Global Protection Cluster

GLOBAL PROTECTION UPDATE
APRIL 2024

Malakal, South Sudan

FORCED RETURNS AND RELOCATIONS

FORCED RETURNS, RELOCATIONS AND CAMP CLOSURE: ENSURING THE PROTECTION OF IDPs

KEY COUNTRY NEWS

Afghanistan grapples with crippling economic deterioration coupled with increasing climate-shocks in a third-consecutive year of drought, as well as multiple earthquakes, which resulted in wide-scale destruction of over 382 villages across Herat Province and directly affected over 275,000 people. The de facto authorities' monitoring of UN organizations and I/NNGOs continue to interfere in the delivery of timely humanitarian response.

In January 2024, 235 protection incidents were recorded in the northwest and southwest regions of **Cameroon**, a 54% increase in comparison to January 2023. On 11 February, an IED detonation during the Youth Day celebrations in previously peaceful Nkambe, resulted in civilian casualties, mostly children, a new dynamic in the protracted conflict.

On 15 February 2024, the government in **Chad** issued a decree declaring a state of food emergency across the country. More than 120,000 Chadian returnees have now fled the conflict in Sudan since April 2023.

2024 marked a transition in the dynamics of the armed conflict in **Colombia**, seeing an increase in armed confrontations between NSAGs and not necessarily between NSAGs and the state, which generates greater challenges for the protection of the civilian population. New emergencies were observed in the department of Bolívar and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta.

Fighting in February 2024 in the town of Sake (Near Goma) and north of Nord Kivu in **DR Congo** displaced around 265,000 individuals. The number of acts of violence and deliberate attacks against civilians has increased in recent months and is likely to worsen with MONUSCO's imminent departure.

In **Ethiopia** the state of emergency in the Amhara region was extended by 4 months at the beginning of February 2024. The drought footprint is being felt across Afar, Amhara, Tigray, Oromia,

where the recent harvest was severely disrupted, leaving households with no or limited food stock.

Food insecurity increasing due to drought and the El Niño phenomenon pose devastating protection risks to the affected population of **Guatemala**.

The surge of violence since February 2024 in **Haiti** has reached unprecedented levels resulting in rampant insecurity and lawlessness, the undermining of State authority by criminal gangs, a grave human rights situation, food insecurity, multiple displacements and a rapidly deteriorating humanitarian situation.

The situation remained challenging in **Honduras**, which continues amongst the most violent countries in Latin America. During the first two months of the year, 40 femicides were registered in the country, and in 2024 already 516 violent deaths have already been reported.

The completion of the MINUSMA withdrawal in **Mali** has impacted civilians, including in relation to increased protection risks related to GBV, recruitment of children into armed groups and mines and other explosive ordnance. Expansion of attacks by armed groups towards the central-west of the country has seen an increase in the contamination of roads, severely impacting humanitarian access.

Four provinces of **Mozambique** were hit by the Tropical Storm Filipo in March 2024, impacting 48,116 individuals (8,533 families) and extensively damaging infrastructure including schools and road networks. Close to 100,000 people were displaced in northern Mozambique following fresh attacks in Chiúre, Macomia, and Mecufi districts in Cabo Delgado, between 8 and 27 February.

In **Myanmar** more than an estimated 2.7 million people remain internally displaced across the country, with the vast majority (2.4 million) fleeing their home due to conflict and insecurity since the military takeover. More than 78,000 civilian properties,

including houses, religious structures, and education and health facilities had reportedly been destroyed as of November, mostly across the Northwest and the Southeast.

Increased attacks on civilians continue to raise alarming protection concerns across Local Government Areas of Borno state, North-East **Nigeria**. There has been an alarming increase in unlawful killings, abduction, and theft and destruction of civilian properties primarily perpetrated by NSAGs against IDPs, IDP returnees, and host community members, with 176 attacks on civilians and 195 abductions in the first quarter of 2024.

The Security Council adopted Resolution 2728 on 25 March demanding an immediate ceasefire in **Gaza** during Ramadan. The Resolution also calls for the immediate release of hostages and for ensuring humanitarian access to Gaza. Despite the sustained calls for a cessation of hostilities and the safe access of humanitarian assistance and staff, protection actors are concerned that the conflict continues to escalate.

In **Somalia**, the drawdown of the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) will likely render the security situation more complex. In a context where 23 of 74 districts are considered hard or extremely hard to reach, the drawdown will likely further complicate humanitarian access.

Mass violence and gross human rights violations in **South Sudan** continue unabated ahead of the landmark elections in December 2024. An alarming increase in abduction of women and children, subjected to sexual slavery and forced marriages, was reported in Jonglei State.

The Security Council adopted Resolution 2724 on 8 March calling for immediate cessation of hostilities in **Sudan**. Ethnic violence, particularly in Darfur, has led to mass killings and targeted attacks against communities such as the Masalit in Al Geneina.

In 2024, 16.7 million people in **Syria** require some form of humanitarian

assistance or protection, the largest number since the beginning of the crisis in 2011. In January alone, approximately 466 security incidents (armed conflict, civil unrest, terrorism, hazards and crime) were reported, compared to 410 in December 2023. Concerns continue over a draft morality law subscribed to the Ministry of Interior in Idleb, imposing restrictive dress codes, reinforcing gender segregation and increased surveillance and control of contents and media, including the possible increase on human rights violations and reduction of humanitarian space.

Presidential elections in **Venezuela** were announced to take place on 28 July 2024. As a result of the government of Venezuela's closure of OHCHR offices in February, all OHCHR international staff had to leave the country in 72 hours. With the approval of the Law on the Control, Regularization, Action and Financing of Non-Governmental and Related Organizations, a myriad of restrictions are also imposed on NGO activities.

Protection Risks in Cluster Operations

The map below illustrates the percentage (out of the maximum value) of the aggregated severity of the 15 protection risks collected by Protection Cluster operations.
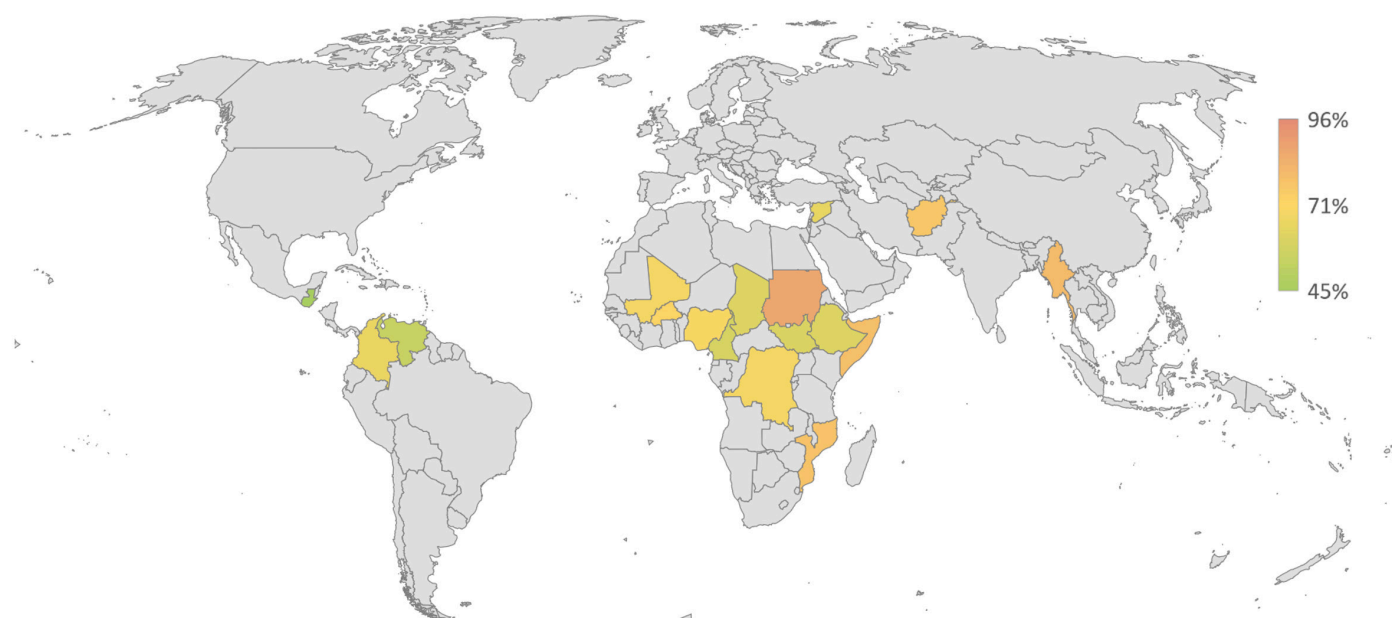
PROTECTION ANALYSIS UPDATES

