



Global Protection Cluster Annual Retreat  
21-22 February 2012

# Report



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# AGENDA

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## DAY 1 – 21 FEBRUARY

### COMPONENT 1 – LAUNCH OF GPC STRATEGY

- 9.00-9.30 **Opening Remarks**  
Louise Aubin, GPC Coordinator
- 9.30-10.00 **Remarks by GPC NGO Participant Speakers**
- 10.00-10.30 **Keynote Remarks**  
Erika Feller, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner (Protection)
- 10.30-10.45 **Coffee**
- 10.45-11.15 **Presentation of the GPC Strategy**  
Simon Russell, Senior ProCap Officer
- 11.15-11.45 **Presentation of the GPC Workplan**  
Catherine Barnett, Child Protection AOR Coordinator
- 11.45-12.15 **Question and Answer Session**  
Claudio Delfabro, GPC Taskforce on Learning Co-Lead
- 12.15-12.45 **Presentation of GPC Website**  
WTMEDIA Presentation by Krisztian Aczel
- 12.45-13.30 **Lunch**

### COMPONENT 2 – OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

- 13.30-15.00 **Contemporary and Emerging Protection Challenges:**  
Volker Turk (UNHCR), Andreas Wigger (ICRC), Ilaria Bottigliero – (IDLO)  
Moderator: Simon Russell
- 15.00-15.20 **Coffee**
- 15.20-16.30 “Civil-Military Coordination and the Protection of Civilians” - Victoria Metcalfe, Research Fellow, Humanitarian Policy Group at the Overseas Development Institute. “Self-Protection Strategies: Community-based Studies in Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe” – Nils Carstensen, Manager and Co-initiator, Local to Global Protection Initiative. Moderator: Erin Mooney
- 17.00-18.00 **Drinks and launch of JIPS Profiling and Assessment Resource Kit**  
  
Hosting Remarks: Louise Aubin  
Presentation by Sarah Elliot

## DAY 2 – 22 FEBRUARY

### COMPONENT 3 – GPC WORKPLAN

- 9.00-10.00 **Presentation of Task Team Conceptual Framework for Each Priority Area: Leads/Presenters as outlined in Programme**
- 10:00 -13:00 **Field Level Support:**
- Working Group 1: Develop and Disseminate a Protection Cluster Toolbox – Leonard Zulu
  - Working Group 2: Establish a GPC Help Desk and Ensure Rapid Deployment Capacity-Szilard Fricska
  - Working Group 3: Provide Training and Build Capacity in the Field –Kim Mancini
- Global Level Engagement:**
- Working Group 4: Donor Engagement –Dina Abou Samra
  - Working Group 5: Advocacy-Rebecca Skovbye
  - Working Group 6: Protection Mainstreaming-Paolo Lubrano
- 10:30 **Coffee taken during working sessions**
- 13.00-14.00 **Lunch**

### COMPONENT 4 – TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS

- 14:00-14:50 **Protection in Natural Disaster Situations:**  
Karen Gulick (UNHCR), David Murphy (OHCHR),  
Anne Thurin (Haiti Protection Cluster).  
Moderator: Susanne Pedersen
- 14:50-15:40 **IDP Outside Camps Panel:**  
Erin Mooney (Yemen), Rosa da Costa (OHCHR-SRHRIDS), Anne Davies.  
Moderator: Kate Half
- 15:40- 16:30 **Transformative Agenda and its Impact on Field Protection Clusters:**  
Belinda Holdsworth (OCHA), Manisha Thomas (ICVA), Kemlin Furley (UNHCR).  
Moderator: Claudio Delfabro
- 15:20 **Coffee taken during panel discussions**
- 16.30-17.00 **Closing**



# LAUNCH OF GPC STRATEGY

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## OPENING REMARKS

### **Louise Aubin, Global Protection Cluster Coordinator**

The retreat was opened by Louise Aubin, Global Protection Cluster Coordinator, who highlighted the Cluster's yearlong review process called the "GPC Visioning Exercise. She clarified that the purpose of the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) retreat was, among other things, to solidify work done during the "GPC Visioning Exercise" and confirm the field operational support orientation of the Cluster. In her remarks she underscored the word 'Action' as the GPC now has a common framework for action. It also has two broad objectives: advocacy and field support.

The Global Cluster Coordinator underlined that protection is so complex that it requires collective action from all partners. To this end, it was imperative for the GPC to use the diversity of partners that exist in the cluster to magnify contributions and benefit from the unique complementarity that is exemplified by the integrated GPC work plan (including mine action, housing, land and property, child protection and gender-based violence).

To this end, the Global Protection Cluster Coordinator emphasised the vibrancy and positive impact of NGO partners on re-shaping the GPC.

Central to the work of the GPC is a common understanding of the scope of protection, all of which is centred on the risks, the rights and the needs of the individual. The focus on the individual is further visible in the integration of the age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach, community empowerment and protection mainstreaming.

