AoR is fully committed to realizing the outcomes from the World Humanitarian Summit and has a strong focus on localization with the inclusion of national actors at both country and global level.

The CP AoR would like to recognize the vital support of donors and the continued contribution of partners, without whom this work could not be done, yet so much more is required. The Centrality of Protection has been fundamental to humanitarian response for nearly a decade, but there are severe gaps in the breadth and depth of the protection analysis used to support humanitarian planning. Child protection issues need to be fully articulated within this analysis. Child protection can no longer be a "forgotten sector" when it comes to prioritization and funding. Advocacy and fund-raising efforts, backed up by a stronger evidential base are needed or generations of children will continue to suffer, growing up to see violence as normal, acceptable and even inevitable.

With this new strategic document, the CP AoR sets out four strategic goals that work towards its vision of a world in which children in emergencies are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. With your support we can realize this vision, to give the generations of children growing up in crises the future they not only deserve, but one that is their right.

Manuel Fontaine
Director, Emergency Programmes
UNICEF

¹ [Review of Child Protection Positioning and Localisation: 2018 HNOs and HRPs](#)



STRATEGY SUMMARY



VISION

A world in which children in emergencies are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.

MISSION

The Child Protection Area of Responsibility supports global, regional and local actors to ensure that humanitarian efforts to protect children in Humanitarian Coordinator and Early Warning settings are timely, well-coordinated, and achieving maximum coverage, quality and impact.

GOALS

1. **Strengthen advocacy, policy and integrated approaches to better prioritize and deliver safe and inclusive child protection services through key partnerships.**
2. **Enhance the coordination of child protection responses through the provision of flexible, timely and appropriate operational support, both remote and in country.**
3. **Strengthen already existing and locally owned child protection coordination systems and improve local service provision through close collaboration with local governments, civil society, protection actors, other clusters/sectors and national actors while adhering to the principle of neutrality.**
4. **Improve the quality of child protection prevention and preparedness measures and responses through quality monitoring systems, stronger analysis and the building of an evidence base of good practice.**

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The CP AoR is committed to the following principles, which shall guide the implementation of this strategy:

PARTNERSHIPS

The CP AoR puts the Principles of Partnership at the center of its work both internally and externally. A diverse and representative range of stakeholders are involved at global and country level driving the strategic direction. Integrated programming is promoted within the Protection Cluster and across other clusters to maximize coverage and quality of child protection responses. The CP AoR works closely with other clusters as both an entry point for prevention and response activities and to identify and address root causes of child protection issues. Key partnerships with other organizations and actors are used to maximize advocacy and policy work to strengthen the visibility and support to child protection and increase prevention activities. Innovative approaches with new stakeholders (including private-sector partners) will be pursued to increase funding and provide better, more efficient and effective programming.

LOCALIZATION

CP AoR is dedicated to supporting the World Humanitarian Summit Outcomes and the Grand Bargain commitments on localization throughout its work streams. This includes increasing local government and civil society leadership and participation in child protection coordination structures; improving coordination and information management processes and making funding mechanisms more accessible to local partners at national and sub-national levels. Through localization the CP AoR seeks to apply the principles of partnership and ensure local actors are enabled to be full and equal partners which will also see benefits in terms of an increased scale of the response and reduced service delivery costs. Building local capacity will support prevention strategies, improve the quality of the response, build the resilience of national systems and strengthen the means to realize accountability to affected populations.

HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES AND THE CENTRALITY OF PROTECTION

The CP AoR will adhere to and promote Humanitarian Principles;² and other relevant normative frameworks. This is particularly relevant for guiding staff and programs in complex conflict and armed violence emergencies where it is necessary to work with parties to the conflict to ensure the well-coordinated delivery of protection services. The CP AoR will work with and through the Global Protection Cluster to ensure that protection is central to humanitarian action by supporting the identification of key child protection outcomes, ensuring their clear articulation as priorities within the humanitarian program cycle and providing the analysis and planning required for their realization.

FOCUS ON THE MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Advocate across the child protection sector to focus resources and programming on providing life-saving services to the most vulnerable children and their families; and work in close collaboration with other sectors to ensure child protection analysis informs all program planning and implementation.

² These include those adopted by the General Assembly resolutions 46/182 and 58/114.

