In today’s most complex emergencies, there are major tensions to be resolved between advocacy on protection issues and operational access.

In 2021, the Humanitarian Policy Group (HPG) of ODI, in collaboration with the Global Protection Cluster’s Human Rights Engagement Task Team, researched and published a report entitled ‘Opportunities and challenges: Collaborative advocacy by humanitarian and human rights actors’.

Stakeholders interviewed for this research highlighted that protection advocacy by humanitarian actors has become a ‘race to the bottom’ in recent years with private diplomacy deprioritised for the sake of securing and maintaining operational access. This dilemma has been prevalent for decades, but has become more so in conflicts in Myanmar, Ethiopia and Syria in the last decade.

The event brings together leading practitioners working across humanitarian and human rights sectors who will reflect on the real and perceived challenges between advocacy and human rights approaches and access for the delivery of services, what factors are hindering greater advocacy and access outcomes, and how these tensions can be addressed.