Ms Aubin concluded with stating that the Visioning Process is an on-going process. The new GPC strategy document is an ambitious three-year framework capturing the Cluster's key priorities. The work plan itself is a one-year work plan and also ambitious. She underlined that the GPC has now has broad and diverse buy-in of the work plan which has activities led by several agencies, UN and NGOs. It also reflects the critical work done by the different AoRs: Child Protection, GBV, Mine Action and HLP who have all been instrumental in shaping the integrated work plan.

## REMARKS BY GPC NGO PARTICIPANT SPEAKERS

### **Takeshi Komino, Church World Service**

On behalf of NGO participants, Takeshi Komino commended the Global Protection Cluster Coordinator for her inclusive attitude and encouraging engagement of so many different NGOs. He remarked that everyone has been able to share their field perspectives in a participatory process. Mr Komino emphasised that NGOs would also like to demonstrate their commitment tangibly and as such some have taken on a lead role on activities in the work plan. Further, NGOs highlighted the following points in the intervention:

- **Accountability:** Concerning the complexity of protection issues, the principle for the NGOs is that protection always happens at the field level. Response happens at the field level. Therefore, accountability must focus on the affected population who are our clients. To this end, the GPC must always answer the questions, who are our clients?
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** leading from accountability it was important to establish a good monitoring and evaluation system that ensured real accountability to the affected populations.
- Finally, the NGOs urged thought and reflection to be given to the practicalities of the work plan. The work plan is a work in progress. Where do we start? What are the key activities to prioritise? Where and how do we allocate resources? How do we put in place a working model? How do we ensure that the value that we are adding is realised at the field level? How do we ensure checks and balances?

Mr Komino concluded that NGOs are very eager to be part of this discussion and are committed to being as practical as possible.

## KEYNOTE REMARKS

### **Erika Feller, UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner (Protection)**

The UNHCR Assistant High Commissioner (Protection), Erika Feller, gave the keynote address at the retreat. During her intervention the AHC (Protection) identified four key points that she wished the participants to take note of during their deliberations:

1. From the UNHCR perspective, this is a singularly important meeting and has the full support of UNHCR's top management. She was aware that some had questioned UNHCR senior management's commitment to the Global Protection Cluster, however, she wanted to emphatically state that there is institutional commitment for the effective coordination and leadership of the cluster at the highest level of the organisation.
2. Ms Feller expressed the expectation that the retreat will herald a new phase of cooperation in the GPC. She outlined that progress that had been made to meet the various challenges that had been identified during the GPC visioning exercise. She referenced some concerns that had been expressed to her by a number of interlocutors. She assured that all were very valid concerns that are the subject of direct discussion within UNHCR and with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. She underlined that delivering effectively on protection requires leadership, coordination and accountability. To this end, leadership

has to be predictable and empowered by all those who are participating in the cluster. While coordination must be kept light, effective and useful. In addition, she recognised that leadership of the Cluster cannot be authoritative. Above all, accountability to the affected populations must be present and real.

3. Ms Feller hoped that the retreat would help cement the commitment to the identified strategic objectives. UNHCR itself has committed to lead on a number of objectives of the work plan. To this end, the High Commissioner has committed to providing additional resources towards meeting the set objectives. It is the expectation of UNHCR's senior management to see global partners make similar tangible contributions to the work of the GPC.
4. Ms Feller then requested the GPC to ensure that its integrated workplan activities have a value adding and problem solving link to the protection challenges faced by the field. She emphasised that the GPC is not an entity in of itself and participants should avoid the institutaionalisation of the Cluster. The GPC is a platform that has been put in place to facilitate rather than implement protection. It is not an inventor or a re-inventor. It magnifies the scope of what we already have (e.g. age, gender, diversity). Accordingly, the GPC should build on what is already in place. She cautioned against the GPC taking on a life of its own eclipsing agencies.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

During the question and answer session participants discussed at length the need to address the disconnect between the field colleagues' expectations of the support they would need and what the GPC is able to provide. However, it was underlined that field consultations had identified clearly the specific needs of field colleagues. The field colleagues sought training tools and coordination tools. They have also requested guidance regarding the engagement between a protection cluster and a peacekeeping operation or political mission. These requests are now reflected in the work plan. Participants welcomed the field support orientation of the GPC and lauded the commitment expressed by UNHCR's senior management.

## PRESENTATION OF THE GPC STRATEGY

### Simon Russell, Senior ProCap Officer

Simon Russell explained the process of developing the Strategic Framework (2012-2014) and then went through each of the following sections of the strategy:

- The **Overview** succinctly describes the GPC visioning process.
- The GPC **Vision** which establishes the ultimate objective of the Cluster;
- The **Mission Statement** concretely anchors the work of the GPC in terms of purpose and scope.
- **Leadership and Participation** through partnership and sharing of responsibility. It was underlined that the strategy speaks of partnership and not membership because the GPC does not have a membership system as this was deemed to be inappropriate for a global level open and transparent collaborative platform.
- **Situation Analysis** to contextualise the protection environment in the field where the GPC was expected to have its impact.
- **Strategic Objectives** confirming that the GPC has adopted the IASC definition of protection which states that protection is “all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee laws).” To this end, the GPC should always aim for a comprehensive protection response. As a result, the GPC has adopted the following strategic objectives:
  - i. **Increased support to the field:** Colleagues in the field have requested for enhanced support from the GPC; suggestions included developing and disseminating a Protection Cluster Toolkit, establishing a GPC help desk, strengthening rapid deployment capacity and training of Cluster Coordinators.
  - ii. **Global engagement on protection issues:** the GPC will clarify its role in engaging with donors, undertaking global level advocacy and mainstreaming protection.
  - iii. **Commitment to the implementation of the strategy** endeavours to ensure greater integration of and coordination between constituent parts of the GPC, establishing a GPC Operations Cell, revising the structure of the GPC to be commensurate with tasks and improve coordination.
  - iv. **Monitoring and impact evaluation** in order to measure the actual performance and impact of the Global Protection Cluster.

