PROTECTION ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

An Introduction

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Global Protection Cluster

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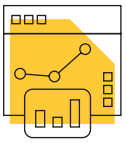
A structured approach to analysing protection risk

The scope of the PAF

The **protection analytical framework** (PAF) guides robust, context-specific protection analysis.[i] The PAF helps anyone undertaking protection analysis to answer the following questions:



What information is needed to undertake a protection analysis?

How should data and information be organised and structured to support an in-depth and integrated analysis?

The PAF guides in-depth and ongoing protection analysis of the crisis environment. It informs decision making for multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary strategies that reduce and prevent protection risks that may violate international human rights and refugee and humanitarian laws. It is suitable for use across humanitarian contexts, including with internally displaced people, returnees, refugees, and mixed situations.

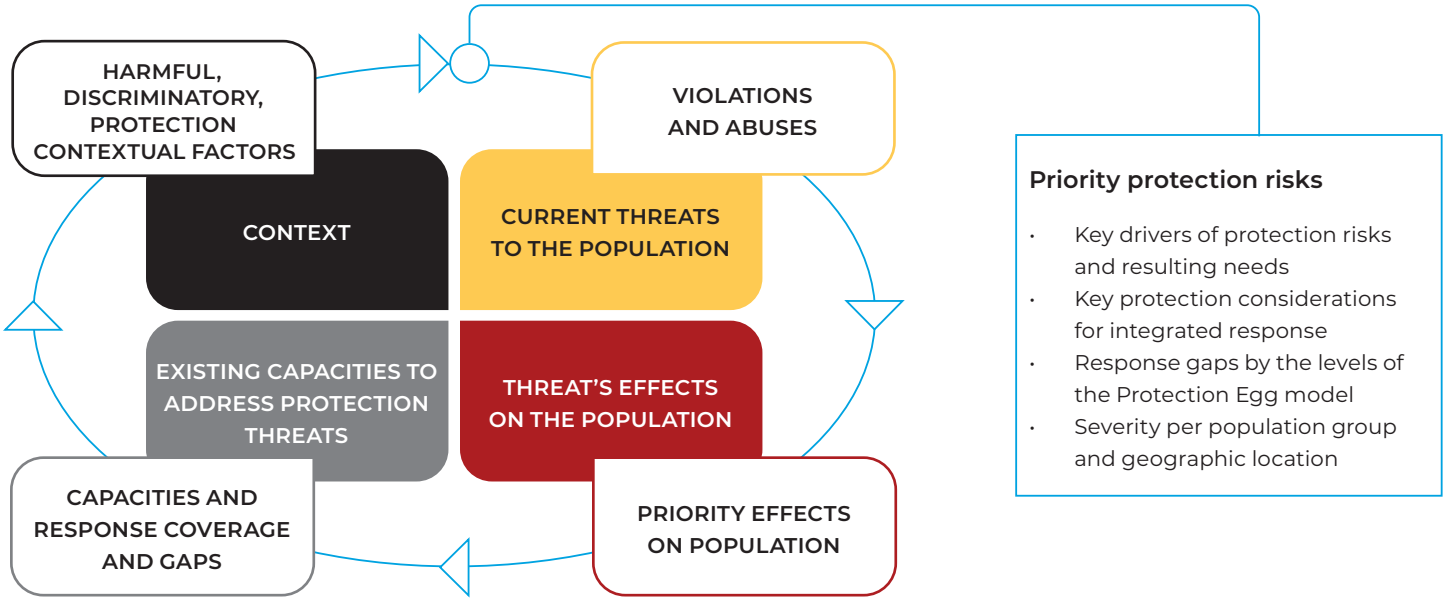
The purpose of the PAF

The analytical conclusions are to guide the development of strategies for reducing protection risk. Use it at the outset of a crisis and during a crisis to ensure continuous analysis and adaptation of interventions.

It guides protection-specific situation analysis and the organisation of data and information to provide an *"evidence-base for programming, advocacy and dialogue for the purpose of influencing behaviors and policies in support of a more favorable protection environment"*.[ii]

The PAF was initiated by the USAID BHA-funded IRC-DRC Results-based Protection Analysis Project to contribute to collective efforts of improving and streamlining protection analysis. It was developed together with and with the full support of the **Information and Analysis Working Group** of the **Global Protection Cluster**. It has been endorsed by the Global Protection Cluster.