OVERVIEW



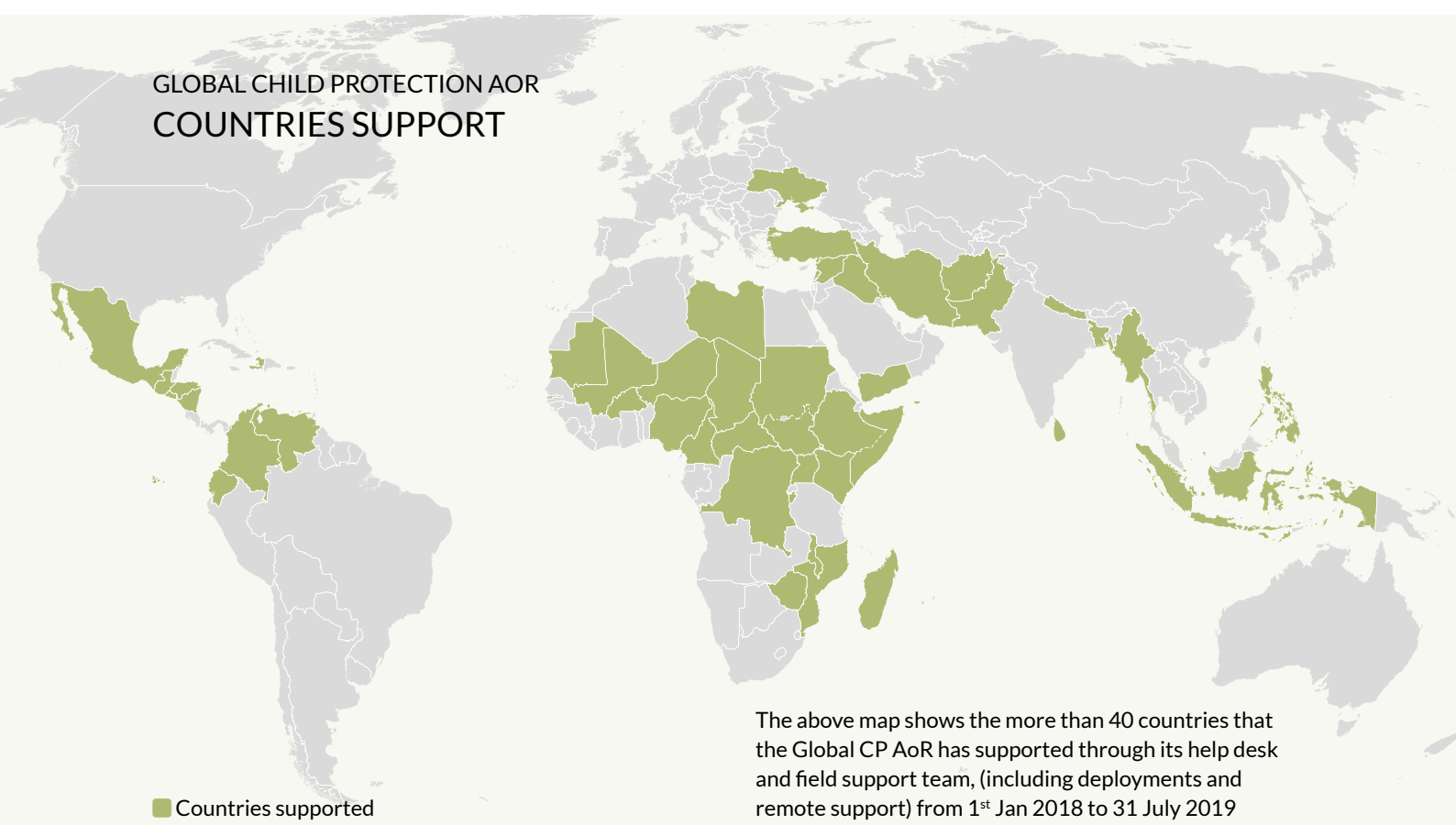
ROLE OF THE CHILD PROTECTION AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

Established in 2007 by the Interagency Standing Committee, as part of the cluster approach, Child Protection is an Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) within the Global Protection Cluster. Led by the Global Coordinator and housed in UNICEF, the CP AoR is responsible for ensuring that national and international humanitarian efforts to protect children in Humanitarian Coordinator and Early Warning³ settings are timely, well-coordinated, and achieving maximum coverage, quality and impact.

The CP AoR's Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) is made up of 18 organizations (national and international

NGOs and UN) and 4 observers who contribute directly to the CP AoR. SAG members provide strategic guidance, oversight and governance to the Global CP AoR work plan (including fundraising for the implementation of work plan activities) and to represent the global CP AoR and advocate for the realization of its strategic goals. Membership of the CP AoR is open to relevant national and international, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The CP AoR represents the interests of the entire humanitarian child protection community and is accountable both to the IASC, through the Protection Cluster and to Humanitarian Coordinators and their country coordination teams, all of whom are ultimately accountable to children and their families who are affected by conflict, armed violence, natural disasters or other humanitarian crises.