## PRESENTATION OF THE GPC WORK PLAN

### Catherine Barnett, Child Protection AOR Coordinator

The integrated GPC workplan demonstrates the unique structure of the GPC which encompass the wide scope of protection. Accordingly, the workplan of the GPC is contained in five linked documents: the GPC work plan and the four AoRs workplans outlining four types of activities:

- i. Activities that an agency or AoR will do on its own, for example, the GBV AoR 's community of Practice which does not need to involve other actors;
- ii. Activities in thematic areas with overlaps, for example, assessments.
- iii. Activities that are similar and complementary, for, example, tool kit;
- iv. Activities that are joint or group oriented.

### Methods of work for implementing the workplan:

1. Collective endorsement of the workplan
2. Areas of Responsibility lead in their respective themes
3. Cluster members lead specific projects according to their mandate and strengths
4. On-going monitoring of progress; adjustments as required
5. Review of achievements

## QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

The workplan of the GPC is on an annual cycle and the strategy transcends three years. It was underlined that the GPC should be able to provide support to field operations in a range of country specific contexts from fragile states to those that had robust state institutional capacities and capabilities, for example, middle income countries.

Regarding the work plan, participants emphasised that there is a need to ensure that it is light, manageable and feasible and not a wishful “things to do” list. It should also incorporate performance accountability and impact measures without being too complex. Above all, participants underlined that the workplans should be iterative working documents. The constituent parts of the integrated workplans, especially as relates to the AORs, should retain specific formats, for example, AoR work plans are much more detailed with time frames, etc whereas the GPC workplan has taken the form of a chapeau document.

It was pointed out that the workplan did not contain deliberate actions that linked with early recovery mainly because they reflect what GPC participants had actually committed themselves to deliver. However, synergies at the inter-cluster level will be identified and articulated to ensure that early recovery was mainstreamed in the work of the GPC.

The Global Protection Cluster Coordinator explained that the workplans reflect the current priorities and as such do not contain activities that an agency was not able to pick up. Therefore, there are for practical reasons gaps that would have to be closed in future workplans.

Participants underlined a realistic assessment of available resources and capacity was needed to determine the feasibility of the workplans. NGO participants underlined the desire, which was unanimously supported, to co-lead on a number of activities contained on the workplan. To this end, leads of Task Teams were actively encouraged to mobilise NGO participants to join their teams.

The GPC was encouraged to actively engage donors with respect to protection mainstreaming. This was presented as a strategic approach to help in mainstreaming protection in other clusters. In addition, the GPC needs to show tangible outcomes and impact in order to justify sustained funding for its activities. It was also underlined that there is a need for coherence within the cluster and as such AORs should actively engage in all activities at the global and field levels.

It was underlined that it is important to look at what other clusters do. The GPC's advocacy activities inevitably have an impact on other clusters so it is important to have a holistic approach. One way of doing this is to strengthen inter-cluster coordination or interaction.

Finally participants expressed satisfaction that though there were five workplan documents presented it was clear that they constituted a single concerted action oriented framework that accommodates pre-existing areas of work and new areas a work. There are now seven work streams where new areas of work can be picked up by all participants. This is a major achievement that has come out of the GPC visioning exercise and process.

## **PRESENTATION OF GPC WEBSITE**

### **WTMEDIA Presentation by Krisztian Aczel**

The Website developer, WTMEDIA, demonstrated the GPC website which is currently under development. The presentation provided information on the current state of development and participants were able to ask questions and offer suggestions in terms of content management. The temporary link to the website under construction is: <http://gpc.wtmedia.net>

The front page is dedicated to latest events or emergencies. A map will show the field clusters. The website can be accessed by users utilizing low bandwidth internet connections and/or from low capacity computers. All content will be standardised. All suggestions and comments on the Website are to be provided to the Global Protection Cluster Support Cell.

# OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

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## CONTEMPORARY AND EMERGING PROTECTION CHALLENGES

**Volker Türk (UNHCR), Andreas Wigger (ICRC), Ilaria Bottigliero (IDLO)**  
**Moderator: Simon Russell**

### **VOLKER TÜRK (UNHCR)**

Mr. Volker Türk advised that there should be a state of affairs analysis from a protection perspective; protection is not only owned by UNHCR but also by the GPC, as a coalition of actors. Mr Türk went on to speak about global trends and the inspiring book, *Ill fares the land*, which is about inequality, poverty, economic and financial crises, and how the world has tried to deal with these issues.

