Global Protection Cluster
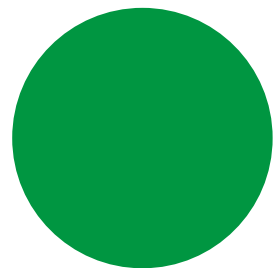
STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK
2016-19

Q&A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
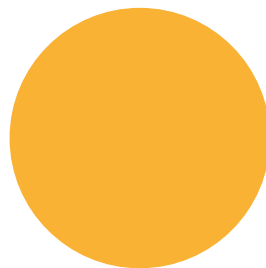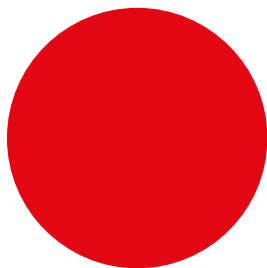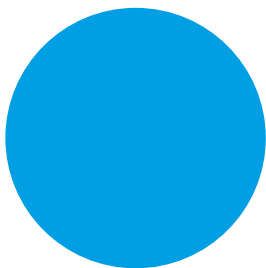
WHY DOES THE GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER NEED A NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK?

The 2012-15 Strategic Framework and resulting work-plans have been largely delivered. The GPC needs to reflect the evolution of the humanitarian response system highlighted by the IASC Statement on the Centrality of Protection [2013], Human Rights Up Front and the Transformative Agenda. The GPC also needs to adapt its working methods to respond to multiple simultaneous crises and protracted situations as outlined in the situation analysis as at January 2016 (annex 1 of the Strategic Framework).

WHAT WAS THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE NEW STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK?

A description of the process is contained at p.8 of the Strategic Framework document. The development of this framework deliberately stepped outside Geneva to consult colleagues in the field and to reach out to partners outside the humanitarian world; the consultations also took in an on-line consultation, with over 1,300 responses. In all, the consultations have reached out to over 2,000 people around the World.

The Strategic Framework builds on the implementation of the former framework but is more outward looking, reflecting the views and expectations of the humanitarian community at large, the field, partners in the Global South and stakeholders like DPKO, DPA, states, IASC, global clusters and others. The framework also takes into account the consultations on, and looks forward, to the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016.

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATIONS?

Throughout the consultations, the issue of coherence within the protection sector because of the diverse range of actors and different components was raised again and again. There is a need to ensure that there is respect for coherence in the presentation of the protection sector but also in planning and programming.

At present, funding for protection does not match the priorities of the IASC in making protection central to humanitarian action. However, it is also difficult to map protection elements in funding applications.

A Humanitarian Country Team protection strategy is useful as a framing document for financing submissions and for setting the priorities in Humanitarian Response Plans and Common Humanitarian Funds. HCT protection strategies can facilitate assessments as to whether a project makes a contribution to protection.

The independent Whole of System Review on protection made two recommendations, which are two sides of the same coin. One, echoing the 2013 funding study, says there is a need to explain what protection means. Another, echoing recommendations from the World Humanitarian Summit consultations, says that protection actors need to be more inclusive of local agencies in the understanding of and approach to protection. These two recommendations clearly resonated with people, not only in the field.

From articulating what "life-saving" means for the protection sector to explaining what protection means in an Islamic context or how food assistance contributes to protection outcomes, there is clearly a lot of work still to be done. In carrying out this work a clear message from the consultations is that guidance needs to be translated into relevant languages, needs to be disseminated and trained on and needs to be simple and clear, using examples of good practice. Again and again a preference was expressed for less generic guidance or policy and more exchanges of practice between operations on specific issues.