93% of **29** Protection Clusters have produced **76** Protection Analysis Updates, including **45** national, **27** sub-national and **4** thematic since the 1st of January 2022. The PAUs are produced regularly on the basis of the Protection Analytical Framework.

PAU PUBLISHED IN 2024*			
Somalia	JANUARY	oPt (West Bank)	MARCH
Mozambique	FEBRUARY	South Sudan	MARCH
DR Congo	MARCH	Nigeria	APRIL

* Click on the country to access the latest PAU
* The approach to PAUs have been revised during the 1st quarter of 2023, please see here the latest guidance.

EMERGING PROTECTION TRENDS

CRISIS WATCH	ALARMING SITUATIONS	
SUDAN	**HAITI**	**oPt**
The conflict in Sudan, involving the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) along with other groups, has led to a humanitarian crisis with significant civilian casualties, including many women and children, and displaced over 7.4 million people. Violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws have been widespread. Children have suffered greatly, with a marked increase in rights violations, including killing, maiming, and sexual violence. The conflict has also seen a rise in gender-based violence, forced marriages, and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, causing numerous civilian casualties. The conflict's impact on health and education is profound, with many facilities damaged or repurposed for military use, exacerbating food insecurity that affects nearly 18 million people. The fighting's spread to agricultural areas threatens future harvests and food availability.	On 11 March 2024, the Security Council "reiterated their deep concern over the security and humanitarian situation and […] their strong condemnation of the increasing violence, criminal activities, mass displacement of civilians, and human rights abuses that undermine the peace, stability, and security of Haiti and the region." Rising insecurity, natural hazard-related disasters and years of economic decline and inflation have driven humanitarian needs in Haiti to record levels, with an estimated 5.5 million persons in need of humanitarian assistance in 2024, nearly half of Haiti's population. An estimated 3 million of these are children. Despite rising needs, the humanitarian response plan for 2024 was only 2.8 per cent funded by March 2024.	Over 1.7 million people have been displaced in Gaza during a 7-month offensive by Israeli Forces. At the time of writing, almost 34,000 fatalities and 77,000 injuries have been reported in Gaza, with 134 hostages remaining in Gaza. The Security Council adopted on 25 March demanding an immediate ceasefire in Gaza during Ramadan, as well as immediate release of hostages and calling for ensuring humanitarian access to Gaza. Despite the sustained calls for a cessation of hostilities and the safe access of humanitarian assistance and staff, protection actors are concerned that the conflict continues to escalate. 1.1 million people face catastrophic levels of food insecurity. In parallel, the protection situation in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, has deteriorated with a sharp increase in Palestinians killed and arrested by Israeli Forces and an increase of Settler attacks. The Protection Cluster expresses its concern at the systematic destruction of the fabric of life, with the destruction of over 290,000 homes, and schools and hospitals.

PROTECTION RISKS

OF CONCERN	HIGHLIGHTS ON PROTECTION RISKS
ABDUCTION, KIDNAPPING, ENFORCED DISAPPEARANCE, ARBITRARY OR UNLAWFUL ARREST AND/OR DETENTION	**50%** of cluster operations (11) report the risk as high or very high. This represents a similar level of reporting to the previous period, even though it is not amongst the top 8 most reported risks
41% of cluster operations report this risk as high or very high. This represents an important increase compared to the last period, back to the high levels of June 2023.	**CHILD, EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE**
FORCED RECRUITMENT AND ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN IN ARMED FORCES AND GROUPS and CHILD AND FORCED FAMILY SEPARATION	**45%** of cluster operations (10) reported 'forced recruitment' and **27%** (6) reported 'family' related risks as high or very high. These represent respectively a slight decrease and a slight increase compared to last period.

MONITOR	TRACKING OF 15 PROTECTION RISKS ACROSS EMERGENCIES

The Global Protection Cluster and its Areas of Responsibility monitor and track 15 protection risks[1] across crises with active Protection Cluster operations. In the last quarter, the **Global Protection Risk Tracker** has been revised, including through elaborating common definitions of the 15 protection risks guiding collective protection analysis.

PROTECTION RISK		VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	VERY HIGH
ABDUCTION & DETENTION	Abduction, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary or unlawful arrest and/or detention	1	3	7	7	4
ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS	Attacks on civilians and other unlawful killings, and attacks on civilian objects	1	3	5	5	8
FAMILY SEPARATION	Child and forced family separation		2	14	3	3
MARRIAGE	Child, early or forced marriage		3	10	6	3
DISCRIMINATION	Discrimination and stigmatization, denial of resources, opportunities, services and/or humanitarian access	1	1	7	6	7
DISINFORMATION	Disinformation and denial of access to information	1	7	9	2	3
FORCED RECRUITMENT	Forced recruitment and association of children in armed forces and groups		3	9	3	7
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	Gender-based violence			5	9	8
LEGAL IDENTITY	Impediments and/or restrictions to access to legal identity, remedies and justice	1	1	8	8	4
PRESENCE OF MINE	Presence of Mine and other explosive ordnance	4	3	3	6	6
PSYCHOSOCIAL	Psychological/emotional abuse or inflicted distress	1	1	6	8	6
THEFT & EVICTION	Theft, extortion, forced eviction or destruction of personal property		3	7	7	5
TORTURE & CRUELTY	Torture or cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment	2	6	8	2	4
TRAFFICKING & LABOUR	Trafficking in persons, forced labour or slavery-like practices		6	10	4	2
MOVEMENT & DISPLACEMENT	Unlawful impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement, siege and forced displacement		2	5	8	7

[1] **GPC Protection Risks Explanatory Note, March 2023**

MONITORING AND ANALYSIS FINDINGS

The table below depicts a correlation analysis examining potential relationships between 15 protection risks based on monitoring conducted by Protection Clusters in March 2024. It is crucial to remember that correlation doesn't imply causation, necessitating further analysis to understand causal relationships and underlying drivers of humanitarian crises. While efforts[2] to improve data reliability by the Global Protection Cluster are noted, interpreting it demands caution, due to contextual complexities and diverse needs of affected populations.