He spoke about violence and food insecurity issues as well as how inequality increases poverty and adversely impacts on situations of violence. Food insecurity has a spurring effect on violence, e.g. Somalia and the Sahel region. He also touched upon the transformative events in the Middle East and the drought situation in Mali, which have contributed to violent displacement.

Although the number of conflicts has gone down in the past 10 years, Mr Türk opined that this is not the trend of the future. Increasing numbers of civilians are affected by conflict. There is a transformation in the way violence is taking place and there is a link between state fragility and violence. Furthermore, there is an increase in private actors that do not generally fall within the commonly understood category of non-state actors that commit criminal acts: gangs, military groups or organisations with radical aims. When a state is weak, there is an increase in non-state actors with maleficent objectives, e.g. the current situation in Somalia. However, state fragility is not only prevalent in the Somali type situation. Sometimes non-state actors are affiliated with national or local authorities which results in an adverse impact on humanitarian space. The categorisation of fragile low income countries and robust middle income countries to map violence induced humanitarian crises is now blurred.

Another global trend involves anything to do with climate change. Mr Türk cited Darfur as an example where climate change has been a factor in the conflict induced humanitarian crisis.

He also opined that the role of the State is again coming to the fore and is more emphasised today than it was some years ago. The State, for example, is becoming a much more important actor (largely due to economic crises) than multinational corporations. We need to ask ourselves what this means for humanitarians and protection.

Humanitarian work will also become more complicated as established standards are being challenged, for example, some stakeholders, are questioning the relevance of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The European Court for Human Rights is being questioned by some States. This signals that it will probably be increasingly difficult to put forward a protection narrative.

Accordingly, the GPC needs to ensure that protection has a common language. This will facilitate positive commitments to protection work and sustainable funding. He underlined that protection work needs to show measurable positive impact. It is not easy but the GPC needs to show that protection is worth investing in. We also need to have a shared vision of analysis. It is important to look at the next 10 years and look at how the humanitarian space will change as a result of this.

## **ANDREAS WIGGER (ICRC)**

Mr. Andreas Wigger stated that the future protection environment will depend a lot on the nature of conflicts as well as the actors who conduct hostilities (state or non-state actors). Common social parameters will also have a role to play as will the degree of civilian empowerment with regard to the extent that they can protect themselves from protection risks. The protection environments will also depend on the evolution of the humanitarian sector which is experiencing an ever increasing number of actors. He underlined that currently protection challenges are exacerbated by the problem of limited compliance with existing norms and standards.

He postulated that there has never been so much law regulating the actions of sovereign states and non-state actors. Or so many actors wanting to protect civilians. However, the protection of civilians has not increased. All these actors trying to contribute to protection has not led to limited war or limited violence. Notwithstanding, there are improvements in the field of Protection of Civilians:

- i. There is now an increased ambition to ensure the protection of civilians. He stated that international law is facilitating the protection of civilians and cited examples of defence forces and policing services that had integrated international humanitarian law and international human rights law in their standard operating procedures and manuals. As part of the state apparatus these are institutions with sustainable internal accountability mechanisms. However, the nature of non-state actors implies non-sustainability of accountability because they change command and control structures all the time. There are also characterised by splinter groups, moderates, radicals and renegades beyond the reach of engagement. There is a kind of permanent discussion with them about their way of conducting hostilities. They are often involved in asymmetric warfare with lots of handicaps, from their perspective, that induces behaviour that is unacceptable.
- ii. There is a growing movement to apply human rights and criminal law in war situations, i.e. criminal punishment in war. This has seen the development of an international system of law enforcement which is holding people accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. This is a field that should be further studied and researched to see how this is changing the behaviour of those in control of the violence.
- iii. Those who flee conflict are today better cared; however, the fact that these people have had to leave their homes in the first place is a demonstration in part of the failure of protection.

Mr. Wigger went on to highlight that a constructive dialogue on protection of civilians needs proximity to those in charge of violence and those affected by the violence. As protection actors, we need to be self-critical and maintain permanent channels and contacts with affected populations in order to ascertain and respond to their protection need. This can be done using the latest communication technology, including social media. He also underlined that advocacy with perpetrators of violence was as important as advocacy work with international community actors who have the means to intervene to stop violence. To this end, humanitarian actors should first and foremost

convince those in charge of violence to change positively their behaviour. This is not easy. You need to be imaginative and convincing. That is the strength and challenge of humanitarians that they must be creative in their dialogue to plead for humanity.

In conclusion he opined that protection actors need a better monitoring capacity as there is no mechanism in place to have a systematic monitoring of violations. There is a need to have this monitoring capacity in place in order to work effectively in future contexts.

## **ILARIA BOTTIGLIERO (IDLO)**

Ms. Laria Bottigliero stated in her presentation that peace and security, development, human rights, rule of law and democracy are interlinked and must form the point of departure in any analysis.