Figure 1: **PAF analytical conclusions**



The PAF will help you identify top protection risks to monitor over time. To identify protection risks, the PAF requires you to consider four broad areas (Figure 1):

- Current factors that affect the protection context, both positively and negatively.
- Violations and abuse across geographic locations and population groups.[iii]
- The priority effects on the population (affecting the dignity, safety and well-being of the population) arising from specific violations and abuses for each population group and geographic location affected.
- Current combination of individual capacity, local mechanisms, national institutional capacity, and humanitarian response capacity to address violations and abuses.

The analysis can inform a context-specific theory of change that in turn articulates the strategies and priority actions to achieve the desired protection outcomes. The process of analysis should underlie all actions to achieve those outcomes, "*including the various sectors and disciplines that may need to be mobilized to contribute to the desired outcome, and to identify the roles of different actors*".[iv]

Protection actors should use the analysis to work with non-protection actors to jointly suggest and identify *"pathways and milestones to address specific risk factors and achieve the desired outcome of reduced risk. … Protection actors should aim to maximize complementarity with other actors, as well as between different activities and programmes within the same organization, in order to address the various risk factors"*.[v]

Guiding policies and initiatives

The PAF aligns with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definition of protection, which is *"all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law, including International Human Rights Law (IHRL), International Humanitarian Law and International Refugee Law (IRL)"*.[vi]

The *IASC Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action*[vii] and *Centrality of Protection Statement*,[viii] together with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) *Professional Standards for Protection Work,*[ix] informs the PAF logic and helps to set the parameters for the understanding and use of the framework.

The Protection Information Management initiative (PIM) provides resources to ensure that protection analysis is informed by quality data and information.[x] The PAF should be used in accordance with the PIM principles. The PAF language and logic is also aligned to the Global Protection Cluster *Humanitarian Country Team Protection Strategy Provisional Guidance Note.*[xi]

The PAF is designed to align with the three elements of results-based protection: continuous context-specific analysis, multidisciplinary strategies, and outcome-oriented methods.[xii]

While building on PIM, the principles described in Figure 2 must underlie the protection analysis process.

Figure 2: **Six principles that underlie the protection analysis process**

Six principles that underlie the protection analysis process

People-centered and inclusive
The interests and well-being of the population must guide the process. The population must participate in context analysis and in conceptualising, developing, and implementing solutions.

Continuous
The analysis must be continuously updated and used to inform decision making so that it promotes collective interventions to reduce threats and who is vulnerable to those threats, and enhance capacities.

Competency and capacity
Protection actors must ensure that staff engaged in protection and associated information management have appropriate training and core competencies.

Use of existing data and information
Use secondary data, data collection tools, and information already available in the context. The purpose of the analysis must be clearly defined, communicated to relevant stakeholders engaged in the analysis process, and aimed at action towards reducing protection risks.

Coordination and collaboration
Collaboration and coordination (both within teams and organisations, and with other stakeholders – humanitarian and non-humanitarian) is critical to build upon existing efforts to identify and understand protection risks, build upon existing efforts and avoid duplication.

Action for protection outcomes
Identify the different ways expected to reduce the protection risk, and the related sequence of actions and roles of different actors. Analysis can be used to inform, design and adapt collective risk-reduction strategies, based on different levels of action according to the Protection Egg, in a particular context.

Agreed definitions, based on existing work

The conceptual definitions in Figure 3 have been informed by existing policies and initiatives, including PIM resources and guiding materials. The definitions were finalised with the support of experts and peer review involving multiple stakeholders.

Figure 3: **PAF conceptual definitions**

PAF conceptual definitions

Protection analysis
A process undertaken to identify protection risks with the aim of informing strategies and responses.

Threat
A human activity or a product of human activity that results in a form of violence, coercion, or deliberate deprivation. Threats can be the perpetrator (agent of the threat) or a policy or an ethnicity norm (source of threat) that is causing harm.