	ABDUCTION & DETENTION	ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS	FAMILY SEPARATION	MARRIAGE	DISCRIMINATION	DISINFORMATION	FORCED RECRUITMENT	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	LEGAL IDENTITY	PRESENCE OF MINE	PSYCHOSOCIAL	THEFT & EVICTION	TORTURE & CRUELTY	TRAFFICKING & LABOUR	MOVEMENT & DISPLACEMENT
ABDUCTION & DETENTION		0.58	0.39	0.49	0.55	0.64	0.07	0.12	0.12	0.27	0.38	0.15	0.53	0.19	0.33
ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS	0.58		0.55	0.10	0.70	0.50	0.59	0.26	0.00	0.73	0.45	0.47	0.61	0.37	0.57
FAMILY SEPARATION	0.39	0.55		0.43	0.56	0.67	0.48	0.60	0.45	0.55	0.43	0.38	0.51	0.43	0.46
MARRIAGE	0.49	0.10	0.43		0.52	0.46	-0.13	0.33	0.32	0.18	0.17	-0.06	0.16	0.16	0.14
DISCRIMINATION	0.55	0.70	0.56	0.52		0.68	0.56	0.33	0.20	0.67	0.17	0.34	0.52	0.52	0.65
DISINFORMATION	0.64	0.50	0.67	0.46	0.68		0.39	0.47	0.43	0.31	0.17	0.35	0.71	0.33	0.41
FORCED RECRUITMENT	0.07	0.59	0.48	-0.13	0.56	0.39		0.35	0.20	0.69	0.18	0.42	0.43	0.61	0.54
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	0.12	0.26	0.60	0.33	0.33	0.47	0.35		0.45	0.23	0.34	0.11	0.50	0.18	0.23
LEGAL IDENTITY	0.12	0.00	0.45	0.32	0.20	0.43	0.20	0.45		0.12	0.25	0.11	0.34	0.48	0.37
PRESENCE OF MINE	0.27	0.73	0.55	0.18	0.67	0.31	0.69	0.23	0.12		0.50	0.39	0.43	0.55	0.70
PSYCHOSOCIAL	0.38	0.45	0.43	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.18	0.34	0.25	0.50		0.20	0.40	0.15	0.26
THEFT & EVICTION	0.15	0.47	0.38	-0.06	0.34	0.35	0.42	0.11	0.11	0.39	0.20		0.19	0.37	0.57
TORTURE & CRUELTY	0.53	0.61	0.51	0.16	0.52	0.71	0.43	0.50	0.34	0.43	0.40	0.19		0.19	0.51
TRAFFICKING & LABOUR	0.19	0.37	0.43	0.16	0.52	0.33	0.61	0.18	0.48	0.55	0.15	0.37	0.19		0.61
MOVEMENT & DISPLACEMENT	0.33	0.57	0.46	0.14	0.65	0.41	0.54	0.23	0.37	0.70	0.26	0.57	0.51	0.61	

A coefficient of 1 indicates a perfect positive correlation, -1 a perfect negative correlation and 0 no linear relationship. For example, it is interesting to note that '**discrimination**', followed by '**movement and displacement**', tend to increase more easily when other risks increase. '**Presence of mines**' tends to increase in parallel to an increase in '**attacks on civilians**', '**discrimination**', '**forced recruitment**' and '**movement and displacement**'. '**Disinformation**' tends to increase in parallel to an increase in '**abduction and detention**', '**family separation**', '**discrimination**' and '**torture and cruelty**'. While these are few illustrative examples, the correlation analysis shows that, across all crises, protection risks are not isolated but highly interdependent and mutually exacerbating. Data from March 2024 confirms that several protection risks are co-occurring and addressing them more comprehensively is essential.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF THE SEVERITY LEVEL OF EACH PROTECTION RISK

The heatmap below provides a visual representation of median protection risk levels across different regions, with darker tiles indicating higher levels of risk. Regions characterized by a prevalence of red tiles, especially those shaded dark red, indicate heightened attention and resource allocation to mitigate risks effectively.

REGION / RISK	ABDUCTION & DETENTION	ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS	FAMILY SEPARATION	MARRIAGE	DISCRIMINATION	DISINFORMATION	FORCED RECRUITMENT	GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	LEGAL IDENTITY	PRESENCE OF MINE	PSYCHOSOCIAL	THEFT & EVICTION	TORTURE & CRUELTY	TRAFFICKING & LABOUR	MOVEMENT & DISPLACEMENT
Americas	3.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	1.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	4.00
Asia & Pacific	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00
East & Southern Africa	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
MENA	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	4.00
West & Central Africa	4.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	2.00	4.00

[2]The GPC with the AoRs, has introduced methodological changes to the quarterly Protection Risk Tracker. These include: 1. Introduction of specific severity criteria shared across all 27 operations for each of the 15 protection risks; 2. Monitoring of protection risks at the sub-national level to facilitate more accurate risk identification; 3. Provision of dedicated guidance to improve the interpretation of protection risks related to human rights violations.

In the **Americas**, risk levels vary from moderate to high, with particular concerns around gender-based violence and legal identity and justice. Conversely, there is one area with low risk regarding the presence of mines. In **Asia & Pacific**, a mix of moderate to very high risks is observed, especially concerning freedom of movement and discrimination. The **MENA** region exhibits a wide range of risk levels, with issues such as presence of mines and psychological distress standing out as particularly concerning. **East & Southern Africa** and **West & Central Africa** both demonstrate predominantly high risk levels across various protection threats, underscoring the urgent need for attention and potentially increased resources to address these challenges effectively.

SEVERITY OF PROTECTION RISKS AT SUB-NATIONAL LEVEL

Protection Clusters have commenced monitoring protection risks at the sub-national level. This approach aims to facilitate a deeper understanding of the presence and incidence of each protection risk, thereby enhancing the quality of information available for the Humanitarian Project Cycle. The national-level data in the Global Protection Risk Tracker for March 2024 has been enriched by sub-national monitoring conducted across various operations.

This transition to sub-national monitoring will continue throughout 2024. To illustrate the analysis, South Sudan, Venezuela, and Burkina Faso are presented in this analysis. The full extent of the analysis cannot be presented due to space limitation, but it is available upon request.
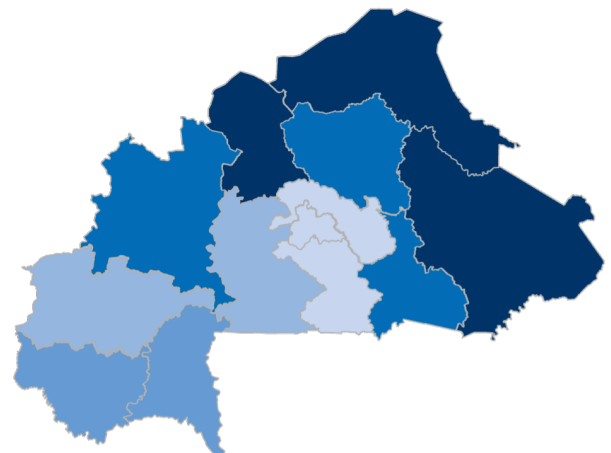
SOUTH SUDAN

