

**PROTECTION:  
WHAT IS IT ANYWAY?**



## PROTECTION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION



Pierre Péron/Oxfam

**JOSEPHINE**  
(not her real name)  
Northern DRC,  
September 2010

“I was held by the Lord’s Resistance Army for eight months. We were always on the move, staying in any one place no more than a week. I was forced to carry heavy loads, find food and cook ... Girls like me, some as young as 12, were forced to become the ‘wives’ of the LRA men. I was assigned to a boy who ... had also been kidnapped, but was now an LRA fighter ... I was finally able to escape one day when I was sent out to look for food. When the LRA fighters who were accompanying us fell asleep, another girl and I ran away. We walked 40 kilometres and finally arrived to safety in a village in Sudan.”

Protection is fundamentally about people like Josephine being safe from the harm that other people might cause them – from the kinds of violence and coercion she suffered when she was abducted by the LRA, and from being deprived of assistance or shelter after reaching refuge, for instance because of stigma about what has happened.

This booklet provides an overview of **what protection means in practice, who is responsible for making it happen and what those in need of protection can expect of humanitarians**. The risks that people face can take many forms and require a range of actions, some more specialised than others. This booklet gives a broad outline for humanitarians in other fields, and also includes links to more detailed resources.

Protection is defined as all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the right of all individuals, without discrimination, in accordance with the relevant bodies of law. This means that protection is an objective central to all humanitarian action: when people face severe abuses or violence, humanitarians risk becoming part of the problem if we don't understand how our own actions can affect people's safety. If we don't take protection into account from the start, not only will we miss opportunities to reduce risk for the people affected, but we could prolong a situation that puts them in danger.

Protection is a legal responsibility: the state has primary responsibility for making sure that people within its borders are safe. When it doesn't do so effectively, for whatever reason, national and international humanitarian organisations can play a part in ensuring that basic obligations are met.

As humanitarians we do not physically protect people from harm, but we can help them stay safe from violence, coercion and abuse. This goes beyond what is known as 'protection mainstreaming' or 'safe programming': **all humanitarians, whatever field they work in, must as a minimum take steps to prevent and reduce risk as well as to restore well-being and dignity** for people affected by crisis, particularly the most vulnerable.

Protection is the outcome we're aiming for. To achieve that outcome, **some humanitarian organisations also carry out specific activities to help people stay safe, recover from harm and secure access to their rights**. These activities include clearing unexploded bombs after conflict, issuing personal documentation, counselling survivors of sexual violence, supporting children separated from their families and helping people to understand and regain access to their rights.

In addition, **all humanitarian organisations have an obligation to contribute their knowledge and expertise to collective humanitarian action on systematic threats** to individuals and communities caught up in an emergency.

---

**THROUGHOUT THIS BOOKLET, LOOK FOR THIS SYMBOL  FOR LINKS TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON ISSUES COVERED**

## WHY ALL HUMANITARIANS HAVE A ROLE IN PROTECTION



© UNHCR/Paul Taggart

The response to the phenomenon of ‘night commuting’ in northern Uganda between 2003 and 2005 illustrates how humanitarian action across sectors can support communities in their own efforts to respond to the threats they face. Thousands of children fled into town centres at night to escape abduction by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA).

In avoiding one threat, however, the children were exposed to other risks such as sexual violence and abuse as they slept outside shops and in bus stations. Community members and religious leaders were the first to respond, opening shelters in churches, mosques and other buildings to house the children at night. Shelter, health services, and water and sanitation provided by humanitarian organisations in turn supported the children in both avoiding abduction and minimising their exposure to violence and abuse in the towns at night.

In the face of immediate danger, people will often take the first action to keep themselves and their families safe, and all humanitarians have a role in supporting them.

That can seem daunting, but the reality is that protection in humanitarian action is fundamentally about helping people stay safe from – and recover from – the harm that others might do them: broadly violence, coercion and abuse. We don’t have to be legal experts to help protect people from harm.

In fact, if you’re a humanitarian then you’re already having an impact on protection, even if you’re not aware of it. Every humanitarian intervention has the potential to reduce the risks people face or to make things worse for them. The way we design and implement a humanitarian response will determine whether we put people at greater risk – or help keep them from harm.