& QUESTIONS
& ANSWERS

There are several elements coming out of the consultations that help to shape the use of the GPC's network power. First, participation in the GPC is too narrow and needs to reach out to include human rights, political, peacekeeping and development actors as well as to national and local agencies, including in the French-speaking and Arab-speaking worlds. Second, protection programming is not merely a technical exercise but rests on a comprehensive analysis of a situation and a multi-functional approach to operations, which requires the inclusion of a broad range of stakeholders. Third, the GPC should be more active in defending staff in the field from excessive processes in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle and reporting. Fourth, the GPC could assist country operations with advocating for the rights of affected people in situations where local advocacy is not possible, on particular themes (e.g. attacks on schools and clinics) or in regional problems, like the LRA-affected areas or Da'esh.

WHAT DOES THE GPC INTEND TO DO IN THE NEXT FOUR YEARS?

The renewed vision and Strategic Framework do not represent a radically new departure for the GPC but they do represent a deepened operational focus, engagement of new partners and an emphasis on new thinking; the themes emerging from the Whole of System Review and the consultations cannot be separated from each other: explaining what protection means and engaging the Global South are two sides of the same coin; engaging new partners and fostering new thinking are two sides of the same coin; a deeper operational focus and programming that makes protection the collective outcome of our efforts are two sides of the same coin.

The strategic objectives of the GPC are two-fold:

A: PROTECTION IS CENTRAL TO HUMANITARIAN ACTION

1. Engage states, political, human rights, development and peace-keeping actors to leverage capacity in analysis, early warning, prevention, response and solutions to crisis, in particular by bringing field and community perspectives in policy processes and strategy design and implementation;

2. Assist HCs, HCTs and field clusters to develop and implement country strategies through guidance, mentoring, mission support, an annual review of major operations and by engagement with the Emergency Directors Group and donors

3. Continue to explain what protection means in operational terms, including through results-based management, in community-based protection and by capacity-building and continuously set standards in protection for accountability to affected people

4. Support field level coordination, including by working with AORs to ensure a coherent and comprehensive protection response in conflict and disaster settings

5. Work with development actors to define in practical terms how humanitarian and development programmes can reinforce each other to protect people, to ensure that durable solutions are as sustainable as possible and that protection programmes remain operational, as needed, through relief to development and development action. This will be done through joint programming frameworks, pilot programmes, sharing lessons across operations and working with UNDP on the SG's Policy Committee decision on early recovery

6. Use the power of networks to promote the centrality of protection in humanitarian action, engage a wider constituency and advance the work of field clusters through the engagement of new partners and the use of social media and foster new thinking by an annual high-level advisory group on protection composed of thought leaders and change agents convened by the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection

B: PROTECTION RESPONSE IS TIMELY, OF HIGH QUALITY AND RELEVANT

7. Promote an outcome-oriented approach, in which protection outcomes are defined and measured by a reduction in risk of exposure to rights violations and by a causal logic linking activities to a remedy or a change in outcomes

8. Strengthen links with innovation labs, global clusters and research institutions to ensure the Protection Cluster Toolbox includes innovative approaches and provides practical advice on interventions that are growing in importance, such as cash-based interventions, social media, engaging with faith groups, urban settlements and remote monitoring technologies as well as on neglected areas of intervention, such as working with private entities and anthropologists

9. Engage national actors in order to grow the understanding of protection in humanitarian action and improve the delivery and sustainability of interventions by producing bespoke materials that are written by and with relevant actors and translated into relevant languages

10. Maintain training of Cluster Coordinators and protection cluster members on coordination skills and technical aspects of protection, develop a Community of Practice and increase the provision of direct support on discrete issues, such as defining in practical terms accountability to affected people, the Humanitarian Programme Cycle, strategic planning, phasing out clusters, etc.

11. Promote Protection Information Management as a foundational element of good programming and maintain the capacity of the GPC to provide support to the field, including local and national actors in languages and through modalities available to them, in data and information collection and analysis to inform protection strategies and humanitarian response and facilitate the measurement of the impact of the work of field protection clusters.

HOW DOES THE GPC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK RESPOND TO THE INDEPENDENT WHOLE OF SYSTEM REVIEW OF PROTECTION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION?