VENEZUELA

BURKINA FASO
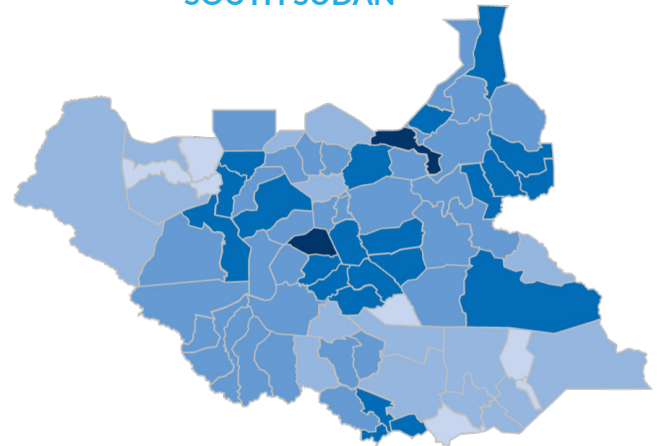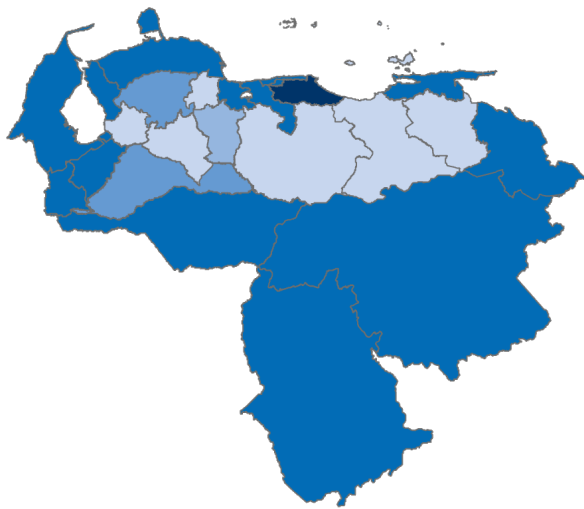
Miranda, Tachira, Delta Amacuro and Zulia are the most impacted by the compounded effects of all protection risks. However, the analysis allowed the identification of specific high-risk situations in other areas, as for example in terms of **'discrimination'** in Carabobo, or **'attacks on civilians'** in Aragua. The full extent of the analysis per each area is available with the Protection Cluster in Venezuela.

Sahel, Est, Nord and Boucle du Mouhoun are the most impacted areas by the compounded effects of all protection risks. However, the analysis allowed the identification of specific high-risk situations, as for example in terms of **'theft and extortion'** in Centre-Est, or a general pervasive medium presence of **'gender-based violence'** across multiple areas. The full extent of the analysis per each area is available with the Protection Cluster in Burkina Faso.

The sub-national exercise is currently being piloted in order to gather lessons learned and introduce contextually relevant enhancements ahead of the 2025 HPC cycle. The revised approach is done by GPC and Field Clusters, and will inform the Global Protection Conference in June 2024.

AT A GLANCE — MOST SEVERE PROTECTION RISKS REPORTED IN THE LAST QUARTER

Since October 2023, the protection risks related to 'impediments and/or restrictions to access to legal identity, remedies and justice' and 'theft, extortion, forced eviction or destruction of personal property' are among the 8 most severe risks as reported by Protection Cluster operations (12). The other 6 risks reported as most severe in October 2023 remain, with an increase of countries reporting high or very high levels of protection risks related to 'unlawful impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement, siege and forced displacement' and a steep decrease of protection risks related to 'attacks on civilians and other unlawful killings, and attacks on civilian objects' (-12%). 'Gender-based violence' remain the top reported protection risks, with a slight increase of the countries reporting it as high or very high.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

100% of operations report gender-based violence as being the most concerning. **77%** describe the risk of as high or very high.

MOVEMENT & DISPLACEMENT

100% of operations report forced displacement and impediments to freedom of movement as a risk. **68%** describe the risk as high or very high.

PSYCHOSOCIAL

100% of operations report psychological/ emotional abuse or inflicted distress amongst the affected populations. **64%** rate the risk as high or very high.

ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS

Attacks on civilians or infrastructures are occuring in 100% of operations. **59%** describe the risk as high or very high.

DISCRIMINATION

100% of operations report discrimination, stigmatization and denial of resources or access and being the most concerning. **59%** describe the risk as high or very high.

LEGAL IDENTITY

100% of operations impediments and/or restrictions to access to documentation, remedies and justice. **55%** describe the risk as high or very high.

PRESENCE OF MINES

Presence of mines and other explosive ordnance is a risk across 100% of operations. **55%** describe the risk as high or very high.

FORCED EVICTIONS

55% of operations reported forced eviction, theft and destruction of property as high or very high.

PSYCHOLOGICAL / EMOTIONAL ABUSE OR INFLICTED DISTRESS

BURKINA FASO	DR CONGO	SOUTH SUDAN	SYRIA - NW	SYRIA - WOS	oPt
AFGHANISTAN	EL SALVADOR	MALI	MOZAMBIQUE	MYANMAR	SUDAN
SYRIA - NE	NIGERIA	CAMEROON	CHAD	COLOMBIA	ETHIOPIA
SOMALIA	VENEZUELA	HONDURAS	GUATEMALA		

In **DR Congo,** psychological and emotional abuse is one of the critical consequences of unending conflicts and displacement and has been identified as one of the most acute risks by the HCT protection strategy. Prolonged exposure to violence in conflict zones has profound and often long-lasting impacts on people's mental and psychosocial health, with particularly devastating effects on women, children, and youth. Across **Syria**, psychosocial needs are significant and increasingly reported, with trauma, stress, and anxiety identified as increasingly reported protection issues affecting all communities, compounded by protracted displacement and severe economic deterioration. In NW Syria, mental health issues, including suicide, drug abuse and anxiety have increased, protection surveys have also shown that mental health related illness is one of the most severe impacts on IDPs and host communities. In **Colombia**, the constant threats in the context of the armed conflict are having an impact on the mental health of children and adolescents and the psychosocial well-being of their communities, especially indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities. The IDPs living in camps and returnees living in host communities in NE **Nigeria** are fearful as a result of the incidents of attacks against civilians in Borno State. Community members expressed fears of being raped, killed, or kidnapped, with some of the victims are traumatized and in psychological and emotional distress. In **Afghanistan**, a joint report from UN Women, IOM and UNAMA, in which 462 women were consulted across 33 provinces, found that 76% of female respondents scored their mental health as bad or very bad. Depression and insomnia were still reported as mental health conditions affecting women and girls, leading to physical impacts such as headaches, tiredness, loss of appetite. IDPs in gathering sites in **Sudan**'s safer states are apprehensive of their futures not knowing until when they can stay at the current gathering sites.

UNLAWFUL IMPEDIMENTS OR RESTRICTIONS TO FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT, SIEGE AND FORCED DISPLACEMENT

AFGHANISTAN	BURKINA FASO	MYANMAR	oPt	SOMALIA	SOUTH SUDAN
SUDAN	CAMEROON	COLOMBIA	HONDURAS	MALI	NIGERIA
SYRIA - NE	SYRIA - NW	SYRIA - WOS	CHAD	DR CONGO	EL SALVADOR
MOZAMBIQUE	VENEZUELA	ETHIOPIA	GUATEMALA		

In Borno state in NE **Nigeria**, freedom of movement is still a critical barrier limiting access to farmlands and livelihood opportunities. Women and girls' freedom of movement continues to be severely curtailed by the de facto authorities' decrees and directives in **Afghanistan**, limiting their access to economic, social, and public life and their access to basic services. Recent report findings indicate that the main reasons for women not being able to move freely are related to no access to a mahram (24,1%) followed by social-cultural barriers (20%) and discrimination (19.6%), whereas only 4% of men and boys reported not being able to move. In **Sudan**, the Protection Sector documented at least 12 areas where conflicting parties imposed movement restriction towards civilians. In **Myanmar**, following the recent escalation in October 2023 nearly 700,000 people have been forcibly displaced, freedom of movement continues to be a problem in conflict areas as well as curfews and movement restrictions within the different states. In NE **Syria**, checkpoints remain problematic for the freedom of movement of the population, compounded by a lack of documentation. A recent Humanitarian Trends and Impact Report highlighted 88,007 victims of confinement across **Colombia** in 2023.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

