



Global Protection Cluster
Mine Action AoR

Terms of Reference

1. Background

The cluster approach was adopted in 2005 by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to strengthen system-wide preparedness and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies, as well as to provide clear leadership and accountability in the main areas of humanitarian response. Clusters are groups of humanitarian organisations, both UN and non UN, who work together on increasing the effectiveness of a specific sector of humanitarian action. At the global level, there are 11 clusters with designated cluster lead agencies based in Geneva or Rome: camp coordination and camp management (IOM/UNHCR - Geneva), early recovery (UNDP - Geneva), education (UNICEF - Geneva), emergency telecommunication (WFP - Rome), food security (FAO/WFP - Rome), health (WHO - Geneva), logistics (WFP - Rome), nutrition (UNICEF - Geneva), protection (UNHCR - Geneva), shelter (IFRC/UNHCR - Geneva), and lastly, water, sanitation and hygiene (UNICEF - Geneva).

Within the overall humanitarian response architecture, the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) works to improve the predictability, leadership, effectiveness and accountability of responses to ensure that protection is central to humanitarian action. It is led by UNHCR. The Global Protection Cluster includes four subsidiary coordination bodies called Areas of Responsibility (AoRs) with designated lead agencies that have equivalent responsibilities to cluster lead agencies in their area of responsibility: child protection (UNICEF - Geneva), Gender-Based Violence (UNFPA - Geneva), Housing Land and Property (NRC - Geneva) and mine action (UNMAS - Geneva).

2. Role of lead agency

As the designated lead agency, UNMAS is responsible to ensure an effective global response in the sector of humanitarian mine action in collaboration with other organisations. In this role, UNMAS brings together NGOs, UN agencies, academics and others under the shared objective of more predictable, accountable and effective mine action responses in emergencies at the global and country level. UNMAS is the provider of last resort¹ on mine action and is responsible to fill critical gaps identified in strategic response plans. IASC guidance states that ‘sector leads are responsible for acting as the provider of last resort (subject to access, security and availability of funding) to meet agreed priority needs.’

3. Mission statement of the Global Mine Action Area of Responsibility

The Global MA AoR provides leadership to ensure that mine action is an integral part of humanitarian planning and responses, and that the risks related to explosive threats are mainstreamed in humanitarian operations across all clusters as standard, especially in new emergencies when a country-level AoR may not have yet been activated. Field AoRs have customised ToRs (e.g. Syria). The Global MA AoR also works to ensure that mine action planning and prioritization take into account broader humanitarian objectives.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of the Global Mine Action Area of Responsibility

- **Coordination and field support:** the global AoR provides a forum where mine action actors can coordinate their activities to increase the coherence, reach and effectiveness of the response, with a view to reducing duplications and preventing gaps. It takes measures to scale up the mine action response in existing emergencies when required and to participate in the GPC Rapid Response Team where relevant. It provides remote support to country-level MA AoRs, providing in-depth technical advice, linking them with current guidance and lessons learnt, connecting teams with similar interests and challenges, and tracking needs and gaps so that

¹ IASC definition of provider of last resort: “where necessary, and depending on access, security and availability of funding, the cluster lead, as provider of last resort, must be ready to ensure the provision of services required to fulfil critical gaps identified by the cluster and reflected in the Humanitarian Coordinator-led Humanitarian Country Team Strategic Response Plan”.

policy development is informed by field realities. It responds to field requests and makes recommendations on activation of a mine action AoR in new emergencies.

- **Advocacy and mainstreaming:** the global AoR makes the case with OCHA and Clusters Lead Agencies to integrate mine action in the Humanitarian Programme Cycle guidance (covering preparedness, needs assessment and analysis, planning, response, implementation and monitoring of humanitarian programmes) and in the annual Humanitarian Needs Overview and Humanitarian Response Plans. The global AoR presents the mine action requirements of Humanitarian Response Plans to humanitarian donors in Geneva. It provides key messages on humanitarian mine action to the IASC and to the UN Secretary-General ‘reports on strengthening the effectiveness of humanitarian coordination (ECOSOC and GA).
- **Policy:** the global AoR provides coordinated inputs on mine action for communications, policies, strategic documents, and trainings prepared by the Global Protection Cluster e.g. protection mainstreaming checklist, best practices, communication toolkit, website. It manages a mine action community of practice focused on sharing best practices and lessons learnt and promotes the use of existing mine action standards and guidelines. The group can also contribute to policies being developed by other IASC bodies as needed.
- **Information Management:** the global AoR participate in the Task Team on Information Management launched by the GPC. It promotes and enables the sharing of data on mine action and other protection issues with GPC partners to improve analysis and protection strategies. It provides advice on relevant resources and sources of further information.
- **Mediation:** the group provides a safe space where humanitarian organizations can discuss and settle contentious issues that sub-clusters may not have been able to resolve at the field level.

5. Mine Action Area of Responsibility Coordinator

The Coordinator convenes meetings and facilitate the work of the group. It acts as a neutral broker. UNMAS funds the position of Coordinator as part of its role as Lead Agency. The Coordinator leads the development of a multi-annual work plan in consultation with members of the AoR based on agreed

priorities. The document will list the member organizations leading different work streams. The Coordinator will work with members of the AoR to mobilise resources to implement the work plan. This may include reaching out to donors or partners outside the AoR. He/she fosters cooperation with other Areas of Responsibility and ensure that the global MA AoR is involved in the decisions taken by the Global Protection Cluster.

6. Frequency of meetings

The Coordinator convenes at Geneva and in-country two separate bi-monthly meetings: one with the members of the global AoR only and another with the country-based MA AoRs, and additional ones when emergency situations require. He/she documents the decisions of the group. In addition, a member can request an ad hoc meeting to discuss an urgent issue. An audio-link is made available to facilitate the participation of organizations that are not based in Geneva. The group holds an annual face-to-face meeting (in the margins of the Global Protection Retreat). The coordinator organizes ad hoc meeting with partners as needed.

7. Composition of the Group

The global MA AoR is a broad-based and participatory forum comprising UN agencies, Non-Governmental and other international organisations, research and academic institutions, donors and representatives of relevant clusters. Current MA AoR members at the global level are listed on the GPC website.

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