**GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER**

## Donor engagement and coordinating fundraising for the protection response

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

Field operations invest a lot of time and resources developing response strategies in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and other flash appeals. They are asked to determine priority areas, populations, activities and/or projects, as well as determine the funding required for the response. More often than not, once the collective strategy is adopted, each operational partner goes it alone to fundraise for their own projects and activities with little visibility for Cluster coordinators. This is compounded by a lack of regular and predictable collective engagement with donors at field level.

This guidance note aims to clarify expectations and provide concrete recommendations for collective engagement with donors to enhance the coordination of protection funding in line with the strategic priorities.

WHEN AND HOW TO ENGAGE

**Organize (at least) quarterly multilateral meetings with donors**

* + August/September– before the (initial) submission to the HRP
    - It is critical to engage donors as you prepare your HRP to get a better idea of funding allocation already available/earmarked by donors for protection for the following year, and to advocate with donors on critical needs.
    - It will also help you better understand what type of activities are likely to be funded, which areas may be covered/overlooked by donor at that point, thus allowing you to better plan, coordinate with partners, and tailor your advocacy with donors to influence their funding priorities for the coming year.
    - During the meeting, present:
      * (Preliminary) data from your needs overview (HNO) to highlight critical protection needs
      * (Preliminary) overview of operational partners’ funding currently available for the incoming year of the HRP – i.e. funding already available for 2022
    - Use this as an opportunity to push for the Collective Protection Outcomes in the HRP and in all cluster’s own strategic plans (Centrality of Protection).
  + December/January– after you finalized the Cluster HRP
* Organise a briefing with key donors once your cluster HRP is finalised (even before formal presentation by OCHA) to present the Cluster/AoR HRP priorities, and proactively ensure that protection is a key driver of the humanitarian narrative and of donors funding strategies.
* Consider involving UNHCR Representative or Deputy Representative for Protection (and Country Director of co-coordinating agency) as host of the meeting; invite the Heads of AoR lead agencies and members of the SAG.
  + March/April– update on Q1
    - Organise a briefing with key donors after the first quarter of the year, when you have an overview of how the funding allocation level will most probably look like for the year. Engaging a discussion with donors early in the year will allow you to better strategize your (funding) advocacy priorities for the year.
  + June– Mid-year review
    - Organise a mid-year review with donors and protection partners to present an overview of funding received so far by the Cluster & AoRs
    - Ensure you highlight the new/emerging protection issues based on the latest protection analysis update, as well as the funding gap priorities for the rest of the year.

**Engage donors bilaterally on their strategic plan to ensure that protection priorities are included in their funding strategy**

* + - * Confirm at country level when to provide inputs for specific (key) donors
      * Keep the GPC updated on such inputs to allow parallel global level engagement

**Organise *ad hoc* bilateral or multilateral meetings** with targeted donors as relevant for both protection funding and advocacy on critical protection issues

* + - * e.g. Members of the Advisory Board of Country-based Pooled Fund as soon as Pooled Fund allocation is announced
      * e.g. Donors on the HCT to push on key protection advocacy issues

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

**CHECKLIST – WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A DONOR BRIEFING?**

* Presentation of protection context, trends, and risks – particular emerging critical protection issues – and priority needs (*Protection Analysis Updates*)
* Update on achievements and response progress (*5W*)
* Funding progress (*FTS/GPC funding monitoring tool*) – data disaggregated by AoRs, type of recipients/organizations (UN, INGO, NNGO), and main donors
* Funding priorities (areas, type of activities, vulnerable groups)
* Key advocacy messages addressed to donors themselves or for which need their support
* Inclusion of partner(s) with critical projects requiring funding (sales pitch)

**Be predictable**

* + Multilateral donor meetings should be organised in a predictable manner with key donors supporting the protection response in country – setting up a calendar well in advance will help ensure attendance.
  + (At least) quarterly collective (whole-cluster and AoRs) multilateral donor meetings should be the basis of your engagement with donors, as it helps building a rapport with donors, ensures protection remains on their radar, and builds credibility of the cluster.
  + Synchronise those meetings with the publication of your Quarterly Protection Analysis Updates and of the beginning/end of the strategic planning process (HNO/HRP) to ensure donors are up to date with protection issues and needs, and to keep protection on the agenda.