AFGHANISTAN	BURKINA FASO	DR CONGO	MOZAMBIQUE	oPt	SOMALIA
SOUTH SUDAN	SUDAN	CHAD	EL SALVADOR	ETHIOPIA	HONDURAS
MALI	SYRIA - NE	SYRIA - NW	SYRIA - WOS	VENEZUELA	CAMEROON
COLOMBIA	GUATEMALA	MYANMAR	NIGERIA		

An increase in GBV has been reported in **Ethiopia** in relation both to areas affected by conflict/violence, and in areas affected by climatic shocks such as drought, where GBV rates have increased and the affected population sometimes resort to negative coping mechanisms such as transactional sex and child marriage. In Táchira state, **Venezuela**, 3 cases of femicide and one attempted femicide occurred during the reporting period. In **Gaza**, GBV risks are further exacerbated due to severely overcrowded shelters and informal settlements, a lack of dignified and safe bathing or latrine facilities, and severe shortages of food and clean drinking water. These factors have all contributed to a breakdown of coping mechanisms. During the month of February alone in **Haiti**, 250 cases of GBV were reported to specialized service providers, 90% of whom were women. In **Honduras**, during the first two months of the year, 40 femicides were registered. The already high prevalence of GBV against **Afghan** women and girls—including intimate partner and domestic violence due to their confinement to their homes—has increased. In **Syria**, the protracted crisis, compounded by economic hardship and natural disasters continues to disproportionately impact women and girls, where it remains a problem for women to have access to equal rights in many domains of their socio-political life. In **Sudan**, GBV incidents are on the rise, notably cases of domestic violence.

PRESENCE OF MINE AND OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE

BURKINA FASO	COLOMBIA	MYANMAR	oPt	SOMALIA	SOUTH SUDAN
AFGHANISTAN	DR CONGO	MALI	NIGERIA	SUDAN	SYRIA - WOS
SYRIA - NE	SYRIA - NW	MOZAMBIQUE	CAMEROON	CHAD	ETHIOPIA
EL SALVADOR	GUATEMALA	HONDURAS	VENEZUELA		

The risk of IEDs spreads to new communities in **Somalia**, as military campaigns recover new areas, with children the most vulnerable to ERW accidents, accounting for up to 80 per cent of all recorded victims in the last four years. A significant increase in the number of landmine victims in **Myanmar** has been reported, particularly in Rakhine and Shan states. Additionally, there are reports of new layers of landmines being laid in these areas. **Colombia** continues to face widespread explosive ordnance contamination in 24 of its 32 departments, mainly from anti-personnel mines laid by NSAGs. Of the total number of civilian victims, 36.8% belong to ethnic communities (14 indigenous and 7 Afro-Colombian). At least 70% of casualties in Khartoum, **Sudan** are from the presence of explosive ordnance resulting from bombing, shelling, and air strikes. In **DR Congo,** since fighting broke out in the town of Sake on 7 February, at least 20 civilians have been killed by indiscriminate bombing, including children. Across **Syria**, past and present hostilities continue to result in widespread EO contamination throughout the country, affecting approximately a third of communities. The most vulnerable groups are children, IDPs and agricultural workers. There are still 1,255.6 km^2 of contaminated areas in **Afghanistan**, affecting at least 1,727 communities. Between July and December, unexploded ordnance killed at least 77 people and wounded at least 163 others. Given the scale and intensity of the assault on **Gaza**, the risk of exposure to mines, ERW, and UXOs is extremely high.

DISCRIMINATION AND STIGMATIZATION, DENIAL OF RESOURCES, OPPORTUNITIES, SERVICES AND/OR HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

AFGHANISTAN	BURKINA FASO	MYANMAR	SOMALIA	SOUTH SUDAN	SUDAN
oPt	CHAD	COLOMBIA	MOZAMBIQUE	MALI	SYRIA - NW
NIGERIA	CAMEROON	DR CONGO	ETHIOPIA	GUATEMALA	HONDURAS
SYRIA - WOS	VENEZUELA	EL SALVADOR	SYRIA - NE		

Minority and marginalised communities in **Somalia**, estimated to comprise 30% of the population, face a long history of discrimination, exclusion from access to services and participation in decision-making processes which directly affect them. Discriminatory norms compounded by denial of resources, opportunities, access to services and humanitarian assistance remain significantly prevalent across **Afghanistan**, especially for women, girls, and other vulnerable groups. Conflict between host and IDPs are constantly reported in **Mozambique**, with instances of host communities demanding money to access water, reported during to the sharing of limited resources. In **Syria**, women may face particular difficulties accessing services. For example, in Aleppo governorate in a number of sub-districts lack of access to services available are reported due to restrictions of movement.

ATTACKS ON CIVILIANS AND OTHER UNLAWFUL KILLINGS, AND ATTACKS ON CIVILIAN OBJECTS

BURKINA FASO	DR CONGO	MYANMAR	NIGERIA	oPt	SOMALIA
SOUTH SUDAN	SUDAN	CAMEROON	MALI	MOZAMBIQUE	SYRIA - NW
SYRIA - WOS	AFGHANISTAN	CHAD	COLOMBIA	ETHIOPIA	HONDURAS
EL SALVADOR	SYRIA - NE	VENEZUELA	GUATEMALA		

oPt continues to experience extreme levels of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure. In Nord Kivu and Sud Kivu, the increased use of artillery is causing civilian casualties in areas of **DR Congo** affected by M23 crisis. In **Colombia**, during 2023, attacks on schools increased within the context of the armed conflict, including 46 events of attacks on schools, hospitals, and other civilian assets, a 50% increase from what was recorded in 2022. It is estimated that these attacks affected the right to education of 16,764 children and adolescents. In **Somalia**, civilians continue to pay the price of conflict and insecurity. Attacks on civilians and civilian objects are reported on by partners in **Myanmar** conducted by MAF and EAOs. From January 13-16, 2024, 40 verified strikes were conducted across NE **Syria**. At least six civilians have been injured in this escalation alone, while at least 26 critical infrastructure sites are either severely damaged or out of service. In **Sudan**, an estimated 70% of hospitals in conflict affected states remain non-functional because of ongoing attacks combined with insecurity and shortages of medical supplies.

IMPEDIMENTS AND/OR RESTRICTIONS TO ACCESS TO LEGAL IDENTITY, REMEDIES, AND JUSTICE

BURKINA FASO	MOZAMBIQUE	oPt	SOUTH SUDAN	AFGHANISTAN	EL SALVADOR
HONDURAS	MYANMAR	SUDAN	SYRIA - NE	SYRIA - NW	SYRIA - WOS
CAMEROON	CHAD	COLOMBIA	ETHIOPIA	GUATEMALA	MALI
SOMALIA	VENEZUELA	DR CONGO	NIGERIA		

In **Sudan**, the civil registry has been closed since the start of the conflict, posing serious barriers to access legal documentation. Lack/loss of civil documentation was reported by 50% of households across **Syria** based on needs assessments. In some areas, people reported having no access to any legal services. Many barriers still exist for the population in NE Syria to have access to legal documentation of all sorts. In NW Syria, access to justice remains as a challenge for some specific population groups including minorities and women. The situation of children in contact with the law is also a main challenge, where access constitutes one of the most significant barriers. There are limited opportunities for legal remedies and justice. Protection actors are concerned about the lack of and loss of documents in **Gaza**, and the destruction of infrastructure such as civil registries.