Vulnerability
Certain characteristics or circumstances of an individual or group, or their surrounding physical environment, which diminish ability to anticipate, cope with, resist, or recover from the impact of a threat. People differ in their exposure to a threat depending on their social group, gender, ethnicity, age, and other factors. Vulnerability is not a fixed or static criterion attached to specific categories of people, and no one is born vulnerable.

Capacity
The resources and capabilities that are available to individuals, households, and communities to cope with a threat or to resist or mitigate the impact of a threat. Resources can be material or can be found in the way a community is organised. Capabilities can include specific skill sets or the ability to access certain services or move freely to a safer place.

Violence
The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation.

Coercion
Forcing someone to do something against their will.

Deliberate deprivation
Intentional action to prevent people from accessing the resources, goods, or services they need and have the right to access.

Protection risk
Actual or potential exposure of the affected population to violence, coercion, or deliberate deprivation.

Protection need
Arises when victims of violations are unable to defend their basic interests and no longer benefit from the basic respect they are entitled to from authorities and other actors who have control over them or on whom they depend.

Protection outcome
A reduction of the risk, including through improved fulfilment of rights and restitution, for victims/survivors. It includes reducing the threats people face, reducing people's vulnerabilities to these threats, and enhancing their capacities.

PAF theoretical framework

The PAF is based on the protection risk equation theoretical framework. Within the PAF, *protection risk* is defined as the actual or potential exposure of the affected population to violence, coercion, or deliberate deprivation.

The protection risk equation (Figure 4) is a non-mathematical representation of the three factors that contribute to risk. A protection risk arises when the threat and the vulnerability (of an individual or a community) are greater than the capacity to prevent, respond, and recover from that specific threat.

The protection risk equation requires more than a broad assessment of an individual's or community's vulnerability and capacity. Instead, PAF users must consider the particular vulnerability and capacity that is associated with each identified threat.

Figure 4: **Protection risk equation (adapted from InterAction)**

PAF concepts and structure

The PAF structure adapts terminology and definitions from existing frameworks[xii] to avoid duplication, ensure interoperability between frameworks, and to encourage use of existing data and information.

The PAF has five components (Figure 5):