In any area of humanitarian action, protection can help us achieve better outcomes for people in need. Taking a protection perspective in our work can help us identify risks that would otherwise limit the impact of what we do, find ways of addressing them in our programmes and refer them to protection specialists when we can’t.

This is not something humanitarians can do on their own. Ours is a complementary role, and it involves awareness of and cooperation with others. Understanding who is responsible for what in protecting people in crisis is essential if humanitarian organisations are to play their part effectively. We look at some of the key responsibilities in the next section.

---

[FOR MORE ON THESE ISSUES, CLICK HERE](#)

### I’M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?

Understand your role in helping people keep out of harm’s way as part of your core humanitarian purpose.



## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Pooja Kishnani/Oxfam

Because the factors affecting people's safety are so many and so varied, **effective protection always involves working with others** – state authorities, local civil society, national and international humanitarian organisations and affected communities working together.

For that to work, there needs to be effective coordination and communication between all those involved. That can mean building bridges between our own humanitarian coordination structures – clusters, working groups and the like – and the institutions closest to the people at risk. It is sometimes civil society organisations such as women's groups, religious leaders and local authorities, with their nuanced understanding of context and direct contact with the people concerned, who will be best placed to help them stay safe.

### **People at risk: the first-line responders**

In cases of physical violence, **most immediate protective action is taken by people themselves, often with help from family, friends and community**. Often that action is to flee danger when possible. Sometimes they will negotiate with parties to a conflict or avoid dangerous places, for instance by stopping going to school or to the market. It is critical that national and international efforts do not undermine, but support and reinforce, safe community-led protection measures.

In extreme situations some of the actions people take to protect themselves and their families can be harmful, such as letting their daughters be married when they are still children, in order to avoid what they consider worse forms of violence against them or other family members. In such cases external efforts can offer people a range of safer alternatives.

People at risk may seek support from **civil society organisations** that they trust. As humanitarians we should respect that choice, by working with or coordinating our action with their civil society representatives.

Even when people act to keep out of danger, the state and government bodies such as the police, military and civil administration remain responsible for their safety and well-being, as outlined below.

---

**FOR MORE ON THESE ISSUES, CLICK HERE**

### **I'M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?**

Build on what already exists: support safe local protection action and make sure that your own actions complement it.



## STATE AUTHORITIES AND ORGANISED ARMED GROUPS



© UN Photo/Martine Perret

**State authorities have primary responsibility for protecting people, even if international bodies are present.** The state must ensure that its agents (e.g. army, police) do not harm civilians, and protect them from harm by others – including by ensuring that people in need can receive protection or assistance from others if the government is unable to provide it.

Capacity and willingness to protect vulnerable groups will vary across government departments. Helping to ensure that state obligations are met can entail a mix of capacity building, coordination, negotiation and advocacy.

**Local authorities have a critical role to play in protection.** They are the manifestation of the state in people's daily lives: the local police officer, the army unit posted to the area or the official in charge of support for displaced people. These are the individuals who implement government policies and responsibilities – although some may be far removed from central government, with limited training, capacity and resources.

**Organised armed groups** have similar responsibilities for ensuring that their fighters do not either deliberately or unintentionally harm members of the public, and for enabling people in need to receive essential assistance and services.

---

**FOR MORE ON THESE ISSUES, CLICK HERE**

### **I'M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?**

Talk about protection to those with legal mandates and responsibilities, and consider how your organisation can contribute to humanitarian advocacy and capacity building for protection.



## OTHER NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL BODIES

National and international **human rights organisations** promote protection by monitoring, investigating, reporting on and raising awareness of human rights. Unlike humanitarians, they will often gather evidence that can form the basis for legal action to hold perpetrators to account.

The work of human rights organisations gives them a different perspective on the threats that people face, and they and humanitarians can often benefit by pooling relevant information on the protection risks and needs of vulnerable groups. Because their work can also be highly sensitive, however, it can sometimes be necessary for humanitarians to maintain a clear distinction between humanitarian action and human rights work to avoid compromising access to people in need.

**Development organisations** have a role in tackling the causes of violence and abuse and building protective capacity, coordinating with government and humanitarian organisations to ensure a complementary response. National and international organisations specialising in **peacebuilding and conflict transformation** also work on the underlying causes of conflict and promote peaceful cohabitation between communities.