THEFT, EXTORTION, FORCED EVICTION OR DESTRUCTION OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

BURKINA FASO	NIGERIA	oPt	SOMALIA	SOUTH SUDAN	CHAD
HONDURAS	MYANMAR	SUDAN	SYRIA - NE	SYRIA - NW	SYRIA - WOS
AFGHANISTAN	CAMEROON	COLOMBIA	DR CONGO	EL SALVADOR	MOZAMBIQUE
VENEZUELA	ETHIOPIA	GUATEMALA	MALI		

There has been an increase in criminality, including stealing of IDP's livestock, bicycles, foodstuff, and humanitarian community assistance such as solar panels at water points in Borno State, NE **Nigeria**. In **Gaza**, over 60% of residential homes have been partially or totally destroyed. During the last reporting period, in Aleppo, 5,000 buildings were in the pipeline for demolition without due process and forced evictions were recorded in Aleppo, Hama, Homs and Idleb governorates of **Syria**. Confiscation of property, land grabbing and occupation continues across NW Syria, affecting particular population groups (ethnic minorities, widows, orphans, older persons). In **Chad**, atrocities committed by NSAGs are followed by the destruction of property and looting. Since the start of the dry season, there have also been several cases of fires. As of the end of February 2024, a staggering 1.5 million IDPs in **Somalia** have been subjected to forced evictions, with Banadir accounting for 66% of these cases.

FORCED RETURNS, FORCED RELOCATIONS AND CAMP CLOSURES

Protection Cluster operations across conflict and disaster contexts have observed an increasing number of forced return and relocation of internally displaced communities. In part, this trend is driven by closures of IDP camps. Protection from forced returns and relocation is essential for internally displaced persons. Under no circumstances should IDPs be encouraged or compelled to return or relocate to areas where their life, safety, liberty, or health would be at risk. **In the case of voluntary relocation and returns occur, protection standards and considerations, including best practices, must be mainstreamed in return and relocation decisions and procedures.** All activities should ensure that displaced persons can enjoy physical, legal, and material security without discrimination. In the case of abrupt camp closures, where the relocation and return is either involuntary or premature, Protection Clusters should adapt their response to design appropriate protection oriented actions, including monitoring the context and advocating for protection safeguards and principles to be adhered to.

Despite the importance of durable solutions to displacement, 62.2m people were internally displaced as of mid-2023. Achieving such solutions are far from assured. Forced returns are not a solution to displacement. **Instances of forced returns and relocations are often poorly documented and analyzed and can be unclear what actions Protection Clusters can take in the face of forced return.**

In an effort to address this, the Global Protection Cluster - with the support of the Geneva Graduate Institute - initiated a study aimed at addressing the following questions: a) What are the main trends and actions related to forced return and relocation in Protection Cluster operations? b) What are the best practices on the issue of forced return and relocation to enable Protection Clusters to conduct consistent, evidence-based advocacy in the future?

The study involved an extensive desk review of 14 protection cluster operations[3] from 2019 - 2022 to identify: a) the main trends and patterns, as well as associated protection risks of 28 potential incidents of forced returns and relocations identified from Protection Cluster documents; b) the Protection Cluster responses to cases of forced returns and relocations and c) challenges. This was complimented by key informant interviews.

The research had a specific focus on three country cases - Mozambique, Nigeria, and Niger. Findings revealed that over half of the incidents of forced return were initiated by national or subnational governments, often when pursuing displacement solutions in an unprincipled manner that violated the basic human rights of IDPs. **Weak legal and policy frameworks, unaccountable governance models, lack of housing, land and property rights, and discrimination and marginalization of IDPs all contributed to exposing displaced communities to protection risks during their relocation or return.**

The central role of States as duty bearers to IDPs and the lack of capacity to fulfill such obligations also pose a dilemma to humanitarian and protection actors. Actors are often caught between the need to maintain humanitarian access and their duties to uphold humanitarian principles and basic human rights. Coordination deficits, competing programmatic priorities, lack of political access and leverage, and gaps in operational guidance on specific protection risks also pose challenges for effective advocacy and response. Where Protection Cluster operations achieved measurable results with relation to advocacy, the crucial contributing factors often include **extensive coordination efforts beyond humanitarian actors to formulate a principled common approach, strategic positioning, and programming to enhance access and exchange with local governance actors, rights-based and innovative approaches to amplify the voices of the displaced communities. There are concerted efforts to breakdown the silos between humanitarian agencies and between the humanitarian, peace, and development actors.**

The GPC presented the results of the study at the Internal Displacement and Solutions Conference, hosted by the Refugee Law Initiative of the University of London in March 2024. This involved Graduate Institute students, the Protection Cluster Coordinators from Nigeria and Niger, and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of IDPs. In her closing remarks, the Special Rapporteur highlighted that a human rights-based approach to durable solutions to internal displacement is essential. **IDPs have the right to choose freely between return, local integration, or settlement in another part of the country. The government is responsible for creating the conditions that allow IDPs to rebuild their lives no matter where they choose to live.** The Special Rapporteur also called for the full participation of IDPs in the planning and management of durable solutions.

The following examples showcase different responses by Protection Clusters during relocation and return processes.

[3]Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger, Iraq, Somalia, Syria, Myanmar, Libya, Occupied West Bank, Ethiopia, Yemen, Mozambique, and Nigeria.

UKRAINE — ENGAGEMENT ON SITE 'LEGALISATION' & CLOSURE

Advocating for consultation and information sharing with affected communities

Ongoing advocacy with HCT, local and central authorities

As of January 2024, it is estimated that approximately 115,000 IDPs in Ukraine reside in over 2,600 collective sites (CSs), with higher proportions in the Western and Central parts of the country that are farther from the frontlines and host significant numbers of internally displaced persons (IDPs). CSs accommodate highly vulnerable IDPs, with 93% hosting elderly persons, 62% hosting persons with disabilities and 34% hosting female-headed households.

On 1 September 2023, the Cabinet of Ministers adopted the Resolution 930, which among other things includes provisions on site definition, procedures for site 'legalization' and closure, minimum humanitarian standards for living conditions, security of tenure, responsibilities of authorities and site managers and rights and obligations of IDPs residents. According to the Resolution 930 national authorities keep record of official sites, which are subject to regular monitoring to identify gaps and bring all sites into conformity with the outlined standards. Further amendments to the Resolution 930 are expected in April-May 2024.

More than 60% of CSs require rehabilitation (59% with Shelter needs; 67% with WASH needs), repairs or construction work to improve sub-standard conditions, as well as to accommodate vulnerable people requiring specific infrastructure or space configurations, primarily accessible infrastructure for people with disabilities, older people or others with limited mobility, as well as infrastructure to improve the privacy and security of women and children to reduce the risk of GBV.

Within this context, CSs closure and consolidation in Ukraine is driven by two factors. First, most CSs are located in educational, health facilities, and other non-housing stock. While intended as a temporary solution during waves of mass displacement, many CSs are now hosting the same IDPs long-term, impacting on host communities' access to humanitarian and government services and social cohesion between IDPs and host communities. Second, the implementation of Resolution 930 is expected to lead to the closure of non-compliant sites in 2024. Humanitarian actors are collaborating to bring non-compliant sites up to standard, recognizing that not all sites will undergo refurbishment and that many sites that are not meeting minimum standards will be closed in 2024 in line with the legislation. Implementation of the Resolution 930 is particularly challenging in the regions close to the front line due to ongoing unpredictable hostilities.

While the CCCM Cluster, which oversees coordination of humanitarian activities in CSs, does not actively promote site closure, partners are encouraged to actively engage with authorities to ensure that government-led plans adhere to basic protection and do no harm principles, and include consultation, information-sharing and adequate support for the residents of sites to find alternative and ideally more sustainable accommodation.