GLOBAL CHILD PROTECTION AOR COUNTRIES SUPPORT



■ Countries supported

The above map shows the more than 40 countries that the Global CP AoR has supported through its help desk and field support team, (including deployments and remote support) from 1st Jan 2018 to 31 July 2019

³ Early warning settings are countries identified (by OCHA or other key partners) where there is a risk of a humanitarian situation developing.

THE CURRENT HUMANITARIAN LANDSCAPE

The world's humanitarian crises have now reached unprecedented levels with 70.8 million⁴ people forcibly displaced. One in every four children in the world is living in a country affected by conflict or disaster and as of January 2018, nearly 50 million children had been uprooted from their homes due to violence, poverty or natural disasters⁵. Such children are more likely to experience one or several forms of violence, ranging from death, injury, sexual and gender-based violence, recruitment and use by armed forces and groups to long-term trauma and deprivation of access to basic services. Prolonged exposure to violence, abuse and traumatic events is likely to impair children's emotional and social development with devastating long-term impacts on children and societies.

Humanitarian funding is failing to keep up with the increasing needs and funding for child protection remains woefully low. During the period 2010 to 2018 funding for child protection remained minimal, with an average share of only 0.5% of total humanitarian funding being dedicated to the sector⁶. Not only is overall funding level low, but it can vary widely between countries. In 2018, Nigeria, Niger, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic and Afghanistan all had a funding coverage rate under 30%, whereas Syria, South Sudan and Bangladesh received 70-85% of requested funding⁷.

Against this backdrop of growing humanitarian needs and the increasing financing gap, the humanitarian system is also changing. New actors and new models for collaboration and programming, including around implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, have emerged that fall outside of the traditional humanitarian coordination architecture. Traditional coordination mechanisms are considered resource-intensive and operating in silos created by mandates and financial structures. Outcomes from

the World Humanitarian Summit including the [Grand Bargain](#) the [New Way of Working](#) push for a different kind of collaboration among governments, civil society, international humanitarian and development actors and others, and an obligation to respect and further strengthen national and local capacity and local leadership in crises wherever possible.

Yet it is important to recognize that protection actors continue to work in challenging complex, conflict driven crises of an increasingly protracted nature. It is therefore imperative that humanitarian principles, supported through the Centrality of Protection guide and inform the work of all humanitarian actors, especially where interaction with parties to the conflict is necessary to ensure protection outcomes are realized.

THE STRATEGY

Against the setting of rising humanitarian needs, an ongoing funding gap and global commitments challenging us to change our ways of working, the CP AoR's 2020 – 2024⁸ strategy provides a focused and innovative framework outlining the priorities required to achieve a vision of a world in which children in emergencies are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.

The strategy outlines the CP AoR's strategic direction and role, specifying four key goals that focus on delivering the core cluster functions⁹ (for which the CP AoR is accountable) and delivering the transformation articulated through the World Humanitarian Summit. Each goal is positioned to integrate with and complement the work of key actors within the wider child protection community; to support the overall strategic direction of the Global Protection Cluster; and to articulate linkages and partnerships with other Clusters and Areas of Responsibility. These goals are underpinned by

⁴ Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2018, UNHCR (2019).

⁵ UNICEF Humanitarian Action for children 2018.

⁶ Unprotected: Crisis in humanitarian funding for child protection (2019), a report by the CP AoR and the Alliance for CPHA, written by Save the Children.

⁷ Ibid, note that this data looks at requested funding, often the actual needs are far larger than those articulated in Humanitarian Response Plans.

⁸ This brings the CP AoR into alignment with the GPC strategy timeframe. A light revision of the strategy is expected at the end of the next work plan period (2021).

⁹ The IASC Principals agreed there is a need to restate and return to the original purpose of clusters, refocusing them on strategic and operational gaps analysis, planning, assessment and results. The aim of the cluster approach is to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, and provide clear leadership and accountability in the main areas of humanitarian response.

four guiding principles that support more inclusive, localized coordination whilst ensuring that core humanitarian values are not compromised.

The document will inform the development of several work-plans¹⁰ through the strategic period, each of which will identify specific targets and outputs aligned with the realization of the four strategic goals. The CP AoR workplans provide a mechanism for members to engage and deliver on specific activities in support of the goals.