The Whole of System Review criticized the protection sector for not being innovative enough in its approaches to protection and delivering protection services (p.55). There is plenty of good practice in the field in integrating anthropological studies into the work of the protection cluster (South Sudan), delivering Mine Risk Education by Skype (northern Syria), holding joint workshops on durable solutions with Government officials and non-State armed actors (Southeastern Myanmar) or coordinating the protection sector without a national cluster (Somalia). Nonetheless, an examination of Humanitarian Response Plans in 2015 reveals that an understandable focus on getting the basics right may be inhibiting new approaches to delivering protection services.

A key insight of the WOSR was the recognition that the Global South is an important humanitarian actor, both within crisis-affected countries and between them (p.17). The recommendations of the WOSR [13.2] on engaging the Global South are foundational, in the sense that other recommendations on explaining protection and clarifying relationships cannot properly be delivered without first reaching out to local actors and non-OECD donors. A critical component of a localization strategy is to ensure that international standards are integrated into the thinking of local actors and non-OECD donors.

The GPC is including several other recommendations, which it can take forward, in the Work-Plan 2016-17, such as developing further work on accountability to affected populations and enhancing monitoring and evaluation. Other recommendations from the WOSR are systemic and are being taken forward by the IASC or others.

& QUESTIONS
ANSWERS

WHAT OTHER REVIEWS DOES THE GPC STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK HAVE TO RESPOND TO?
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Apart from the independent Whole of System Review of Protection there were a number of relevant studies during 2015 and 2016, such as the report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peacekeeping Operations, a Brookings Institution study on IDPs, the report of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing and, lastly, the UN Secretary-General's Report to the World Humanitarian Summit. In its renewed vision the GPC is ahead of the curve in responding to the call in the SG Report for the WHS to focus on collective outcomes; the GPC has been clear since the IASC Statement on the Centrality of Protection in 2013 that the collective outcome of humanitarian efforts must be the protection of people in crisis- this is the message we will be carrying forward to the World Humanitarian Summit in May;

HOW WILL THE GPC IMPLEMENT ITS OBJECTIVES?
❷—————————————————————————————————————

Through the Work-Plan 2016-17, the GPC aims to encourage innovative processes and new approaches to protection in the field by:

1. Establishing a Protection Lab to define the challenges of dissemination international standards while promoting the role of local actors and finding and scaling solutions to these challenges;

2. Building a community of practice in innovation in protection to capture and spread good practice from the field;

3. Working with the University of Essex on the uses of Big Data in humanitarian aid;

4. Working with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute on risk management;

5. Building GPC social media networks and equipping cluster leads in the field so they can feed networks with Facebook postings, tweets, pictures etc to create a picture of what can be done to advance protection in the field and give information to beneficiaries (link to AAP/CWC);

6. Producing an edition of Forced Migration Review that focusses on innovative approaches to protection in the field

In ensuring a coherent and comprehensive approach to protection, the GPC will:

1. Produce an annual review of how operations have ensured centrality of protection in response, including with GPC support (link to M&E)

2. Fund missions to support development of HCT protection strategies in L3/integrated missions settings

3. Develop guidance for RC/HCs on their responsibilities to ensure the centrality of protection in humanitarian response

4. Produce a video with the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative on centrality of protection

5. Produce an annual e>book in English, Arabic, French etc. on various themes related to centrality of protection, focussed on good practice from the field

6. Build a community of practice to exchange experience across operations, through the use of social media and the holding of two round-tables through the year.

The GPC is intent on engaging the Global South as a key element in its new strategy and will:

1. Hold a round table in Nigeria on working with National Human Rights Institutions;

2. Hold a round table in Turkey late in 2016 on protection in remote management operations;

3. Hold a seminar in late 2016 specifically for Arab donors on protection

4. Work with donor relations and donors directly on creating funding criteria for protection e.g. ensuring JICA, KOICA, King Abdullah Saudi foundation, include protection as funding priorities

5. Develop an Advisory Group which includes high thought leaders and change agents from around the World to provide strategic direction on protection, not only for the GPC

6. Translate key existing protection standards into local languages and disseminate and train on them through field clusters

WHAT IS THE GPC OPERATIONS CELL?