Recognizing that a significant number of IDPs in CSs will not be able to return to their places of origin due to ongoing conflict or damaged and/or destroyed property, protection actors are collaborating closely with CCCM to offer case management services for IDPs in CSs, to provide them with the support and services they need to move out of CSs into more appropriate housing, with a focus on IDPs immediately affected by site closures. Advocacy is also ongoing with the Protection, CCCM, Shelter/NFI and Education clusters in conjunction with the Humanitarian Country Team and local and central authorities regarding planning for dignified, affordable, alternative housing options and other support for durable solutions.

NIGERIA — CAMP CLOSURES STRATEGY

Support for principled returns and relocation in the context of government-led camp closures

Developed guiding strategy and supporting annexes

An estimated 2.2 million persons are displaced across the States of Borno, Adamawa, and Yobe in Northeast Nigeria. In early 2023, the agenda of the Borno State Government (BSG) to end displacement led to the closing of camps in Maiduguri, as well as the announcement of plans to continue closing 71 camps in the Local Government Areas (LGAs) and the 154 informal camps within Maiduguri and Jere where majority of the IDPs fled to. Consequently, IDPs have been relocated to LGA headquarters and towns. Some of which are in areas that are hard or extremely hard for humanitarian partners to reach due to insecurity. In many of these return/relocation areas the population also face limited freedom of movement and access to basic services, most importantly food and safe farming. On 20 January 2024, the BSG plan to close camps at the LGA level began with the relocation of 408 households in Ngala ISS Camp. The camp closure was done without the involvement of the humanitarian actors, and with limited community participation and advance notice on date and time of the relocation, leading to some families being left behind in the camp. With this relocation having taken effect within the first month of 2024, further camp closures are anticipated in 2024 and beyond.

Given the challenges of operating in this context, the Protection Sector in NE Nigeria developed a Strategy to guide protection partners working with populations affected by the closure of camps and reflected on how to provide protection responses to those who have relocated and those who opt to locally integrate. The Strategy outlines key protection considerations and activities before, during and after relocation / return, as well as outlining the corresponding roles and responsibilities of Protection leadership, protection partners, government actors and the communities themselves at the various stages of the process. Strategy annexes also include key awareness messages for sensitization among affected communities, a camp phaseout and closure checklist, and a return and relocation observation form.

SUDAN — ADVOCACY ON PREVENTION OF INDUCED RETURN

Ensuring voluntary and informed decisions on relocation

Developed guidance and position paper on gathering sites

In response to the internal displacement crisis in Sudan, the Protection Cluster, Shelter/NFI and Site Management have spearheaded the development of guidance on gathering sites and alternative solutions to gathering sites, with a focus to curb the proliferation of said sites. This approach emphasizes the critical need for education resumption, balanced with the provision of safe and dignified shelter. After the issuance of a guidance note, the Protection Cluster also developed a common position on relocation to be presented to the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group for endorsement. The common position outlined camps as the option of last resort and advocated for relocations to be conducted with the full consent and participation of IDPs, ensuring their rights and safety are prioritized. This emphasises that consultation with affected communities is paramount, using a conflict-sensitive approach to address challenges and ensure voluntary, informed decisions regarding relocation. The Strategy also highlights the importance of safety and sustainability in relocation efforts, ensuring sites are free from risks and populations have access to essential services.

Key recommendations include prioritizing solutions that integrate IDPs within host communities, exploring alternative educational arrangements to avoid displacing IDPs from schools, and considering site consolidation to improve access to assistance and services. Coordination with local authorities and a unified humanitarian stance are crucial for implementing these solutions effectively, ensuring both educational rights and the need for appropriate shelter are addressed.

This collaborative effort between Protection Clusters, development, and peace actors represents a significant step towards sustainable solutions for IDPs in Sudan.

COLOMBIA — MONITORING & ADVOCACY FOR SAFE RETURNS IN BUENAVENTURA

Secure, willing and dignified returns

Accompanied processes and advocacy for fundamental human rights

In areas such as Bajo Calima in Colombia's Valle del Cauca department, processes of return of the displaced population are moving forwards. It is in the Colombian government's interest to have the support and technical assistance of protection actors, which is why the subnational team in Buenaventura is accompanying government efforts to promote return processes that preserve the security, willingness, and dignity of the population. This situation contrasts with experiences of the recent past, where government 'emergency return mechanisms' that gave assistance in the area of origin violated fundamental human rights.

Despite this positive engagement, there continue to be significant forced displacement emergencies in Colombia. The Protection Cluster and in particular the sub-national team in Buenaventura continues to monitor and advocate for fair and principled returns of displaced populations in the region.

## ETHIOPIA — IDP RETURNS & RELOCATION OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE & ASSISTANCE PACKAGE

Guide the humanitarian community's interventions in support of IDPs' return to their areas of origin

Documents as basis for humanitarian actors' advocacy at all levels, with national/local authorities and other stakeholders

Ethiopia is home to over 3.45 million internally displaced people (IDPs), among which 2.2 million displaced by conflict, and more than 2.5 million returning IDPs (source: IOM-DTM, Aug-Sep 2023). The search for durable solutions for IDPs, including returns/relocations, is high on the agenda of the Ethiopian government. The humanitarian community has been engaging with all concerned authorities on the importance of ensuring that all IDP movements should be voluntary, safe, and dignified, in accordance with international principles and standards.

In August 2023, the Protection Cluster under the umbrella of the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group contributed to develop an "IDP Returns and Relocation Operational Guidance and Assistance Package", to guide the humanitarian community's interventions in support of IDPs' return to their areas of origin within an ICCG integrated multi-sectoral response. This document contains key principles and pre-requisite conditions
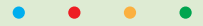
for return/relocation movements, minimum requirements in each phase of the process that need to be met for humanitarian actors to support, and response packages per cluster. It has been complemented by a recently endorsed Ethiopia humanitarian country team (EHCT) position paper on IDP returns and relocations.

These documents, along with field assessment on the situation of returnees and conditions in areas of return, have been the basis for humanitarian actors' advocacy at all levels, with national/local authorities and other stakeholders, in relation to possible or actual returns/relocations of IDPs, in particular in Tigray, Amhara-Oromia, Amhara, Somali and Afar. Recent IDP movements, for example from Amhara to Oromia, have highlighted challenges in terms of full compliance with the applicable principles and standards, including adequate involvement of the humanitarian community throughout the various stages of the process. Dialogue is ongoing with concerned stakeholders, in particular the Ethiopian Disaster Risk Management Commission, to learn from these experiences and possibly develop a model for cooperation.

Moreover, the process for the domestication of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention), ratified by Ethiopia in 2020, is ongoing. The adoption of the necessary domestic instruments will hopefully lead to improved protection and fulfillment of the rights of IDPs.

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Edna, 18, and her brother Elson, 23, fled their village in Chiure district, Cabo Delgado Province, Mozambique, when it was attacked by armed groups in February 2024. The siblings walked with 30 family members to Namapa in neighbouring Nampula province, fleeing for their lives.

ACCESS THAT PROTECTS

The GPC recognizes the foundational role that access plays in enabling protection, and how protection actors can support strengthened access, and has therefore focused on advancing policy and practice change that further enables these linkages between access and protection. As laid out in our report Access that Protects: An Agenda for Change, published in collaboration with OCHA, we have been pursuing a range of actions to drive improved policy and practice that strengthens the intersection between access and protection. As part of this the GPC has been advancing collaboration with OCHA, Protection Clusters, Access Working Groups, the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN) and other stakeholders over the past year. As part of this, the GPC-UNHCR-CCHN has been delivering protection negotiations workshops with Protection Cluster members in different crisis contexts where enhanced negotiations for protection have been identified as a priority. In March 2024, a 5-day workshop was delivered with Myanmar Protection Cluster members with a focus on different approaches to protection in armed conflict and then a deep-dive focus on advancing effective protection negotiations. The GPC and partners will continue to engage on this issue, seeking to strengthen data and reporting, community-level and frontline capacities, and advocacy efforts in support of access that protects. to advance the recommendations put forward in the Agenda for Change and, ultimately, to move the needle on an access that provides the critical sustained and quality space for protection.

