How has the GPC engaged with donors in recent past?

- OCHA-organized Inter-Cluster Consultations with Donors: Conceived as two meetings per
  year – February, to open the dialogue on a particular theme, and in December, to close the
  theme and take stock on progress achieved as agreed in the first meeting.

- GPC Cluster Coordinator Bilateral Interaction with Donors: Regular briefings provided to
  donors in the context of UNHCR’s role and responsibilities as Cluster Lead Agency. Usually in
  UNHCR bilateral meetings with some donors there is an agenda item on clusters;

- General briefings by Cluster Lead Agency on Operations: UNHCR as Cluster Lead Agency
  has provided specific and thematic briefings on country operations e.g. Northern Uganda dur-
  ing Excom side events.

- Some dialogue on cluster responsibilities in the context of resource mobilization efforts, Glo-
  bal Strategic Priorities and log frames with specific donors.

Objectives

To establish more systematic multi-lateral dialogue between GPC members and donors on topics
of mutual interest with a view to improving funding for protection and donor collaboration on policy
affecting protection.

Rationale

- Various donors have expressed a keen interest in being able to engage with the GPC on a more
  regular basis, in part to better understand how the GPC works, how thematic policy issues
  should be addressed and how protection concerns need to be addressed in country-specific
  crises and, more generally, how the work of GPC could be better supported by them.¹

- From the GPC perspective, regular engagement with donors serves as an opportunity to raise
  key concerns in relation to protection and highlight for donors the measures they could take
  to help address them. It also provides a mechanism for important feedback from donors on
  protection cluster performance globally and in the field.

¹ Some donors have at times expressed an expectation for their direct involvement in the GPC, as is apparently the case
with some other clusters at the global and field levels. While the independence of humanitarian action in combination
with the sensitivity of protection concerns and the role of donor governments in this regard mean that donor involve-
ment in the internal mechanisms of the GPC is inappropriate, a regular mechanism for GPC-donor engagement is
appropriate and necessary.
• Donor dialogue should not be viewed primarily as a fundraising mechanism – though it certainly may support fundraising efforts through increased mutual recognition of priorities and enhanced credibility of operational programming and policy work on protection. Similarly, donor dialogue should not be approached as simply a vehicle for advocacy by the GPC -- it is equally an opportunity to hear donor observations and feedback and to work in a collaborative manner with donors to address protection concerns.

**Topics for dialogue**

Initial conversations during the GPC Annual Retreat should be used to better understand expectations of both donors and GPC members for GPC-donor dialogue. A light survey of GPC members and donors could then be carried out to develop a more precise idea of key topics and countries/contexts to explore through dialogue.

Broadly speaking, topics for dialogue should include:

• **Country-specific protection analysis**, highlighting the risks facing vulnerable populations and the measure needed to reduce risk, specific funding gaps, donor policy, including donor government engagement with the affected States which can support overall strategies to address protection concerns.

• **Policy on protection issues**, highlighting analysis on key protection concerns affecting populations across contexts and opportunities to strengthen or close gaps in relevant donor policy.

• **Protection funding**, specifically:

  - There is a need to better understanding the **patterns in funding shortfalls** for protection in order to more effectively raise concerns to close systemic gaps. This will involve analysis of available data (in particular FTS) over a three-year period to identify broad funding. See CPWG examples of similar research attached (report and briefing paper).

  - There is an interest in examining **donor guidance for proposals addressing protection**, the degree to which protection serves as criteria for vetting proposals, and the potential to develop donor guidance further as a means to encourage strengthened protection programming.

**Approach and format**

**Which donors?**

More systematic and regular engagement with donor governments is the clear priority. However, with a view to supporting well-resourced protection programming on the ground, the GPC may also begin to cultivate relationships with private foundations.
Formats

A combination of the following formats to facilitate systematic dialogue may be established or developed further:

- **Multi-lateral and bi-lateral meetings with Permanent Missions in Geneva typically involve generalists with broad humanitarian portfolios.** Can be beneficial in terms of sensitizing them to the attention needed on key protection concerns in a given situation. Options may include: (i) maximize the GPC component of inter-agency briefings or (ii) establish a GPC-specific regular opportunity for mutual exchange/briefing at a general level.

- **Convening multi-lateral dialogue at the expert level** with the specialized personnel within donor government HQs or regional offices, for example twice per year, would enable more in-depth and specialized exploration of key issues and potentially have the greatest value for both the GPC membership and donors in terms of building up longer term collaboration on key themes and developing appropriate funding mechanisms.

- **Bi-lateral engagement with particularly keen donors** – e.g. US government’s Inter-Agency WG on the Protection Cluster. Not a substitute for regular engagement with donors as a group, but would be helpful to prioritise a few key donors for annual dialogue, can probably be convened in relevant donor capitals, e.g. by individual GPC members.

Beyond face to face meetings on a regular basis,

- **On the occasion of emerging or sudden on-set crises, the GPC should convene a GPC-Donor crisis telcon in order to exchange information on protection priorities and the means of addressing them in order to help ensure appropriate and timely donor responses.**

- **Regular email from GPC Coordinator** – e.g. monthly or bi-monthly – covering updates to key areas of work, providing links to new materials, etc.

Once the topics of mutual interest are more comprehensively identified through consultation and a light survey, additional methods or formats may be identified.

Working methods

- **AoR representation in each mechanism and occasion is essential to avoid conflicting messages emanating from different parts of the GPC.**

- **It will be essential for the the GPC Support Cell to facilitate the maintenance of a simple database to record who is talking to who and the issues addressed through bi-lateral contacts.**

- **In order to be useful, and not just one-way cursory briefings, early agenda-setting will be important.** This will allow for pre-meeting preparation, as appropriate to the topic and format, including ensuring that the right people are present for meetings. Emphasis should be on quality not quantity.

- **Approaches and formats should be prioritized and phased in over the course of the coming 1-2 years rather than taken up all at once.**
• Links to other GPC activities/workplan components should be maximized. A few examples of this:

  - the GPC’s objectives to operationalise mainstreaming across global clusters and on the ground could be supported by encouraging donors to use GPC mainstreaming guidance in their own funding guidance;

  - use donor dialogue mechanisms as a vehicle for the advocacy objectives prioritized in 2012, e.g. on neglected populations

**Suggested next steps**

• Identify who will lead this area of work – though the GPC Coordinator, in close collaboration with the respective AoR leads, has a primary role to represent the cluster, it will be helpful to have a lead individual from among the GPC membership, for example to help facilitate ongoing processes related to the development of agenda items

• Create donor contact list for regular info flow

• Consultation with donors on topics during the GPC Annual Retreat

• Light survey to better understand the expectations of GPC members and donors on topics/coverage for dialogue

• Set up an initial multi-lateral meeting for in-depth conversation at the expert level with donor governments