



PROTECTION SECTOR WORKING GROUP (PSWG)

**ABUJA, NIGERIA
TERMS OF REFERENCE
June 2015**

OVERVIEW

Recognizing that states have the primary responsibility to protect all persons within their jurisdiction in accordance with international and national legal provisions, the need for a protection working group became imperative in the aftermath of the catastrophic floods in 2012 which affected 33 out of 36 states in Nigeria. In 2014, the need to strengthen the coordination of the protection sector was heightened, as the insurgency and counter insurgency activities widened in scope and increased in intensity, in the three North East States of Borno, Yobe and Adamawa. There has also been spill over into the other three North East States (Gombe, Bauchi and Taraba) with increased security incidents and in-flows of IDPs seeking safety. In the North Central, fierce clashes have ensued between Fulani pastoralists and Tiv or other farmers as well as communal and religious violence in Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa and Zamfara. Such violence has led to large numbers of internally displaced persons, as instances of sexual and gender-based violence and various forms of violations of child rights remain high on the humanitarian protection and human rights agenda of both national and international protection actors.

The Protection Sector Working Group (PSWG) was set up at the National level in 2012 to strengthen the coordination of members' activities and the exchange of all protection related information in the country.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND COORDINATION

PSWG is accountable to the Humanitarian Coordinator.

The PSWG provides the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and the National Humanitarian Coordination Forum strategic advice and ensures coordination of protection, including with the sub-sector working groups on child protection and SGBV.

The PSWG will seek guidance from, liaise and share relevant information with the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) as and when required. It will also coordinate with and support State-level PSWGs.

PSWG GOALS

- Ensure predictable, accountable and effective coordination of protection response at the National and State levels.
- Ensure the centrality of protection in the humanitarian response in Nigeria through effective mainstreaming of protection in all humanitarian sectors.
- Ensure that PSWG members are accountable to affected populations through consultative and feedback mechanisms.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

In line with its protection strategy and action plan, the PSWG will have the following objectives.

- To ensure that gaps in the response to protection issues are systematically identified and addressed including through protection monitoring activities and participation in joint assessments.
- To advocate for a protective environment for vulnerable groups such as displaced persons, survivors and those at risk of sexual and gender-based violence, children and young persons, persons with disabilities and older persons.
- To support HCT's advocacy work in protection including compliance with international standards on durable solutions.
- To provide targeted trainings and capacity building on protection for humanitarian actors, authorities and other relevant actors.
- To support the effective mainstreaming of protection in all humanitarian sectors.
- To provide support and guidance to sub-sector working groups and PSWGs at the State-level.

The work of the PSWG will be guided by the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence. The Protection Cluster will manage the information in its possession according to the utmost confidentiality and safeguard of beneficiaries, communities, staff and, organizations involved.

STRUCTURE OF THE PSWG

The leadership of the PSWG is composed of one UN agency and a relevant national institution, or an international non-governmental organization (INGO). In line with its global protection responsibilities and sectoral tasks decided by the HCT, UNHCR together with NHRC will assume the responsibilities of Co-Leadership of the PSWG.

CO-LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES AND MEETINGS

The Co-Leads are responsible for organizing the meetings and members are invited to put forward agenda items. Members of the PSWG will assume responsibilities to implement activities identified in the protection strategy and action plan.

The meetings are taking place at least twice every month. The frequency of meetings may change, depending on the need and the humanitarian situation in the country. Ad hoc meetings may be called by any member of the PSWG in consultation and agreement with the Co-Leads. In the spirit of collegiality and team-work, the members are invited to host meetings in their offices. Draft agenda will be circulated to the PSWG members ahead of the meeting and the PSWG members are invited to table additional items as necessary. After the meeting, the minutes will be drafted by the hosting organization and circulated by the Co-Leads for suggested revisions, following which the minutes will be considered adopted.

SUB-WORKING GROUPS AND OTHER FORA

The PSWG may establish sub-working groups/task forces as needed and requested by the members. The Child Protection Sub-Working Group (CPSWG), co-led by UNICEF and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, and the SGBV Sub-Working Group, co-led by UNFPA and the Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, were activated in 2015. The Terms of Reference for the Sub-Working Groups will be developed in due course. In the context of returns, a sub-working group on Land and Property Rights may also be established. These, as well as any other sub-working groups established under the umbrella of the PSWG, will regularly brief the PSWG on their activities. Further to this, the PSWG may set up temporary thematic groups to address emerging specific protection issues.

The PSWG is based in Abuja, thus its regular member organizations are required to have representation in Abuja as well. This, however, does not preclude the PSWG from inviting non-

members to its meetings on an occasional basis for briefing or advocacy purposes. The PSWG may also support the establishment of regional or State-level protection sector working groups in order to ensure immediate and local coordination of protection-related activities in emergencies. While the PSWG engages the Government at the National level, it also may, through the State-level PSWG members, engage relevant state and local authorities on any issue of concern. In the context of the urgent protection needs resulting from the insurgency in the North East, State-level PSWGs are being activated in 2015 in the most affected states.

The PSWG membership is open to:

- a. Relevant international NGOs with protection profile and activities;
- b. Relevant governmental institutions with protection activities and mandates;
- c. Relevant UN and UN-affiliated agencies, as well as ICRC in the observer status, with protection-related activities and mandates;
- d. National NGOs, civil society organizations (CSOs) and faith-based organizations as well as national institutions through existing coordination bodies based in Abuja as identified and agreed upon by the members.

REPORTING AND HUMANITARIAN COORDINATION IN GENERAL

Each month, PSWG members will fill out the Protection Activities 5W Matrix with information concerning their protection activities and send the information to UNHCR to compile. The Protection Activities Matrix is a tool used for information sharing and planning purposes. It includes information on Who, is doing What, Where, When and for Whom ('5W') in relation to protection activities for persons of concern in Nigeria. A secondary purpose of the Protection Activities 5W Matrix is to facilitate effective referrals between partners. PSWG Members are tasked with maintaining their agency's entries for recent protection activities into the Protection Activities 5W Matrix. The Protection Activities 5W Matrix may be compiled in coordination with Protection Sub-Sector Working Groups including Child Protection and SGBV; and State-level PSWGs, as appropriate. The Protection Activities 5W Matrix will be used for reporting purposes for PSWG specific and interagency humanitarian reporting (Strategic Response Plans, Interagency/PSWG Humanitarian Dashboard, Fact Sheets, etc).

While continuing to advocate for a strengthened humanitarian coordination structure in Nigeria, the PSWG will provide protection strategic advice and support to the Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG), as well as the HCT and other relevant inter-agency coordination forums, at their meetings or as required, depending on the exigency of the situation. The Co-Leads of the PSWG will also keep the Humanitarian Coordinator abreast of PSWG activities and protection concerns.

The PSWG will seek to facilitate the work of and provide protection advice to the HCT and other relevant inter-agency coordination forums on all humanitarian and relevant developmental processes and programs and may draft policy papers or guidelines on any protection issue or intervention.