In order to support these efforts the GPC has established an Operations Cell with staff from UNHCR, the Danish Refugee Council, ProCap and the Carlo Schmid Foundation to deliver on the current strategic objectives described above. The Operations Cell was formerly known as the Support Cell and the change in name reflects the emphasis on its engagement with field colleagues. The Operations Cell is there to support these field clusters in their responsibility to craft an appropriate response.

It also provides the Global Cluster Coordinator with the capacity to follow critical inter-agency processes, contribute to policy and standard setting on protection issues and the prioritization of global support activities to field operations. The Operations Cell is also critical to the implementation and monitoring of the GPC work plan, influencing planning and spearheading catalytic activities. It also engages with donors and mobilizes resources. Going forward, UNHCR has accepted a recommendation from the independent Whole of System Review of protection to have a dedicated Global Protection Cluster Coordinator.

WHY DOES THE GPC NEED A GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE?

There are 28 protection clusters in the field, 21 of which are led by UNHCR, three by UNICEF and three by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Globally, these 28 protection clusters in highly complex situations are responsible for the delivery of protection programmes reaching tens of millions of people at a cost of about $1bn. Clusters are accountable to the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator at the country level and coordinators are doubly accountable to their heads of agency. Cluster performance monitoring tools provide some level of oversight by the GPC.

The GPC Operations Cell has four staff managed by a head of the Cell, who reports to the GPC Coordinator. The operations budget is currently $150,000 although this is expected to rise with the implementation of the new Work-Plan. Staff are answerable to line managers and their respective agencies in the performance of their duties and expenditures are overseen and audited through UNHCR budgeting procedures, ultimately accountable to its EXCOM.

A governance structure for the GPC is needed to direct attention to supporting the field in delivering protection programmes. In today's context and responding to the consultations on the Strategic Framework, that support needs to be inclusive, innovative and pro-active.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHY IS THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE GPC CHANGING?

The governance of the GPC has been represented by a Strategic Advisory Group, composed of UN agencies based in Geneva and NGOs from Denmark, Norway, the United Kingdom and United States. This structure has been helpful to the GPC in furthering the implementation of the former strategic framework. Nonetheless, a renewed strategy for the GPC that focuses on support to the delivery of protection programmes in the field requires a matching governance structure that:

a. Answers the recommendation of the Whole of System Review to be more inclusive and to reach out the Global South, in particular [13.2];

b. Answers the recommendation of the Whole of System Review that a strategic, protection-oriented approach to humanitarian action should be supported at HQ level [13.4] and an holistic approach to the development of crisis analysis is needed [13.5.1];

c. Answers the finding of the Whole of System Review that protection actors need to be more innovative [10.3], including by reaching out to non-humanitarian and new partners;

d. Answers the recommendation of the Whole of System Review (and previous evaluations) for more coherence in protection [13.4.3];

e. Is directed at supporting the field;

f. Strengthens the governance of the GPC by separating oversight of the implementation of the Work-Plan from those actually implementing it;

WHAT WILL THE GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE GPC LOOK LIKE?

See attached diagram (Annex 1: Governance Structure).

WHAT WILL THE HIGH-LEVEL ADVISORY GROUP LOOK LIKE?

This group will not be created before 2017, owing to the high number of events in 2016- including the WHS- and the time it will take to create. People who have proven to be thought leaders and change agents from around the World will be invited to participate in the group on a personal basis rather than because of the office they fulfil. The group will be convened by the UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner for Protection, bringing to bear the convening power of the Office and based on existing experience with an advisory group on gender, forced displacement and protection.

WHAT WILL THE PROGRAMMING REFERENCE GROUP LOOK LIKE?