The **diplomatic community** – including embassies, for example, and envoys of the United Nations (UN) and regional organisations – has channels of dialogue with governments and other parties to a conflict that it can use to raise protection concerns and promote international obligations, complementing the work of others on the ground.

**Peacekeeping missions** are mandated by intergovernmental organisations such as the UN, often to monitor implementation of peace or ceasefire agreements or to support political transition. They can use diplomatic channels to help resolve conflicts and advocate for governments to meet their obligations towards vulnerable groups. Many have armed peacekeepers with a specific mandate to protect civilians through physical presence and the threat or use of force. They may also support national armed forces in various ways, and their mandate can include offensive action against certain groups, making them parties to a conflict.



© UN Photo/Sylvain Liechti

Sometimes UN humanitarian agencies work alongside peacekeepers and/or political affairs staff in 'integrated' missions. To ensure that the neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian action are not compromised, humanitarians must maintain a clear distinction between their own work and the political and military aims and activities of peacekeeping and political missions.

All these bodies have responsibilities for helping people stay safe from harm. In the next section we consider who is in fact at risk of harm in emergency situations.

### I'M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?

Work with others: understand the mandates of other organisations and talk to protection colleagues about how you can contribute to shared efforts to protect people at risk.



## WHO IS AT RISK, AND WHY?



Martine Perret/UNMIT

**ROSA, 80**  
(not her real name)

“When the enemy attacked I couldn’t run away because my legs don’t work. My neighbours hid me under trees. I stayed there for four days.”



In any society, some people are more vulnerable than others. This may be because of their gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation, or a combination of factors. **In a crisis the environment they live in can become more insecure, and they may be less able to take steps to protect themselves, such as moving to safety.**

All these factors can combine and can also change very quickly during a crisis. A divisive political statement made in a capital city can suddenly put an ethnic minority at greater risk many hundreds of miles away; people who were at an advantage prior to a conflict may suddenly find themselves the target of attacks or unable to move freely. Injury or arrest can place once-powerful militia fighters and their families at the mercy of others.

We can make some assumptions about who may be most at risk – based on the known risks of sexual violence for girls and women, for instance, or the dangers for children separated from their families. People who were socially marginalised before a crisis will often be at greater risk once it starts as they have fewer resources, contacts and safe coping mechanisms to draw on. But these general indications cannot tell us who is in fact at risk in any given situation.

For that, **it is essential to understand the specific threats that people are facing, the dynamics of vulnerability in each situation, and how these change over time.** Women and girls, men and boys may experience different forms of violence or discrimination, but ethnicity or political affiliation may be the main factor putting them at risk. Weapons that seem indiscriminate, such as mines, may in fact affect men and boys most if they are the ones who go out to find food or water.

Our first step to gaining that understanding is consulting the people directly affected. Communities often have a good insight into the threats they face at a local level, and will generally be doing what they can to reduce exposure to them. Next we look at what support they can expect from humanitarians as they do so.

**I'M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?**

Know the context: consult the people affected to understand the threats they face, who is most at risk and how they are coping.



## WHAT SHOULD PEOPLE AT RISK EXPECT FROM HUMANITARIANS?



Stella Madete/Oxfam

**MONICA**  
South Sudan

“I want to go home and find my children, because I cannot sleep not knowing how they are. I hope for peace so that everyone is able to go back home, and one night can pass without the sound of a gunshot. I am a strong woman. I am used to working and taking care of my family. What I want most is to be able to do that again.”



So what can someone like Monica expect from the humanitarian system?

At the very least she and others like her should be able to access humanitarian assistance without it putting her in greater danger, whether it is food she can receive safely, shelter in a secure area free from unexploded bombs and other hazards or an emergency cash transfer – without having to pay for it, in cash or in sexual favours or in any other way.

In addition, steps must be taken to ensure that she is not exposed to further threats. Those responsible for any violence or threat of violence towards her must be reminded of their obligations and every effort must be made to bring their behaviour into line with the basic norms of humanity and (in conflicts) the rules of war. This may require a long-term effort, but it must start from the earliest signs of mistreatment. In some cases, ensuring people's physical safety may mean increasing police patrols, a national military presence or an international force. If these are not forthcoming, Monica should know that humanitarians will advocate with those responsible on her behalf.

If she needs support to trace missing family members or to deal with what is happening to her and her family, she should know where and how to access such services confidentially, and they should be available to her in a timely and efficient manner. Where she experiences problems with these services, she should be able to make a complaint, have it dealt with quickly and know what action has been taken as a result.

