



Terms of References

GPC Task Force on Community-Led Protection

Updated: 01 February 2022

1. Context and Current Gaps

Protection in humanitarian action has typically been viewed through state-centric lens. For a long time, many strategies for protection focused on influencing or changing the behaviour of state or non-state actors towards the civilians they govern. Civilians were traditionally treated as recipients of external protection action and were thus seen as beneficiaries. But civilians are not just passive recipients of protection but have agency and capacity to strengthen their protection and increasingly protection actors have been placing more importance on the participation and leadership of communities in protection work.

In situations of violence, civilians and communities engage in self-protection actions to keep themselves, their families and their communities safer. This can involve engaging with armed actors, as both perpetrators of violence and potentially providers of protection, resulting in both positive and negative outcomes.

Within the current humanitarian system, there is limited technical guidance and visibility of community self-protection activities and community-led or community-based protection work, not only at the global level but also within the way protection action is coordinated and implemented at the country level. Community-led protection is rarely prioritised in operational protection HRPs and in common humanitarian pooled fund allocation strategies, even though numerous national organizations, CBOs and civil society, as well as some international organizations already focus on this specialised protection work. Researchers, academics, and other areas of expertise – such as access, civil relations/coordination and peace actors – also engage in elements of community-led protection, such as conflict resolution, community-led negotiations and negotiations with armed actors, however, there are no common guidelines or standards on supporting community-led protection nor commonly used tools and no central platform for sharing information, experiences, and learning, disseminating best practices, and identifying common challenges and solutions around working on supporting community-led protection.

The humanitarian coordination system – and specifically, the Global Protection Cluster – offers an opportunity to make the critical role that especially national organizations, CBOs and civil society play as leaders but also international organizations that have community-based/community-led protection programmes as enablers in community-led protection more visible. There is an opportunity to expand the traditionally top-down, state-centric mode of protection work, recognising and promoting how protection is an activity done *by affected populations*, not just for affected populations. It will also be an opportunity for sharing practice and learning, strengthening networks and providing a platform for strengthening synergies between protection and peace action.

2. Objectives

The Task Team on Community-Led Protection will focus on promoting a more coordinated approach to supporting affected populations to strengthen their own agency in conflict, to promote ownership over their own safety, and recognise their capacity to mitigate and prevent violence and the risks they may face. Initially, it will focus on the following objectives:



- Promote common understanding of community-led I-protection, its impacts and enabling factors in the the humanitarian sector
- Increase visibility of locally led protection action and community self-protection in the international humanitarian protection coordination, including more explicit recognition and inclusion of Community-Led Protection in relevant HNOs, HRPp and pooled fund processes
- Define ways of working for a GPC working group that is led by local actors and the approaches, principles, capacities needed for this.
- Building a community of practice to exchange learning, best practices, and challenges for crisis contexts
- Preparing the establishment of a working group on Community-Led Protection to take over from the Task Team

3. Key Areas of Work & Expected Deliverable

Under the leadership and coordination of the Global Protection Cluster, the Task Team assumes the following roles and responsibilities:

- Strengthening common understanding of work supporting community-led -protection in the protection sector
 1. Co-create common guidelines, standards, and processes for Community-led Protection, together with relevant local actors
 2. Provide guidance on sub-set terminologies and definitions which encompass Community-led-Protection
 3. Building understanding of the impact of community-led protection and its enabling factors, including through gathering available evaluation data, identifying gaps
 4. building a community of practice; understanding good practice / lessons learned and enablers of successful community-led protection, as well as barriers to community-led protection? Positive and negative impact of community-led protection and the implications for external actors
 5. Develop tools for Community-led -Protection programme design within the humanitarian programme cycle, and engage with donors and third parties on identifying solutions to complex problems around community-led protection and localization
- Based on strengthened evidence, advocate for inclusion of Community-led Protection in:
 6. HNOs and HRPp
 7. In pooled funds
- Develop a ToR, ways of working for a working group co-led by local, national and international actors on community led protection at global level to take over from TT
- Building a network of practitioners working on Community-Led Protection to exchange learning, best practices, and challenges for crisis contexts .
 1. Community of Sharing on Community-Led Protection
 2. Coordinating a central platform which includes information on (pilot) projects, research studies, evaluations, impact assessments, technical advances and solutions for common challenges

The following considerations will guide the initial work and activities that the Task Force and its members will pursue for the 2022-2023:

- By March 2023, the Task Team will have an agreed upon workplan
- By June 2023, a Community of Practice will be established, meeting every months
- By December 2023, the Task Team will formalize for consultation draft guidelines and standards for Community-led -Protection, including monitoring and evaluation tools



- Community-led -Protection common guidelines and standards will be finalized by December 2023
- Pending funding, during 2024, 3 country research studies on the coordination of Community-Led Protection will be coordinated in consultation with country protection clusters

4. Membership & Ways of Working

Membership will be open to all GPC members, partners, and other stakeholders involved at global, regional, or national level in promoting, supporting and implementing Community-led -Protection. Every international organization and UN agency who wants to participate in the Task Force will be required to support a national organization, CBO and/or civil society partner to actively engage in, and benefit from, the Task Team's work.

NRC, Oxfam and / or a new local partner from the GPC SAG will share a co-lead role for the Task Force in Year 1, drawing on existing funding to allocate sufficient staff time and resources to fulfil this role. During this period, at least one national partner will be identified and supported to progressively take over the co-chairing. Co-lead agencies will jointly organize and facilitate the meetings and follow-up on action points.

Meetings shall take place once a month and will be adjusted to accommodate for time zones. Extra-ordinary meetings may be called by the chairs or upon request from a member and will take in account time zones to accommodate as many members as possible.

Participating organisations are encouraged to take up leadership of different activities and to contribute to the work of the Task Force through active collaboration with one another.

All decision making of the Task Force is based on consensus. This includes agreement on accuracy of minutes, wording of documents, tools, positions, advocacy messages, training plans, piloting of initiatives, and reports on activities on a 'no objections' basis, with every effort made to ensure Task Force members have adequate time to respond. In case of issues that cannot be resolved by consensus, the TT co-leads reserve the right, in liaison with the GPC Coordinator, to take a final decision on the matter

All Task Force meeting minutes and resources will be translated into Spanish, English, French and Arabic, and all meetings will have simultaneous translation into English, Spanish and French.

Working group meetings will be held in Geneva, with audio dial-in capacity provided for partners in other locations. The working group meeting agendas will be determined by TT led and co-leads in consultation with working group members. An information and file sharing platform will be available to all members of the group, as well as an online communication channel (to be decided by group members).

The workplan for 2023-2024 will be discussed and agreed once the first meeting of the TT takes place, taking as reference the overall GPC-SAG Strategic Workplan.

5. Accountability & Communications

Co-Leading agencies are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Task Force's Objectives and Tasks, and regularly reporting back to the GPC Strategic Advisory Group and the Global Protection Cluster Coordinator on progress and achievements.

The Task Force regularly informs and seeks engagement with field clusters and operational actors on relevant developments, resources, and events related to Community-Led Protection



6. Funding & Resources

The Task Force may have a secretariat post attached to it. This will be resourced through donor support. The Task Force will create a resource plan and strategy to support implementing its objectives and deliverables.

Some of the deliverables will be accomplished through donor support and in-kind contributions by Task Force member organizations. This remains, however, without prejudice, to the requirement to obtain consensus on the respective product by the Task Force and the GPC.

7. Timeframe

The ToR will be in effect from their endorsement until 31 December 2023, after which they will be reviewed and extended by the GPC Coordinator, if deemed necessary and appropriate.