This group will be created in 2016 to bring together twice a year the Areas of Responsibility, Task Teams of the GPC, which currently form the SAG, and several field coordinators. The group will be chaired by the GPC Coordinator and will create its TORs based on a proposal from the Operations Cell. The over-riding objective of the group will be to ensure coherence in protection programming at the field level. This group should also help create and dissolve Task Teams upon completion of their work.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

WHAT WILL THE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP LOOK LIKE?

The Technical Working Group will be created in 2016 to provide oversight of the implementation of the Work-Plan 2016-17. It will be chaired by the GPC Coordinator and meet on a quarterly basis. The group will be formed of 5-6 humanitarian agencies with an operational presence, representing areas of the World, and will last as long as the life of a Work-Plan. It will create its TORs based on a proposal from the Operations Cell.

WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE THREE GROUPS?

The Technical Working Group has oversight of the implementation of the Work-Plan, and through that, the work of the Operations Cell within the limits of its existing accountability. The remaining groups are outward-looking, focused on programme coherence and strategic direction. The relationship between the groups is not hierarchical.

WHAT WILL THE TRANSITION TO THE NEW GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE LOOK LIKE?

Nominations to the Technical Working Group should be made via the GPC website. The current SAG will hold a meeting to plan its transition to the Protection Programme Reference Group and adopt new TORs. The High-Level Advisory Group will take more time to create and initial consultations can begin around the time of the WHS.

HOW DO STATES PARTICIPATE IN THE WORK OF THE GPC?

States participated strongly in the consultations on the Strategic Framework and are expected to continue to contribute to the work of the GPC by, *inter alia*, participating in thematic discussions, country situation briefings, missions to field operations, deploying experts, applying the experience of governments to the setting of standards and by giving funds to implement the Work-Plan.

HOW WILL THE GPC OPERATIONS CELL MANAGE/MEET EXPECTATIONS GIVEN THE AMBITIONS SET OUT IN THE WORK-PLAN?

The ambitious scope of the Work-Plan reflects the demands of the WOSR and the expectations arising from the consultations and the demands of field colleagues. The Operations Cell is not expected to undertake all of the identified work-streams and the GPC is guided by the principle of complementarity. The Work-Plan is a mix of on-going work-streams and an invitation to contribute by deploying staff to the Operations Cell, by giving funds or by taking on responsibility for a work-stream.