Throughout this strategy, the term 'child protection coordination group' will be used and may be taken as referring to 'Child Protection Area of Responsibility', 'Child Protection Sub-Cluster' or 'Child Protection Working Group'. Finally, it is important to note that the strategy is geared towards the global CP AoR.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

This strategy is based on a review of achievements and comprehensive consultations, including: remote and face-to-face exchanges with the Strategic Advisory Group; twelve key informant interviews on Goal 2: Operational Support (in particular with the Rapid Response Team, which previously had its own strategy and has now become part of the overall strategy) as well as field consultations. An additional 14 key informant interviews were undertaken to fully understand and articulate the CP AoRs role in supporting Localization, the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Building Nexus and ensuring the Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Response. To finalize the structure and text of the strategy a small group of key partners was formed to provide inputs and oversight. A draft was also shared with donors for top line comments and inputs.

REPORTING ON THE STRATEGY

The CP AoR will report progress on working towards its goals and strategic objectives through reporting on its workplans on a biannual basis to the CP AoR Strategic Advisory Group and publicly, through the CP AoR newsletter.

¹⁰ The strategy will inform the revision and development of the 2020-21 workplan and complements the CP AoR's workplan (2018 – 2020) implementation of which began in 2018.



GOAL 1

STRENGTHEN ADVOCACY, POLICY AND INTEGRATED APPROACHES THROUGH KEY PARTNERSHIPS

The CP AoR will work closely through key partnerships to strengthen advocacy, policy and integrated approaches¹¹ to better prioritize and deliver safe and inclusive child protection services.

As the Area of Responsibility within the Protection Cluster responsible for child protection, the CP AoR engages in high level advocacy and policy discussions at the global level, representing the membership on a range of global task teams, inter-agency forums and promoting linkages and good practice across the humanitarian coordination system. The CP AoR seeks to ensure that key advocacy messages from national and sub-national partners are conveyed to donors and partners and that these messages are backed by robust analysis and evidence from lessons learned. The CP AoR works through strategic partnerships to ensure that child protection remains a global humanitarian priority. The Principles of Partnership are central to the work of the CP AoR, guiding collaboration among stakeholders, working across the traditional silos of clusters or sectors, and promoting innovative approaches to child protection coordination, to maximize the coverage and quality of responses.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ➔ Provide leadership and guidance to field coordination teams and partners on global developments, new initiatives and commitments¹²
- ➔ Support field coordination teams to advocate for the inclusion of child protection priorities within humanitarian response plans, HCT protection strategies and other key strategic documents
- ➔ Improve CP visibility and access to funding through advocacy and fundraising, supported by field level analysis and the sharing of good practice
- ➔ Promote integrated approaches and programming through partnerships with the Protection Cluster, other AoRs and other clusters¹³
- ➔ Support CP initiatives through effective engagement with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children the CPC Learning network and others

¹¹ An integrated approach views effort in different thematic areas as parts of a coherent whole; therefore, the CP AoR will build linkages and collaboration with all other sectors across the humanitarian program cycle.

¹² This includes wider child protection initiatives and IASC Cluster and coordination commitments.

¹³ This includes partnerships with other clusters both to identify and address root causes of child protection issues (such as current work on data collection and analysis with the Food Security Cluster) and as a key entry point for child protection programming (for example working with the education sector to ensure the provision of psychosocial support services).



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GOAL 2

PROVIDE OPERATIONAL SUPPORT TO ENHANCE COORDINATION

The CP AoR aims to enhance the coordination of child protection responses through the provision of flexible, timely and appropriate operational support¹⁴, both remote and in country.

The ultimate goal of coordination is ensuring the quality and coverage of the child protection response. To this end, the CP AoR's regional focal points and global and regional help desks (operating in Arabic, Spanish, French and English) provide remote support to country teams, including technical advice, tools, thematic guidance and the sharing of lessons learned. Additionally, they track information and support needs to ensure that guidance and policy development remains informed by the realities at national and sub-national levels.

Further, the CP AoR's Global Coordinator, Deputy Coordinator, and Field Support Team (comprising of coordination, information management and thematic specialists¹⁵) can deploy rapidly to provide field-level support. This includes filling the coordination role in a new emergency or where there has been a deterioration in a pre-existing situation and providing

expertise to strengthen coordination systems. The CP AoR also works with UNICEF's standby partner team to secure additional surge capacity, when required and with local organizations where possible.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ➔ Provide in-country and remote support through a flexible and well-resourced Field Support Team¹⁶ with rapid response capability
- ➔ Provide timely and appropriate remote support through Global and Regional Help Desks
- ➔ Increase the pool of trained and experienced Child Protection Coordinators and Information Management Officers through engagement with standby partners¹⁷
- ➔ Build Child Protection Coordination and Information Management capacity at country and global level

¹⁴ Includes both deployments and remote support focused on delivering the core cluster functions defined in the [IASC Reference Module for Cluster Coordination at the Country Level](#).