She should have a mechanism to tell humanitarians what is happening to her, her family and community, what action she wants to see taken and her ideas for change. And she should know that those organisations will understand her rights and take her views seriously when planning the response and will use them to advocate on her behalf with the decision-makers and power brokers she cannot access herself.

Finally, she should know that there is a whole structure and system working on her behalf in which every component is geared to improving her situation and making her safer. In the next section we look at how that translates into practical action for humanitarian organisations.

**I'M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?**

Listen to people's concerns about their safety and feed these into collective humanitarian advocacy.



---

**FOR MORE ON THESE ISSUES, CLICK HERE**

## WHAT CAN HUMANITARIANS DO IN PRACTICAL TERMS TO HELP PEOPLE AT RISK?



© UNHCR / J. Maillem

There are three levels at which humanitarian programmes take people's protection on board.

All humanitarian organisations must take steps to **reduce the risks of violence, coercion and abuse for people affected by crisis**. This entails understanding who is at risk and why, and taking the possible consequences of humanitarian action or inaction on people's exposure to threats into account in decision-making. It includes minimising the risk of abuse by humanitarian teams, and ensuring that those teams know how and where to refer people in need for specialist support to prevent or recover from violence or exploitation (see the following page for more on specialist organisations).

For instance, with an up-to-date understanding of who is vulnerable to what threats in a given context, humanitarian teams in other sectors might take the risks into account in various ways:

- *In the choice of materials* – for instance, using bamboo to build washing areas, rather than plastic sheeting where that is known to attract looters
- *In the siting of facilities* – placing water points specifically to reduce the risk of assaults on people collecting water
- *In the timing and location of distributions* to minimise the risk of attacks on recipients.

Humanitarian organisations in all sectors may also **increase the impact of their programmes on people's safety**, for instance by:

- *Providing support to protection interventions*, for example the food or shelter component of a programme of psychosocial support to former child soldiers
- *Targeting and designing action* in other sectors to have outcomes for people's safety, as when livelihoods support targets poor families at risk of people trafficking
- *Advocating for action to address specific threats to people at risk*, for instance through coordinated pressure to improve their access to assistance.

They should also **be part of collective protection efforts by the humanitarian community**, which should generally be led by the Humanitarian Coordinator and Humanitarian Country Team. This entails:

- *Contributing to joined-up efforts to enhance protection in practice and ensure that decisions about humanitarian response strategies are well informed and do not put people in greater danger*, for instance ensuring that assistance does not unintentionally prolong abuse
- *Working with others across sectors and mandates (humanitarian, diplomatic, peacekeeping) to tackle pervasive threats through strategic use of international capacity*, for example coordinating efforts on food, shelter, logistics and security to help children avoid being forced to join armed groups.

**FOR MORE ON THESE ISSUES, CLICK HERE**

### **I'M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?**

Ensure that your interventions contribute as much as possible to a more protective environment, locally or internationally, for people at risk.



## SPECIALIST HUMANITARIAN PROTECTION ORGANISATIONS

To avoid placing people in greater danger, humanitarians without specialist expertise should not attempt systematic monitoring, investigating or reporting of human rights violations. Rather than interviewing the person affected or asking for details about an incident, a non-specialist should offer to put them in contact with organisations that can provide support.

To help you find the right support, below is an overview of some of the international humanitarian organisations with specific mandates or specialist expertise in protection, grouped by area of intervention. For reasons of space, only a few of those you are most likely to meet in the field are listed; links are provided where available to lists of other organisations in each area. These and others, many of them national and local organisations, may be active in the same areas as you; it is important to ensure that your team knows who to refer reports of abuse to, and how to do so safely and confidentially. Where they are present, these organisations may also be able to offer advice on how best to respond to specific protection issues arising in your programmes, or put you in touch with someone else who can.

The [International Committee of the Red Cross \(ICRC\)](#) has a specific mandate in international law to ensure humanitarian assistance and protection for victims of conflict and violence. Its functions include advocating with all sides in a conflict, often through confidential dialogue, to uphold international rules on protecting civilians and others not actively involved in fighting.