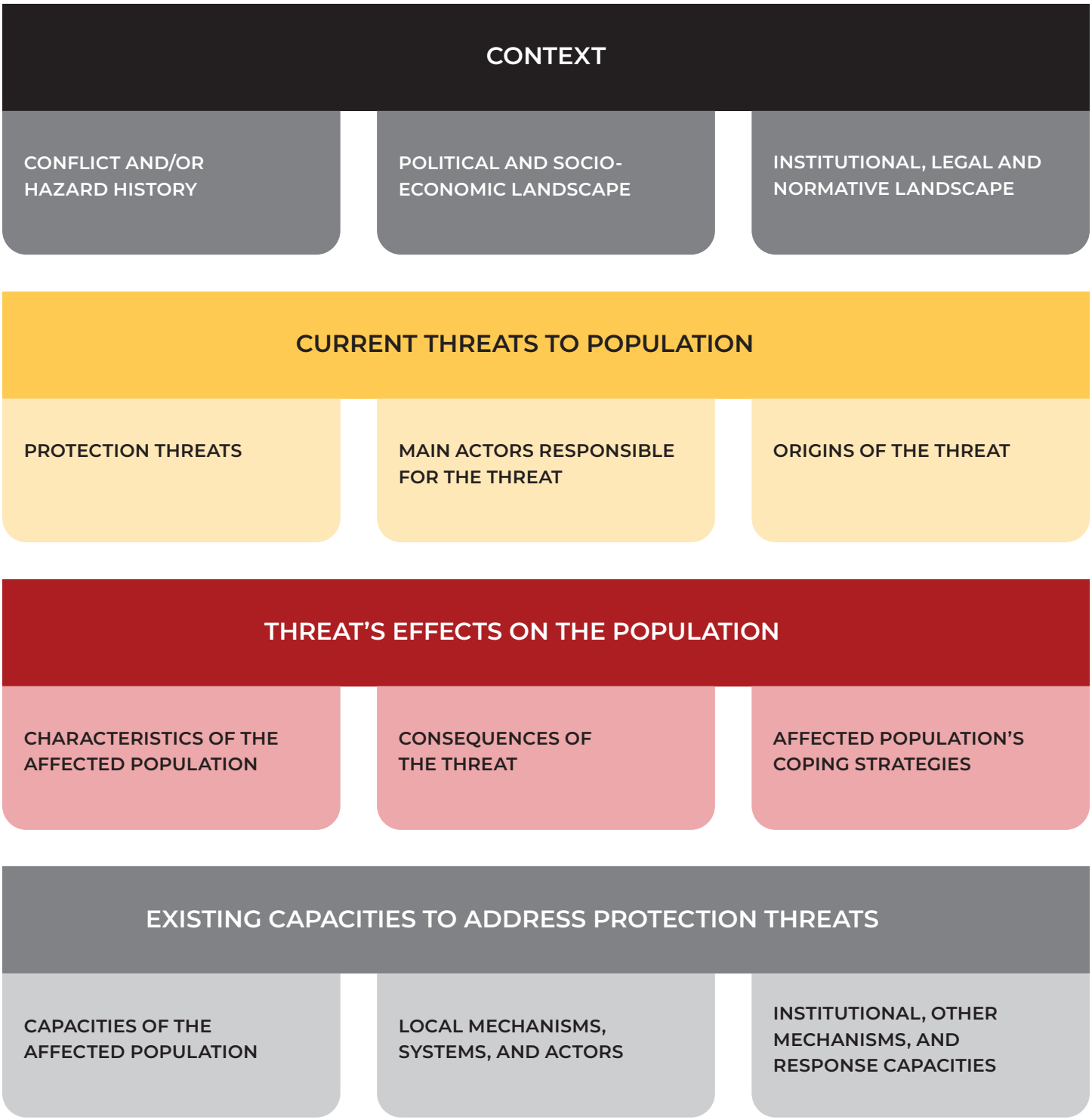
- Four pillars
- Three sub-pillars in each pillar
- A suggested set of categories by which to organise information
- Analytical questions to help structure the analysis
- A list of data and information needs.

Figure 5: **The PAF five main components**

PILLARS	SUB-PILLARS	CATEGORIES	ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS	DATA AND INFORMATION NEEDS
Broadest category of analysis to organise all data and information needs collected under an essential dimension for protection analysis.	Sub-dimensions of each pillar; helpful to organise data and information to guide the understanding of the dimension capture by the pillar.	A more granular catagorisation of core areas of information that sit within each subpillar/pillar.	Suggested key questions that align to each PAF information category, to guide the use of the framework. These questions are not intended to be prescriptive but can be adapted, or elaborated upon, depending on context.	Suggested data and information needs that can help to answer the proposed analytical questions.

Figure 6: **PAF concepts and structure**

Figure 6 shows the PAF's four pillars and twelve sub-pillars:



A more detailed description of the PAF pillars, sub-pillars and categories is in Annex 1. Additional guidance on the analytical questions and data and information needs is provided in Annex 2.

The PAF pillars encourage analysts to focus on four key areas of information (Figure 7) to deduce the top protection risks in the selected geographical area.

Figure 7: **The four PAF pillars**

The four PAF pillars

Context
Thorough context analysis is important as it helps us to understand specific contextual factors that influence the crisis dynamic and resultant protection situation.

Current threats to the population
It is important to identify the types of threats that are currently occurring, the responsibility of the actors involved and the origins of the threats.

Threat's effects on the population
It is important to identify the population groups that are affected by the threats, how or why they are vulnerable to these threats and how the consequences may be different across different population groups and geographic areas.

Existing capacities to address protection threats
It is important to identify how existing capacities at the individual and local level, as well as institutional response and other capacities (both national and international) can address the protection threats, either by mitigating the consequences or addressing the driving factors of the threat.

How to use the protection analytical framework

The PAF provides a guiding structure to enable collaborative analysis and reflection and participatory design of actions for desired protection outcomes. Always adapt the PAF to the context.