The Arab spring has made it clear that weak governance and lack of respect for human rights has increased the risk of violent conflict. In all of this, civilians have paid a high toll. In places like Darfur, Iraq and Afghanistan, shrinking humanitarian space is compromising stabilisation and the reconstruction of affected countries. However, humanitarian space is not enough because to effectively undertake peace building work the rule of law must be present. This does not require a perfect or sophisticated rule of law framework, but one that adheres to basic international standards.

The presence of basic rule of law elements can lead to institutional capacity building, focusing on pressing issues such as statelessness, land and property related disputes, health care, prison administration, organised crime. These public goods are in dangerously low supply. A functioning rule of law system is key to achieving the millennium development goals. The breakdown of the rule of law is the most significant indicator of escalating conflict, because then, it is the rule by force that prevails. The Security Council recognises this and that is why it mandates restoration of rule of law in places such as Afghanistan, Burundi, CAR, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Haiti, Timor-Leste, Sudan and South Sudan.

She underlined that protection actors should prioritise rule of law activities which are properly monitored using shared objectives, indicators, benchmarks, and multisectoral interventions. Effective rule of law programmes promote and enhance the protection of civilians and are critical for long lasting peace.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

During the question and answer session participants also underlined the need to take into account the impact of non-state actors on the protection environment, in particular perpetrators of violence within the context of organised crime. To address this effectively it was underlined that effective rule of law programmes were extremely important. Participants also underlined the need to uphold humanitarian principles when engaging in protection dialogue with perpetrators of violence and to ensure that the credibility of humanitarians was not undermined by engaging in such activities.

Participants also noted that emerging protection challenges presented opportunities. Nowadays, an increasing number of non-state actors are willing to listen and be monitored by protection actors. There are also more South-South relations and willingness by States in the same region to hold each other accountable when violence spirals out of control. It was also noted that the management of protection information is also a growing challenge that needs to be addressed.

In conclusion, participants highlighted the fact that the GPC is a formidable collection of protection actors. It should use this natural advantage in order to play a very prominent role in protection advocacy and raise protection concerns at the global level. It can also play a role in prevention and preparedness. In addition, the GPC should take advantage of the opportunities for dialogue with the affected population. To this end, humanitarian agencies need to be willing to listen. Agencies also need to empower people as much as possible, giving vulnerable people the tools to realise their rights. People receiving assistance need to know what their rights are, otherwise there is a risk of radicalisation of groups.

## **SELF-PROTECTION STRATEGIES: COMMUNITY-BASED STUDIES IN MYANMAR, SUDAN, SOUTH SUDAN AND ZIMBABWE**

**Nils Carstensen, Manager and Co-initiator, Local to Global protection Initiative**  
**Moderator: Erin Mooney, UNHCR Yemen**

The study looked at protection in a number of states: Myanmar, Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe in order to determine responsibility for protection. While validating that the State has the primary responsibility to provide protection it also confirmed that the community played a significant role in the protection of individuals within it, especially with regard to its vulnerable members. The key themes from the studies were as follows:

- i. People saw their own actions to minimise protection risks as more important than those of outside actors. In the worst and most urgent situations, the impact of international actors in achieving protection was perceived as marginal.
- ii. Local understandings of protection often vary considerably from that of international actors – very literal rather than rights based.
- iii. The activities of international agencies constitute only one (often small) element of protection.
- iv. Protection concerns and responses are interlinked in a holistic manner. In particular, affected populations view protection and livelihood issues as closely related.
- v. International agencies often fail to understand or engage effectively with local self-protection activities. Local initiatives could be much better supported by outside actors, working with due caution and sensitivity.
- vi. Psychological issues may be as important as physical safety.
- vii. Self-protection efforts are highly contextual and time-specific – and must be understood and analysed at the national, community, family and individual levels.
- viii. Individuals and groups often face terrible dilemmas, including trade-offs between risks. Sometimes individual rights are superseded by family and/or community needs and values. Vulnerable people are often forced to choose between safety and livelihood security and expose individuals to further risks.

- ix. Humanitarian assistance that offers the receiver options and possibilities (cash, food and other easily exchanged items) was highlighted as particularly valuable.
- x. Local social/morale/religious values were referred to as crucial for protection of vulnerable members of the communities – more so than formal rights.
- xi. Community resilience, cohesion, sharing and solidarity, combined with good leadership, are experienced as crucial for the protection and survival of communities.
- xii. Having the right relationships with power-holders/authorities is crucial to protection – the importance of patron-client protection networks as a coping strategy.
- xiii. Affected populations often make use of informal markets, crossing the front-lines of conflict; contact between communities across the frontlines of conflict was also considered important.
- xiv. Armed/political groups are often experienced and viewed as both threats and protection actors – but very few outside agents engage substantially with them even on civil matters.

## **CIVIL-MILITARY COORDINATION AND THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS**

**Victoria Metcalfe, Research Fellow, Humanitarian Policy Group at the Overseas Development Institute**

**Moderator: Erin Mooney**

The study focuses on two types of military deployments: stabilisation and peace support operations. Stabilisation missions have gained increasing prominence over the past decade. In conflicts, stabilisation aims to mitigate threats and in some cases protection is the explicit objective. Generally, stabilisation missions proclaim an adherence to International Humanitarian Law, proactive protection, counter insurgency and building a protective environment.