The [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees \(UNHCR\)](#) is mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees. It has a mandate to prevent and end statelessness and to protect stateless individuals. In a coordinated manner within the international humanitarian system, UNHCR also responds to the assistance and protection needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and others affected by conflict. It leads the [Global Protection Cluster](#) as well as, in many instances, national and sub-national protection clusters and coordination mechanisms.

The [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights \(OHCHR\)](#) is the principal UN office mandated to promote and protect human rights for all. In emergency settings, OHCHR field teams monitor and analyse the human rights situation on the ground to inform the humanitarian response. OHCHR supports UN humanitarian agencies to maintain a human rights perspective in their work, including joint advocacy and by participating in and sometimes leading national protection clusters. Field offices may also provide advice and technical

support to civil society and governments on emergency-related human rights issues such as the administration of justice, legislative reform and law enforcement.

[Child protection](#) in emergencies is defined as the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children. In a humanitarian emergency children are at risk of injury and disability, physical and sexual violence, psychosocial distress and mental disorders. They may be separated from their families, recruited into armed forces and groups, economically exploited or come into contact with the justice system – and exposure to one threat will often make them more vulnerable to another. Specialist child protection activities include facilitating community-based child protection interventions to promote protective social norms; case management; providing psychosocial support; strengthening caregivers' capacity to care for children; strengthening the resilience of children and adolescents; establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms focusing on grave violations; and reuniting children with their families.

[UNICEF](#) leads coordination of child protection work within the protection cluster globally; national and sub-national protection clusters will generally include a child protection working group involving international, national and local NGOs as well as UN agencies. A global Rapid Response Team provides support to field-level child protection coordination groups and can rapidly deploy coordination and technical support in emergencies. International NGOs working on child protection in emergencies include [Save the Children](#), [the Danish Refugee Council](#), [Islamic Relief International](#), [Plan International](#), [Terre des Hommes](#), [War Child](#) and [World Vision International](#). For other organisations involved in child protection in emergencies, see [www.cpwg.net/cpwg/cpwg-members](http://www.cpwg.net/cpwg/cpwg-members)

[Gender-based violence \(GBV\)](#) is defined as any harmful act against a person's will that is based on socially ascribed differences between males and females. Specialist interventions to address GBV may include information on and provision of medical care, legal support and mental health/psychosocial support for survivors of sexual violence; risk monitoring and data collection; community mobilisation and civil society support on promoting women's rights; and training for members of the police, judiciary, armed services, social welfare teams and other government officials.

UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) lead coordination of GBV prevention and response within the Global Protection Cluster and are providers of last resort; national and sub-national protection clusters will generally include a GBV working group involving international, national and local NGOs as well as UN agencies. International agencies working on GBV in emergencies include the **International Rescue Committee (IRC)**, whose Women's Protection and Empowerment Team provides tools, guidance and support to humanitarian workers on serving the needs of GBV survivors, including through its GBV Responders' Network; **CARE International**, whose work on protecting women from violence includes interventions, research and advocacy on GBV prevention and response; and **UNFPA**, which supports data collection and information management on GBV and provides e-learning resources and guidance for practitioners.

For other organisations involved in GBV prevention and response, see [www.gbvaor.net/who-we-are](http://www.gbvaor.net/who-we-are)

**Housing, land and property** issues that people face in emergencies include insecurity of tenure and the threat of forced eviction; housing, land and property disputes; lack of housing and land documentation; and natural resource disputes. As the designated **Housing, Land and Property (HLP)** focal point agencies, the **Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)** and the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)** jointly coordinate HLP work within the Global Protection Cluster, bringing together a wide range of organisations. For example, NRC provides legal advice, counselling and information to assist refugees and IDPs in conflict and post-conflict contexts; the **International Organisation for Migration (IOM)** provides policy and implementation support to governments on crisis- and displacement-related land issues and post-crisis mechanisms; and **UN-Habitat** supports government, partners and communities to tackle HLP issues through policy reform, capacity development, research and the development and implementation of tools for land tenure, management and governance.

**Mine Action** seeks to identify and reduce the impact and risk of landmines and explosive remnants of war to a level where people can live safely. Activities include clearance, risk education, assistance to victims, training of teams of deminers in clearance techniques and campaigning against the use of indiscriminate weapons such as cluster munitions. The **UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** leads coordination on mine action within the Global Protection Cluster and is the provider of last resort. Other key organisations in this field include **Handicap International**, whose rehabilitation specialists provide care and support to people injured by mines and explosive remnants of war; the **Mines Advisory Group (MAG)**, which sets up community liaison systems to report on explosive hazards for subsequent disposal; and the **Danish Demining Group**, whose community-focused approach builds up local institutions and addresses small arms and light weapons as tools of violence.