PAF basics

The PAF supports analysis at different geographic levels, including community, area, country, and cross-border. It is not a data collection tool or approach, but rather allows PAF users to organise data and information from multiple sources and existing mechanisms. By defining the analysis purpose and data and information needs, the PAF supports the identification of information gaps and therefore informs decision making on the most appropriate approaches, methods, and tools for acquiring additional data and information.

The use of the PAF will require secondary data collection, and the extent to which specific information categories of the PAF are explored will be adapted according to context. To apply it most efficiently, analysts should:

- Identify a Protection Analysis Lead to oversee the analysis process.
- Explain the structure of the process and roles to everyone involved in the analysis.
- Assign specific roles and responsibilities, ensuring that those closest to protection problems are meaningfully engaged in the analysis process.

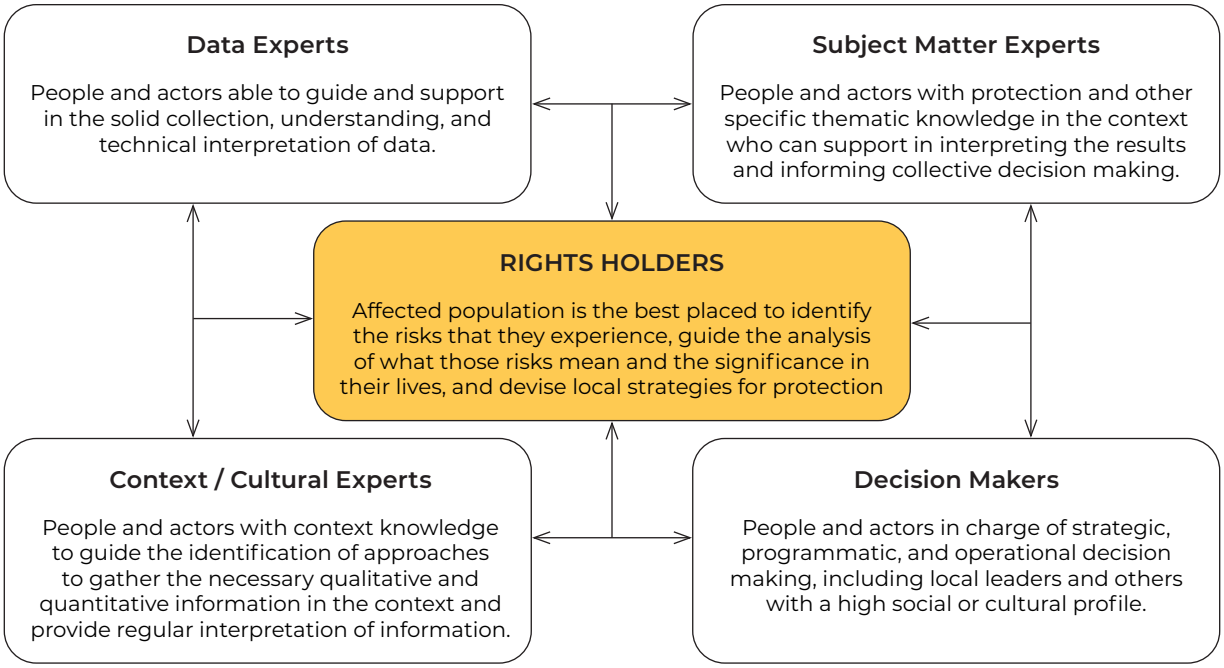
Who does the analysis?

The intended target audience for the PAF are protection colleagues undertaking a protection analysis, including protection colleagues at both area or country levels and within coordination structures. It is a framework for joint and collaborative analysis.

Often a lack of human resources prevents a comprehensive protection analysis. The *Tools to Ensure Data is Useful and Usable for Response*[xiii] provide a useful indication of whose contributions may be needed, internally or externally, to support a more in-depth and integrated analysis (Figure 8).

The voice and knowledge of the affected population, local staff, partners on the ground, and first line workers is essential. The Protection Analysis Lead must ensure this happens, either with their direct participation in preparation meetings, through bilateral conversations, or through joint analysis sessions.

Figure 8: **Roles in protection analysis**



When and how often to do the analysis?