¹⁵ Technical and thematic advisors deploy and provide remote advice in support of key cluster functions including needs assessments, the development of country-level CP AoR strategies and monitoring systems and the technical revision of prevention measures and responses in line with cluster responsibilities.

¹⁶ This includes strengthening linkages and deployable capacity in cross-cutting areas such as GBV, MPHSS and Mine Action.

¹⁷ Current capacity and targets will be detailed in the work plan.



GOAL 3

STRENGTHEN LOCALLY OWNED CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATION SYSTEMS AND SERVICES

The CP AoR strives to strengthen existing and locally owned child protection coordination systems and improve local service provision through close collaboration with local governments, civil society, protection actors, other clusters/sectors and national actors while adhering to the principle of neutrality.

The Global Strategic Advisory Group has a diverse membership drawn from a range of child protection actors and includes a strong representation from local partners¹⁸. Local actor participation critically shapes how the AoR works with local civil society, government institutions and development actors, thereby strengthening the humanitarian, development and peace building nexus. Building resilience and strengthening preparedness encompasses government, civil society and community-based approaches and will continue to be a priority in the face of long-term protracted crises and the increased effects of the climate emergency.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ➔ Promote local leadership, participation and innovation in child protection coordination groups ensuring local organizations have access to decision making and prioritization processes
- ➔ Support duty bearers to lead child protection coordination groups by strengthening government systems and building government capacity¹⁹
- ➔ Strengthen transition processes and increase cooperation between government ministries, humanitarian and development actors
- ➔ Build the resilience of government systems, civil society and community-based mechanisms to better support preparedness and prevention measures
- ➔ Strengthen coordination and cooperation with peace building and conflict actors by supporting local child protection coordination groups to improve engagement and dialogue with these actors

¹⁸ Membership has been open to local actors and governments since mid-2018.

¹⁹ Governments will be supported to take leadership roles in coordination and fulfilment of the six core cluster functions.



GOAL 4

IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF CHILD PROTECTION PREVENTION AND PREPAREDNESS MEASURES AND RESPONSES

The CP AoR aims to improve the quality of child protection prevention and preparedness measures and responses through quality monitoring systems, stronger analysis and the building of an evidence base of good practice.

The CP AoR works to improve needs identification, analysis, monitoring and evidence gathering during preparedness and emergency responses; advocating for an adequate presence of child protection actors where it's most needed and working to ensure programs adhere to minimum standards²⁰. To strengthen the quality aspects of programming the CP AoR (in collaboration with key global partners) supports the capacity development of both child protection actors and the wider humanitarian community in technical areas related to child protection. Equally, there is a commitment to identify, evaluate and document examples of good practice and to feed this into the development of lessons learned, guidance and tools. The CP AoR will work with and through other AoRs and the GPC to provide this key evidence to decision makers, donors and policy makers to ensure child protection issues are clearly articulated in strategic priorities and policy documents at both country and global level.

KEY OBJECTIVES

- ➔ Strengthen the identification, analysis and interpretation of CP needs within assessment and monitoring systems²¹ to enhance the timeliness, coverage and quality of humanitarian responses
- ➔ Improve knowledge management by identifying, sharing and building on good/promising practices and communicating findings within the sector and externally to donors and policy makers
- ➔ Support technical capacity development at country-level in collaboration with the Alliance Working Groups and Task Forces and other key partners
- ➔ Improve accountability systems and increase local and affected populations participation (including children) in response planning, design, delivery and evaluation
- ➔ Provide consolidated analysis of technical and workforce capacity gaps and advocate for/support the development of global strategies to address these gaps
- ➔ Disseminate and promote the Child Protection Minimum Standards and establish systems to ensure CP actors work in compliance with the standards

²⁰ This includes the [Child Protection Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Action](#) and the [INSPIRE Framework](#).

²¹ Including strengthening the displacement tracking matrix, multi sector needs assessments and collaboration with other sectors, on using data collection/assessment frameworks to better capture context specific linkages between child protection and sectoral topics/issues.

ANNEX 1

Visual summary, Child Protection Area of Responsibility Strategy 2020 – 2024