For other organisations involved in mine action, see [www.globalprotectioncluster.org/\\_assets/files/aors/mine\\_action/MA\\_AOR\\_Participants\\_EN.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/aors/mine_action/MA_AOR_Participants_EN.pdf)

### **I'M NOT A PROTECTION SPECIALIST – WHAT CAN I DO?**

Know your limits: talk with specialists to find out how you can help people access their services, and what not to do in order to avoid putting them in greater danger.



## WHERE TO GET MORE INFORMATION

There is a wealth of resource materials available on various aspects of protection. A non-specialist looking for key references on particular subjects may want to start with the materials and links below.

### GENERAL

#### Protection: An ALNAP Guide for Humanitarian Agencies

An introduction to the fundamental concepts of humanitarian protection  
[www.alnap.org/pool/files/alnap-protection-guide.pdf](http://www.alnap.org/pool/files/alnap-protection-guide.pdf)

#### Sphere Protection Principles

Concise overview of key concepts and practical guidance for taking protection on board throughout humanitarian action  
[www.spherehandbook.org/en/how-to-use-this-chapter-5](http://www.spherehandbook.org/en/how-to-use-this-chapter-5)

#### ICRC Professional Standards for Protection Work

Minimum standards for various aspects of protection in situations of violence and conflict, including data management, interaction with human rights organisations and peacekeeping missions, and results-based management of protection strategies  
[www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/p0999.htm](http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/p0999.htm)

#### Oxfam GB, Improving the Safety of Civilians: A protection training pack

Practical introduction to protection mainstreaming and programming for emergency response professionals, adaptable to various levels of prior knowledge  
[www.policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/improving-the-safety-of-civilians-a-protection-training-pack-115396](http://www.policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/improving-the-safety-of-civilians-a-protection-training-pack-115396)

#### ActionAid, Safety with Dignity:

##### A field manual for integrating community-based protection across humanitarian programs

Community-focused field guide, strong on tools and clear, practical guidance  
[www.actionaid.org/publications/safety-dignity-field-based-manual-integrating-community-based-protection-across-humanit](http://www.actionaid.org/publications/safety-dignity-field-based-manual-integrating-community-based-protection-across-humanit)

#### Global Protection Cluster website

Basic information, latest materials, contact details of resource people  
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org)

### MAINSTREAMING PROTECTION

#### Global Protection Cluster Protection Mainstreaming Training Package

Full training pack for use with humanitarian teams and government staff  
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/\\_assets/files/aors/protection\\_mainstreaming/PM\\_training/1\\_GPC\\_Protection\\_Mainstreaming\\_Training\\_Package\\_FULL\\_November\\_2014.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/aors/protection_mainstreaming/PM_training/1_GPC_Protection_Mainstreaming_Training_Package_FULL_November_2014.pdf)

#### World Vision, Minimum Inter-Agency Standards for Protection Mainstreaming

Core principles and practical guidance for applying them across six core sectors of humanitarian action  
[www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/procap/document/world-vision-minimum-inter-agency-standards-protection-mainstreaming](http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/procap/document/world-vision-minimum-inter-agency-standards-protection-mainstreaming)

### CHILD PROTECTION

#### Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

[www.cpwg.net/minimum-standards](http://www.cpwg.net/minimum-standards)

#### Child Protection Working Group website

Basic information, latest materials, contact details of resource people  
[www.cpwg.net](http://www.cpwg.net)

### GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

#### IASC Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

Guidance for planning, implementing and coordinating multi-sectoral action to prevent and respond to sexual violence, focusing on the early stages of an emergency but including action for preparedness and post-acute crisis response  
[www.gbvguidelines.org](http://www.gbvguidelines.org)

#### GBV Responders' Network

A resource base of tools, research and advocacy materials for addressing violence against women and girls in humanitarian settings  
[www.gbvresponders.org](http://www.gbvresponders.org)

#### GBV Area of Responsibility website

Basic information, latest materials, contact details of resource people (under development)  
[www.gbvaor.net](http://www.gbvaor.net)

### HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY

#### Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Area of Responsibility website

Basic information and contact information of resource people (under development)  
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/themes/housing-land-and-property/hlp-area-of-responsibility.html](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/en/themes/housing-land-and-property/hlp-area-of-responsibility.html)

#### NRC's HLP Training Manual

Available upon request at  
[www.nrc.no/?did=9165948#.VjybdYSS1C8](http://www.nrc.no/?did=9165948#.VjybdYSS1C8)

#### Displaced women's housing, land and property rights

Basic information and latest reports  
[womenshlp.nrc.no](http://womenshlp.nrc.no)

## MINE ACTION

### UNMAS, Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes

[www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/MA-Guidelines-WEB.pdf](http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/publications/MA-Guidelines-WEB.pdf)

### Examples of the role of mine action in integrating victim assistance into broader frameworks

[www.reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Five\\_Key\\_Examples\\_of\\_the\\_Role\\_of\\_Mine\\_Action.pdf](http://www.reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Five_Key_Examples_of_the_Role_of_Mine_Action.pdf)

## FORCED DISPLACEMENT

### Global Protection Cluster Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons

Introduction to and guidance on operationalising core concepts, principles and frameworks  
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/\\_assets/files/tools\\_and\\_guidance/protection\\_of\\_idps/IDP\\_Handbook\\_EN.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/protection_of_idps/IDP_Handbook_EN.pdf)

### UNHCR, Protecting Refugees: A Field Guide for NGOs

Accessible guidance, checklists and frequently asked questions on refugee protection and specific protection needs of particular groups  
[www.unhcr.org/3bb9794e4.html](http://www.unhcr.org/3bb9794e4.html)

## PROTECTION IN CONFLICT AND DISASTER

### IASC Operational Guidelines on the Protection of Persons in Situations of Natural Disasters

[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/\\_assets/files/tools\\_and\\_guidance/IASC\\_Guidelines\\_Natural\\_Disasters\\_EN.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/IASC_Guidelines_Natural_Disasters_EN.pdf)

### ICRC, International Humanitarian Law: Answers to Your Questions

A plain-language overview of key aspects of international law relevant to humanitarian workers and others operating in conflict settings  
[www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/p0703.htm](http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/p0703.htm)

## OLDER AND DISABLED PEOPLE

### HelpAge, Protecting Older People in Emergencies: Good Practice Guide

Case studies highlighting common challenges and effective practice  
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/\\_assets/files/tools\\_and\\_guidance/age\\_gender\\_diversity/HelpAge\\_Older\\_People\\_Best\\_Practices\\_EN.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/age_gender_diversity/HelpAge_Older_People_Best_Practices_EN.pdf)

### Age and Disability Capacity Building Programme (ADCAP), Minimum Standards for Age and Disability Inclusion in Humanitarian Action

Guidance and case studies on inclusive response across sectors  
[www.helpage.org/resources/practical-guidelines/emergency-guidelines](http://www.helpage.org/resources/practical-guidelines/emergency-guidelines)

## MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

### IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings

Practice-based guidance for a wide range of issues, from human resource management and community mobilisation to monitoring and evaluation and standards for specific sectoral interventions  
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org/\\_assets/files/tools\\_and\\_guidance/Guidelines\\_IASC\\_Mental\\_Health\\_Psychosocial\\_with\\_index-EN.pdf](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/Guidelines_IASC_Mental_Health_Psychosocial_with_index-EN.pdf)

### Mental Health and Psychosocial Network website

Latest resources, events and discussion in multiple languages from around the world  
[www.mhpps.net](http://www.mhpps.net)



This document was developed by Oxfam for the Global Protection Cluster and financed by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (ECHO). The views expressed herein should not be taken, in any way, to reflect the official opinion of the European Union, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

For other materials in this series, see:  
[www.globalprotectioncluster.org](http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org)  
[www.oxfam.org.uk/protection](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/protection)

Designed by Soapbox, [www.soapbox.co.uk](http://www.soapbox.co.uk)

© Global Protection Cluster March 2016



Cover photos, clockwise from top left:

© UN Photo/Martine Perret  
© UNHCR/K.Rochanakorn  
Martine Perret/UNMIT  
Martine Perret/UNMIT  
© UN Photo/Shareef Sarhan  
Simon Rawles/Oxfam