However, stabilisation efforts to enhance protection of civilians have been problematic. The hold is temporary and civilians are constantly at risk of retaliation. It is difficult to assess what has been achieved regarding the protection of civilians. Another problematic point is that stabilisation is used by some States to distance themselves from International Humanitarian Law obligations. The strategy is focused on military defeat of an enemy. The international military is therefore not neutral and is often a party to the conflict.

Conversely, the mandate under which peacekeepers are deployed is different in the sense they often do not have a peace making posture in the same way that stabilisation forces do. In both cases, stabilisation or peacekeeping, the engagement or association with these missions can be problematic for humanitarians. This is on account of the fact that stabilisation or peacekeeping missions are commonly tasked to support one belligerent against the other. In addition, the need to protect civilians can be a source of frustration as both stabilisation and peacekeeping operations are requested to undertake tasks usually performed by humanitarian actors. Furthermore, these missions do not necessarily use the same definition of protection or impartiality and neutrality and there is no common definition of protection of civilians.

In summation, Ms Metcalfe suggested that in terms of a way forward, it should be recognised that civil-military coordination can provide an enabling environment. She cautioned, however, that engagement must be negotiated and context specific.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

The question and answer session informed participants that in field operations often humanitarian actors have a different understanding of the notion of protection of civilians to actors working within stabilisation and peacekeeping operations. It was underlined in this respect, that the risk of engagement with military actors can be quite significant. Therefore, it is essential to have an understanding of what the risks are. The general consensus was that some form of dialogue and inter-action between humanitarians and stabilisations/peacekeeping operations was important to ensure effective protection of civilians.

# GPC WORKPLAN

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## PRESENTATION OF TASK TEAM CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR EACH PRIORITY AREA

The following seven priority focus area working groups have been established:

### FIELD LEVEL SUPPORT:

**Task Team 1:** Develop and Disseminate a Protection Cluster Toolbox

**Task Team 2:** Establish a GPC Help Desk and Ensure Rapid Deployment Capacity

**Task Team 3:** Provide Training and Build Capacity in the Field

### GLOBAL LEVEL ENGAGEMENT:

**Task Team 4:** Donor Engagement

**Task Team 5:** Advocacy

**Task Team 6:** Protection Mainstreaming

The session provided space for the Task Teams to receive broader input from the Global Protection Cluster on the seven priority areas of work. GPC participants provided comments and suggestions on Concept Notes prepared by each Task Team on each of the seven GPC Priority focus areas of work. The lead of each Task Team gave a brief introduction of the concept note they were responsible for: Developing and Disseminating a Protection Cluster Toolbox (L. Zulu); Establishing a GPC Help Desk and Ensuring Rapid Deployment Capacity (S. Fricska); Provide Training and Capacity in the field (K. Mancini); Donor Engagement (D. Abou Samra), Advocacy (R. Skovbye); and Protection Mainstreaming (P. Lubrano). After a short exchange with the presenters, the participants went into working groups and discussed input to the relevant Task Team for the priority focus areas.

Protection Cluster participants at the global level and in the field are invited to sign-up or act as a reference contact for any working group that they are interested in joining and participating in its activities.

# TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS

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## PROTECTION IN NATURAL DISASTER SITUATIONS

**Karen Gulick (UNHCR), David Murphy (OHCHR), Anne Thurin (Haiti Protection Cluster)**  
**Moderator: Susanne Pedersen**

### KAREN GULICK (UNHCR)

Karen Gulick provided an overview of UNHCR's role in natural disasters and addressed the question that often gets asked: what is happening with the pilot on leadership on protection in natural disasters? Ms Gulick confirmed that UNHCR is willing to take on the leadership role if it is requested by the government and the UNCT. The UNHCR High Commissioner remains very committed to supporting protection activities in natural disasters situations. Ms Gulick underscored that UNHCR's engagement is first and foremost in support of the host government and only at the request of the host government. Furthermore, if there is an existing coordination mechanism, that coordination should continue. If OHCHR is present and has the capacity to lead, OHCHR could do so.

In June 2011, a paper was presented to the UNHCR Executive Committee's Standing Committee, discussing UNHCR's role in natural disasters as lead agency and operational agency. The paper clarified that in natural disasters, UNHCR would focus primarily on the emergency phase. Where operationally engaged, UNHCR would focus on what it traditionally brings to the table, e.g. identification of vulnerable individuals, participatory assessments, etc., UNHCR is also in the process of enhancing its protection cluster leadership capacity.

The role of the task force on protection in natural disasters was underlined in particular its work in elaborating the protection in natural disasters training module. During the course of the year protection in natural disasters will be mainstreamed in the following:

- i. Protection Cluster toolbox;
- ii. GPC Help Desk, providing expertise on natural disasters;
- iii. Strengthen capacity of rapid response mechanisms to ensure deployment capacity with natural disaster expertise;
- iv. Deliver training on protection and protection coordination in natural disaster contexts;
- v. Clarify engagement with donors, particularly in the context of an immediate disaster;
- vi. Undertake global level advocacy and;
- vii. Protection mainstreaming.