Some of the work-streams require the creation of additional work-forces, e.g. the establishment of a Protection Lab requires specific funding and staffing.
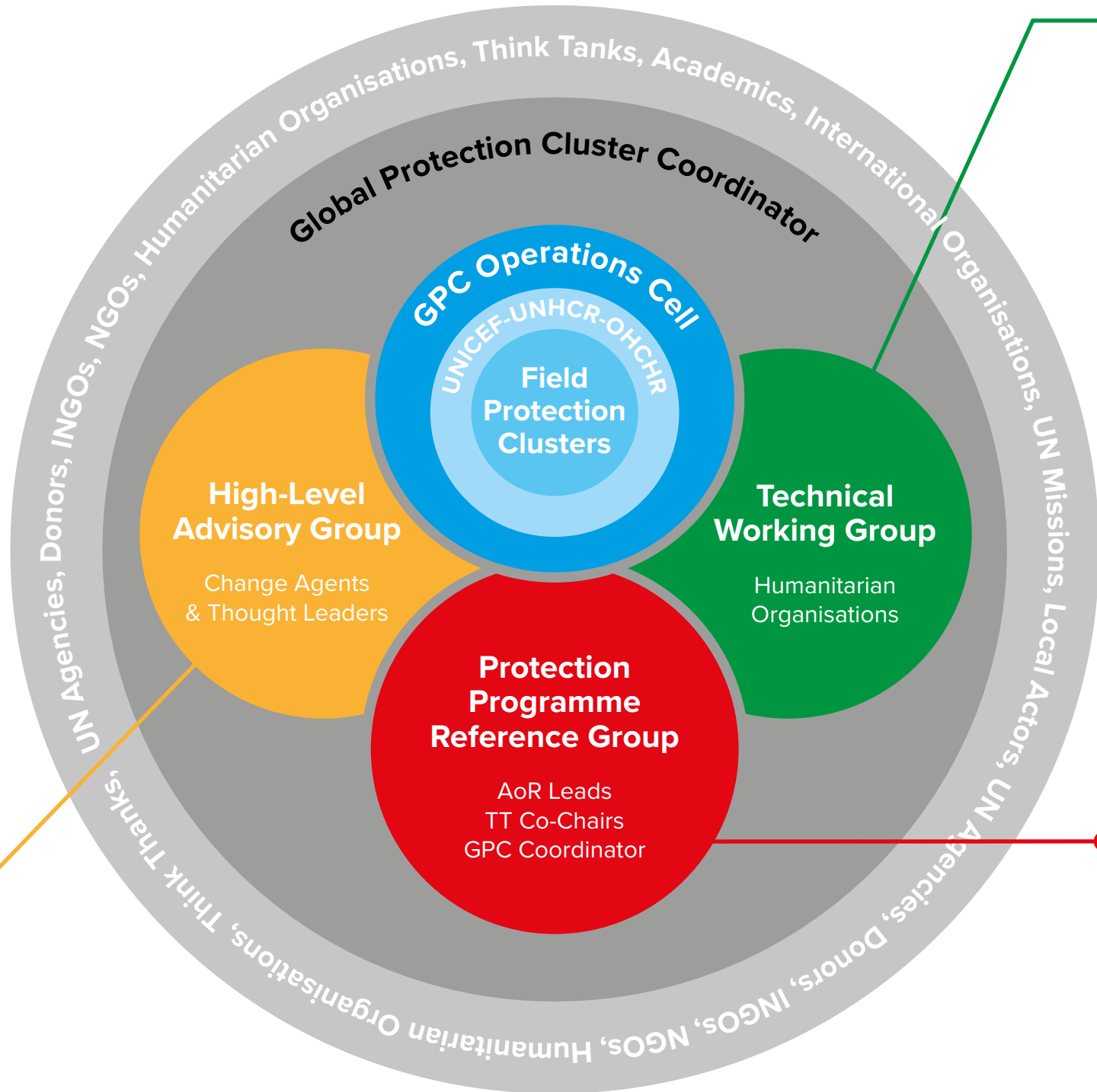
The strengthening of Monitoring and Evaluation will enable the Operations Cell to manage and adjust expectations. Nonetheless, the implementation of the Work-Plan requires a robust prioritization of effort and a maintenance of focus on supporting the field.

Global Protection Cluster
GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

Global Protection Cluster Coordinator

UN Agencies, Donors, INGOs, NGOs, Humanitarian Organisations, Think Tanks, Academics, International Organisations, UN Missions, Local Actors, UN Agencies, Donors, INGOs, NGOs, Humanitarian Organisations, Think Thanks,

GPC Operations Cell

UNICEF-UNHCR-OHCHR

Field Protection Clusters

High-Level Advisory Group

Change Agents & Thought Leaders

Technical Working Group

Humanitarian Organisations

Protection Programme Reference Group

AoR Leads
TT Co-Chairs
GPC Coordinator

Technical Working Group*

Purpose: **Monitor implementation** of the strategic framework, including rate of expenditure, advise on collective funds, thematic roundtables.

Meetings: quarterly

* The members of the Technical Working Group are expected to serve no more than the duration of a work-plan (two years) in order to ensure the GPC remains representative of its participation.

Protection Programme Reference Group

Purpose: Agree **work-plans**, **policy standards**, **operational priorities** and **response capacity**.

Meetings: twice a year

High-Level Advisory Group

Purpose: Foster new thinking to promote the **Centrality of Protection in humanitarian action**.

Meetings: annually