The use of the PAF does not necessarily have a specific starting point and it may be triggered by a specific occurrence, shock or event. Once triggered, it should be an iterative process. The first use of the PAF requires PAF users to:

- identify and organise available secondary data
- adapt the suggested analytical questions
- identify indicators
- identify additional data required.

You can use the PAF to build on existing analyses, identify information gaps, and suggest additional information needs for a more in-depth and integrated protection analysis.

Further analysis can generate updated information to reflect the evolving context. Depending on the objectives of a particular analysis, components of the PAF can be selected, rather than applying the whole framework. This might mean focusing on specific pillars and collating specific data to support defined purposes.

The analysis, guided by the PAF, should be carried out regularly.[xiv] When defining the analysis timeframe, consider contextually relevant events or seasonal dynamics affecting the population, possible humanitarian programming, and key moments or deadlines generated through coordination mechanisms.

Figure 9: **Four steps in the PAF workflow**

1 DESIGN

1. Define purpose
2. Define actors, engagement, and coordination
3. Define information needs
4. Data and information review
5. Define analytical approach
6. Define activities and resources

2 ACQUIRE

1. Familiarise actors with the PAF
2. Collate secondary data
3. Collect primary data, if required
4. Safely store and maintain data

3 ANALYSE

1. Explore
2. Describe
3. Explain
4. Interpret
5. Anticipate

4 COMMUNICATE

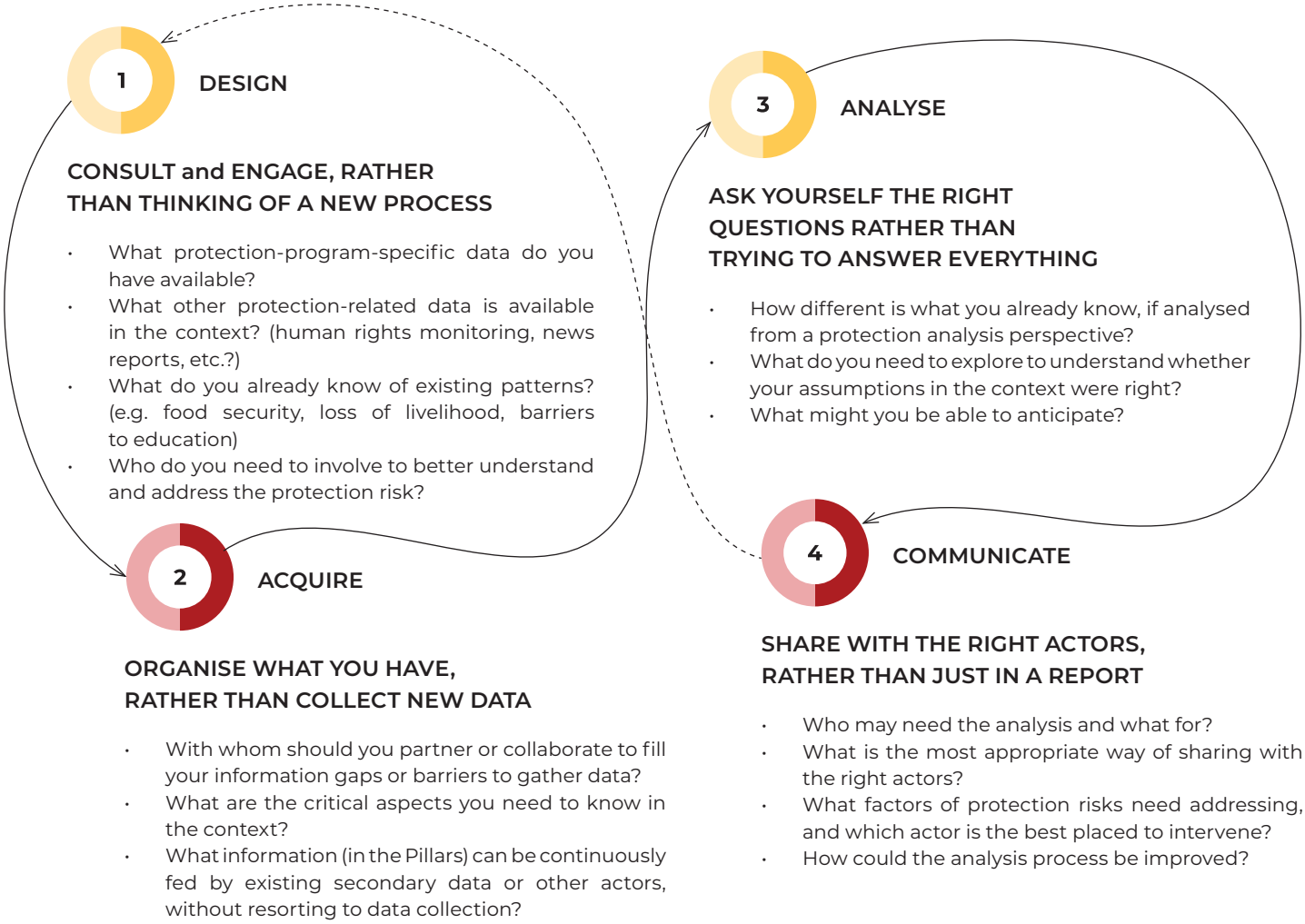
1. Present readable and persuasive analysis
2. Document and share results
3. Review process and lessons learnt