## **DAVID MURPHY (OHCHR)**

David Murphy underlined that natural disasters often exacerbate pre-existing human rights concerns. There is now a good understanding of vulnerabilities that occur in natural disaster contexts. Planning and preparedness is very important for natural disasters. Preparedness leads to much more coherent action. It should happen across clusters, bringing everybody together: humanitarian and development actors, local and national actors, government, etc.

He underlined that the GPC should engage in the transformative agenda, particularly on the preparedness theme. Donor partners are interested in funding preparedness. The coherence and momentum that cross-cluster work brings is important to feed into.

## **ANNE THURIN (HAITI PROTECTION CLUSTER)**

Anne Thurin informed that a key actor in natural disasters is the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). There is already an International Framework for disaster risk reduction which states that emergency preparedness and response lies at the national level. At the national level there is a lot of effort by development actors but not a lot of engagement by humanitarian actors. We need to enter into disaster risk reduction because humanitarians have an important role to play. There is a need for protection actors to support national disaster management plans and the contingency planning processes.

Often natural disasters strike in countries where you already have protection actors. The existing challenge is that in many countries the regular programmes do not integrate an emergency preparedness response. This has to change. The presenter gave a good practice example of UNICEF staff in the South Pacific who are supposed to spend 10% of their time on emergency preparedness and response. This is important because it encourages staff to collaborate with local authorities.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

It was underlined that protection work and approaches in natural disaster contexts are different from those in a conflict induced situation. Protection workers should appreciate the difference and adapt strategies in order to ensure an effective response. To this end, training was identified as an important method of communicating this distinction.

Participants also noted that there is still a wide gap between humanitarian and development action. It fundamentally comes down to a leadership issue. Participants recommended that the GPC through its advocacy work should amplify the voice of the Protection Cluster to make the two sides talk to each other.

## **IDP OUTSIDE CAMPS PANEL**

**Erin Mooney (UNHCR Yemen), Rosa da Costa (OHCHR-SRHRIDS), Anne Davies**  
**Moderator: Kate Halff (IDMC)**

The majority of IDPs do not live in camp settings, yet the current humanitarian response focuses on this. The session raised the awareness of specific protection issues faced by IDPs outside camps.

### **ERIN MOONEY (UNHCR, PROTECTION CLUSTER, YEMEN)**

Erin Mooney postulated that 90% of IDPs are found outside a camp situation. Sometimes, like in Yemen, this is for cultural reasons since it is culturally inappropriate for women to be in close quarters to men who are not family members.

In Yemen, IDPs outside camp live in the following situations:

- i. IDPs living with host families: over time this often becomes a strain for the host family and leads to overcrowding and lack of privacy.
- ii. IDPs renting apartments or rooms in local community: this is generally a short term measure because of the financial implications of long term stay in leased accommodation on the persons of concern.
- iii. IDPs in collective centres: these are mostly in the south of Yemen, where more than 80 schools are used as collective centres for IDPs.
- iv. IDPs living in informal settlements, so-called “outside settlements”: this is a very broad category comprising everything from former camps (where government security is provided) to informal settlements that sprout up in rural or urban areas. They can also be very temporary. There are hundreds of these informal settlements in Yemen.
- v. IDPs living in caves: these have generally been invisible due to difficulty to access and are often cut off from humanitarian assistance.

One commonality of all these types of IDPs living outside camps is that they consistently receive less protection and humanitarian assistance than those in camps. The following are the operational constraints to assisting IDPs outside camps:

National and legal frameworks often demonstrate a predisposition for camps.

- i. Access is an issue. There are a high number of IDPs outside camps and it can take hours if not days to reach sporadic settlements. Some are even inaccessible by roads and security may also be a concern.
- ii. Data collection, registration, protection monitoring and response are incredibly difficult. Often the IDPs have to rely on the coping mechanisms of the hosting communities or own communities.
- iii. Concerning community participation, women’s participation outside camps is virtually non-existent.

- iv. There are higher reported incidents of SGBV, particularly during firewood collection. However, levels of domestic violence are lower among IDPs living outside camps. The reason for this may be due to more spacing between settlements and better control of where they are living, providing more privacy and space between neighbours. This leads to less pressure within the family.
- v. There are high differences in education between IDPs living in camps and those outside camps. In camps there are consistent programmes and literacy classes which are not possible to provide in dispersed settlements.
- vi. Tensions with host communities put IDPs at risk in situations in which the displaced and the hosting communities are both suffering financial hardship.

In conclusion it was underlined that it was imperative to include IDPs outside camps in protection and assistance strategies otherwise there is a high risk that the vast majority of IDPs will not benefit from protection and assistance programmes.

## **ANNE DAVIES**

Ms. Anne Davies informed that hosting of IDPs by receiving communities often happens spontaneously during a period of high community solidarity at the outset of an emergency, but as time goes by this solidarity diminishes under the strain of eroded coping mechanisms as the community gradually becomes increasingly impoverished and IDPs eventually leave to go to situations of destitution.