**Be strategic**

* + Use protection strategies adopted in country as entry points for your regular engagement (e.g. Protection Cluster Strategies, HCT Protection Strategies, etc.).
  + Provide protection analysis and update on protection response based on the Cluster strategic plan (HRP, flash appeals, etc) to highlight advocacy messages and funding needs – including pushing for action at intercluster or HCT level where relevant.
  + Highlight protection context dynamics, issues, risks and needs, as well as response gaps AND achievements in the protection response – show the value of the protection response! N.B.: Only flagging protection issues and gaps can turn off donors as it may be perceived as a lack of capacity of protection actors to make a difference.
  + Give a positive spin to make protection attractive and exciting to support, show that protection funding saves lives, and enhances the quality of the overall humanitarian response. Support innovative approaches in protection programming.

**Be a consistent and credible source of Protection analysis**

* + Use your Quarterly Protection Analysis Updates as a basis for your donor briefing (same as for the HCT and any other advocacy efforts); ensuring your advocacy with donors is based on evidence, data and analysis.
  + N.B: The GPC has developed the Protection Analysis Framework (PAF), templates for regular Field Protection Analysis Updates, and has series of guidance and tools on Protection Information Management (PIM) to help develop your protection analysis capacity. If you do not have effective protection data collection, sharing, and analysis in place, contact the GPC immediately for support.
  + Use additional tailored advocacy notes and policy briefs to raise donors’ interest in specific or new protection issues and activities to support and fund.
  + Consider setting up a *Protection Monitoring & Analysis Working Group* and/or an *Advocacy Working Group* with relevant Protection Cluster and AoRs partners and stakeholders to enhance collective analysis and help coordinate and design collective advocacy strategies and messages.

**Be collective**

* Involve Cluster/AoRs coordinators and SAG members in preparing meetings (agreeing on key points and messages) and participating in meetings (giving them opportunity to make brief presentations or statements) to show common front.
* N.B: This does not prevent the Cluster, AoRs, or partners to engage bilaterally as well, but it is key to break siloed engagement and stand as ‘one-cluster’ with common advocacy priorities, equally representing funding needs from UN agencies, international and national NGOs.
* Try to shift from an approach of ‘fighting for pieces of the pie’ to increasing the size of the pie for *all* protection sectors and core activities, avoiding competition among ourselves.
* Present joint protection initiatives, including with other relevant clusters.

**Be complementary**

* Multilateral meetings should be complemented by bilateral meetings with key donors before/after to prepare multilateral meetings, ensure follow up, and/or allow more targeted engagement.

**Be specific**

* + Shift the narrative away from “everything is urgent” and give concrete recommendations, highlighting specific and concrete underfunded activities, thematic priorities, innovative approach, vulnerable populations, specific areas for funding.
  + Highlight the impact of funding versus no/underfunding (e.g. what if we get the funding? what if we do not get funding?) and more specifically what do it say in terms of impact on people’s life and protection (e.g. what if we don’t respond?).
  + Give visibility to critical project/actors (specifically local actors) in need of funding. Remember the GPC minimum requirement that 25% of the HRP protection requests come from local actors.

**Be opportunistic**

* Organise field visits with donors (including virtual visits) to further build a relationship and give voice to community as a strong influence on donors in supporting needs raised by population directly.
  + Look for a donor particularly engaged as an ally and *champion of protection* who can push for the protection agenda in donor coordination meetings and other relevant forum (e.g. HCT; Country-based Pooled Fund’s Advisory Board; etc).

**Be prepared**

* + Use all the tools that the Cluster has developed (Protection Analysis Updates, 5W, GPC Funding Monitoring Tool) to ensure proper monitoring and tracking of partners needs for priority activities/services, areas and populations.
  + Ensure the Funding Monitoring tool is updated on a quarterly basis (or more regularly if possible) by operational partners to have an overview of available funding.

**Be creative**

* + Consider organizing a “Protection week” along the lines of the 12 Days of Activism or Calls to Action on GBV to raise awareness on specific protection issues and interest for funding.

FINAL REMINDER

The GPC and its AoRs have committed to the following two minimum funding requirements.

1. We consider that a good HRP protection size is approximately **15% of the overall inter-sectoral request**.
2. We consider as a minimum requirement that **25% of the HRP funding requirements for protection** are from local actors.