The PAF work flow

The PAF workflow (Figure 9) provides the four main steps (adapted from ACAPS)[xv] and the associated processes required to achieve timely, quality and credible protection analysis.

Adapt the process for each step according the context and follow a series of basic questions to guide the way you do this. Figure 10 illustrates each step and suggested basic questions. Further details are described in the Appendix 1 - PAF Analysis Tools.

Figure 10: **PAF workflow guiding questions**



[i] PIM, Protection Information Management Common Terminology, 2018, p.45, https://bit.ly/3bbzEpf

[ii] IASC Protection Policy (2016:3), https://bit.ly/3yrE2eo

[iii] Population groups are not predetermined categories. They must be relevant to the context, ensuring that different types of characteristics are not studied separately. The characteristics to define population groups can include age, gender, diversity and sex and other ethnocultural characteristics (https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sconcerns/popchar/popcharmethods.htm).

[iv] ICRC Professional Standards (2018:7), https://bit.ly/2Zm7OBu

[v] ICRC Professional Standards (2018:43)

[vi] IASC, 2016, https://bit.ly/3yrE2eo

[vii] IASC, 2016, https://bit.ly/3yrE2eo

[viii] IASC, 2013, https://bit.ly/3prEd41

[ix] ICRC, 2018, https://bit.ly/2Zm7OBu

[x] http://pim.guide

[xi] Specifically, it can be used to support interagency processes to collectively undertake a protection analysis by providing guidance for mobilizing a comprehensive, system-wide and multisector effort to prevent or respond to the most serious protection risks facing affected populations as well as to prevent and stop recurrences of violations . IASC, 2016, https://bit.ly/2LUjQPa

[xii] InterAction, https://protection.interaction.org/

[xiii] The information and data needed to elaborate a protection analysis according to the PAF is the same that may be used or is in use to conduct data activities and processes in relation to the Joint Inter-Sectoral Analysis Framework (JIAF), Global Information Management Assessment and Analysis Cell for COVID-19 (GIMAC), GBV Area of Responsibility Analytical Framework, Needs and Identification Analysis Framework for Child Protection (NIAF), Mine Action Area of Responsibility Analytical Framework. The concepts and structure draw upon these analysis framework, in addition to other analysis frameworks and initiatives (National Protection Cluster Iraq Analysis Framework, , MIRA and PIM).

[xiv] See: Tools to Ensure Data is Useful and Usable for Response: https://bit.ly/3bXP6Hf

[xv] "Protection analysis should not be treated as a one-off exercise; instead, it should be carried out continually throughout the response. An initial protection analysis can serve as the basis for an initial and interim response. Interim or initial response activities can then provide a basis for further dialogue and deeper analysis with the relevant stakeholders, in order to clarify assumptions, develop partnerships and develop strategies to more comprehensively address the risk patterns." ICRC Professional Standards (2018:42).

[xvi] https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/resources/files/acaps_analysis_workflow_poster.pdf