SITUATIONAL UPDATE   ACCESS OVERVIEW FOR PROTECTION

ABILITY OF PROTECTION ACTORS TO ACCESS AFFECTED POPULATIONS

During the reporting period, Protection Clusters reported that the ability of protection actors to access affected populations has remained similar in **40%** of operations. The situation deteriorated in **43%** of operations: **Cameroon, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, oPt, South Sudan**, and **Sudan**. The situation improved only in **Afghanistan, NE Syria,** and **Whole of Syria**.

BARRIERS

Regions	Insecurity or hostilities	Attacks or threats	Environmental and logistics	Restriction and obstruction	Unavailability of services
Asia & Pacific	0%	50%	0%	0%	0%
West & Central Africa	33%	33%	17%	0%	17%
East & Southern Africa	80%	0%	0%	0%	20%
MENA	0%	25%	0%	0%	25%
Americas	20%	0%	20%	0%	40%

SITUATIONAL UPDATE

Approx. 25% or less	Between 25% and 50%	Between 50% and 75%	Approx. 75% or more	Do not know
Guatemala, Mozambique, Sudan, Venezuela	Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Ethiopia, Honduras, Mali, Myanmar, NW Syria, Somalia, Syria WoS	-	DR Congo, El Salvador, NE Syria, South Sudan	oPt, Nigeria

Ongoing conflict hampers access to vulnerable groups in **NW Syria,** with bureaucratic barriers delaying aid delivery, damage to infrastructure obstructing movement and security risks threatening aid workers' safety. In **Somalia**, an estimated 580,000 people live in areas which are hard to access by the humanitarian community, the majority being women and children. Out of 74 districts, 23 are either hard or extremely hard to reach. Increased attacks on humanitarian convoys in **South Sudan** hinders presence of protection actors in certain locations, whilst floodings also make it harder for humanitarians to access people in need. Trends in **Cameroon** show the situation has deteriorated due to increased confrontations between the parties to the conflict in the NW, SW regions. A suspension of humanitarian activities in Minawao is attributed to insecurity and the abduction of humanitarian staff in January. In **DR Congo**'s North Kivu, the extension of the M23 presence and the occupied territories directly affect the access for humanitarian actors and more specfically the delivery of protection services.
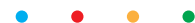
ABILITY OF AFFECTED POPULATIONS TO ACCESS PROTECTION SERVICES

During the reporting period, Protection Clusters reported that the access situation for affected populations to reach protection services has remained similar in **40%** of operations. The situation deteriorated in **52%** of operations: **Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nigeria, oPt, South Sudan,** and **Sudan**. The situation improved only in **Whole of Syria**.

BARRIERS

Regions	Bureaucratic and administrative constraintsel authorization, others)	Environmental and logistical constraints	Interference from authorities or non-state actors	On-going insecurity or hostilities	Other, please specify
Americas	0%	67%	50%	13%	0%
Asia & Pacific	0%	0%	50%	7%	0%
East & Southern Africa	100%	0%	0%	27%	0%
MENA	0%	0%	0%	20%	100%
West & Central Africa	0%	33%	0%	33%	0%

SITUATIONAL UPDATE

Approx. 25% or less	Between 25% and 50%	Between 50% and 75%	Approx. 75% or more	Do not know
Guatemala, Mali, Mozambique, Sudan, Venezuela	Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Ethiopia, Honduras, Myanmar, Somalia, NW Syria, South Sudan	-	DR Congo, El Salvador, NE Syria, Syria WoS	oPt, Nigeria

In **Burkina Faso,** there is a deterioration of the access by populations to protection services due to the suspension of using cash as modality of response. A significant increase in abduction of IDPs in NE **Nigeria** has impacted the safety, well-being, and mobility of the affected communities, thereby hindering their access to essential services and resources such as food, firewood, and healthcare. Arbitrary denial of humanitarian access by conflicting parties, including deliberate impediments to relief supplies and assistance, further exacerbates the situation in **Sudan**. For people on the move in **Guatemala**, increased border monitoring by authorities and smugglers prevents people accessing humanitarian services on the road.

AGENDA FOR CHANGE — PROGRESS AND HIGHLIGHTS ON PROTECTION CLUSTER COMMITMENTS

During the reporting period, Protection Clusters advanced a range of efforts in relation to access, including bringing protection considerations into access discussions and fora **(91%),** and bringing attention to the impact of access constraints on protection through advocacy **(74%)**. Protection Clusters also encouraged their members to report access incidents through OCHA reporting system or other mechanisms in place at country level **(74%),** and supported negotiation efforts undertaken by its members, OCHA and/or HC/HCT **(26%).**

Discussions and Fora	91%
Advocacy	74%
Negotiations	26%
Reporting Mechanisms	74%
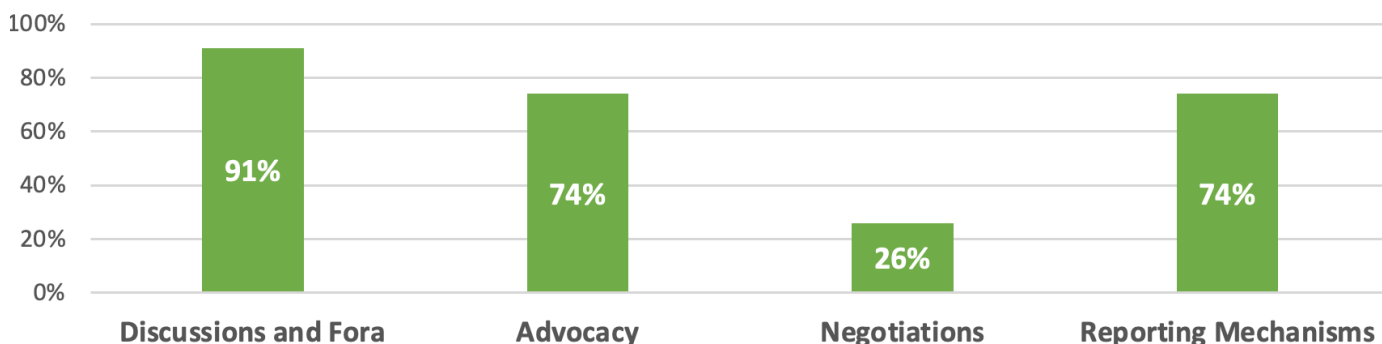
FIELD COORDINATION AND OPERATIONS

In Q1 of 2024, the GPC rolled out its updated Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) based on key deliverables and minimum requirements of the Field Coordination Package. 712 surveys were submitted by mid-March 2024, from 28 different operations. The results of the CCPM will inform GPC field support priorities for 2024-2025, strategic planning at global level, as well as discussions during the GPC Global Protection Conference in Nairobi (June 2024).

In Q1 of 2024, 70 field support requests were attended by the GPC Operations Cell. Majority of support requests were received from oPt, Myanmar, Ethiopia, and Sudan operations. In-person missions were conducted in support of the operations in NE Nigeria, oPt, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Bangkok (Myanmar).

GPC National Protection Clusters 2024