## **ROSA DA COSTA (OHCHR)**

Ms. Rosa Da Costa stated that the Special Rapporteur for the Human Right of IDPs has made IDPs outside camps one of the priorities of his mandate. It is clear that there is no specific follow up strategy from the humanitarian sector and many activities for IDPs outside camps are administered in an ad hoc manner. There is no overall picture of who is doing what and what the gaps and good practices might be. To encourage momentum, the Special Rapporteur is dedicating his next report on this topic. The report will be presented to the Human Rights Council on March 6, 2012.

Ms Da Costa emphasised the importance of early and effective data collection. Establishing this information at the outset is a fundamental step but often jeopardised because there are no systems in place. It is important to use new methods and approaches such as the profiling techniques compiled in the Profiling and Assessment Resource Kit (PARK) elaborated by JIPS and ACAPS.

Another challenge is posed by IDPs in urban contexts. They have a lack of housing, documents and proof of income, and subsequently have less access to services and prone to urban violence, forced evictions and secondary displacements (e.g. Iraq). In some cases such as Kenya there are reports of significant increases in the number of street children. In situations of politically instigated violence, there is no mechanism for compensation or reconciliation. The global trend seems to suggest a growing number of IDPs who choose to live in urban areas. By 2030, urban populations are expected to exceed 5 billion. With rapid urbanisation in the coming years, informal settlements are expected to grow exponentially, as will housing costs, with repercussions on climate change and increased frequency of natural disasters.

Ms Da Costa suggested that a question we must pose to ourselves is whether more systematised assistance is necessary or even beneficial. A comprehensive approach which combines a community based approach and IDP specific interventions may be much more effective in achieving durable solutions. It was recommended that good practices should be recorded and shared of national and humanitarian actors undertaking activities benefitting IDPs outside camps in order to put an analysis together and share it system wide.

## **QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION**

It was pointed out that protection actors often look at whole communities affected by displacement rather than just IDPs. This increases the difficulty to access and collect relevant data and information of the specific vulnerabilities faced by IDPs outside camps. In addition, vulnerabilities and coping strategies evolve over time.

Participants also underlined that the situation of IDPs in protracted displacement contexts is very dire as the coping mechanisms are severely eroded for both the IDP and hosting communities.

The session ended with a general recommendation that protection actors should work a lot more at addressing priority needs of IDP outside camps and budget for them efficiently. There should not only be budgeting for IDPs, but the most vulnerable people. Tremendous work can be done in urban areas, for example community drop in centres, (e.g. Colombia, Kenya and Yemen). It was recommended to profile people by learning about their problems and then design programmes that can respond to a majority of those findings. Participatory needs assessments are also important in designing programmes that are appropriate in this context.

## **TRANSFORMATIVE AGENDA AND ITS IMPACT ON FIELD PROTECTION CLUSTERS**

**Belinda Holdsworth (OCHA), Manisha Thomas (ICVA), Kemlin Furley (UNHCR)**  
**Moderator: Claudio Delfabro**

### **WHAT IS THE TRANSFORMATIVE AGENDA?**

Since 2005, the Humanitarian Reform Agenda has aimed to enhance humanitarian response, including through ensuring increased capacity, predictability, accountability and partnerships among humanitarian actors. The reform is predicated on the foundation stone of more effective partnerships between UN and non-UN humanitarian actors. Subsequent to the response challenges experienced in large-scale emergencies, brought to the fore in the Haiti and Pakistan 2010 emergencies, and in light of the growing recognition of the weaknesses in the multilateral response system the IASC Principals decided in December 2010 to review the current approach to humanitarian response and make adjustments. Based on an analysis of current challenges to leadership and coordination, the IASC Principals agreed in December 2011 to a set of actions that collectively represent a substantive improvement to the current humanitarian response model. These include:

- i. A mechanism to deploy strong, senior humanitarian leadership to guide the humanitarian response from the outset of a major crisis;

- ii. The strengthening of leadership capacities and rapid deployment of humanitarian leaders at various levels, to ensure the coordination architecture functions well;
- iii. Improved strategic planning at the country level that clarifies the collective results that the humanitarian community sets out to achieve and identifies how clusters and organizations will contribute to them;
- iv. Enhanced accountability of the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and members of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) for the achievement of collective results; and
- v. Streamlined coordination mechanisms adapted to operational requirements and contexts to better facilitate delivery.

These reforms are aimed at simplifying processes and mechanisms, improving inter-agency communication and collaboration, and building confidence in the system as a whole, from the immediate response to longer-term planning. This mid-term correction of the current humanitarian response model presents a set of actions that are feasible and take into account future challenges, including the need for improved efficiency and greater accountability to affected people.

## **CLOSURE OF THE RETREAT**

The retreat closed with a firm commitment to take forward the activities as outlined in the workplans. All participants confirmed the reinvigorated and purposeful atmosphere that had been generated by the visioning exercise and the retreat.

The GPC will implement activities as outlined in the integrated 2012 workplan and within the parameters of the framework of the 2012-2014 strategy.

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**Global Protection Cluster**  
Working Group

Working Together for  
**Protection**

**A World in which boys, girls, women and men affected or threatened by humanitarian crises are fully protected in accordance with their rights.**

**GPC vision**

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