



Global Protection Cluster

**GLOBAL
PROTECTION
CLUSTER
ANNUAL
REPORT 2023**



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THE GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER



The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) is a network of local and national responders and actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations and United Nations (UN) agencies, engaged in protection work in humanitarian crises, including conflict and disasters. The GPC is mandated by the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC), coordinated by a Global Coordinator, led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), governed by a Strategic Advisory Group (SAG), and serviced by a multi-partner Operations Cell.

The GPC unites members, partners and communities working on the full range of protection activities, including through four specialized Areas of Responsibility: Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence, Housing, Land and Property and Mine Action, as well as through Task Teams and Work Groups: Information and Analysis, Cash for Protection, Advocacy, Community-Led Protection, Anti-trafficking and Law and Policy.

The **Annual Report** presents the work carried out by the GPC in 2023 to protect and improve the lives of tens of millions of people in need of protection. It highlights the year's achievements, as well as challenges faced by the cluster and its partners, in responding to life-threatening crises across our 31 active Protection Cluster operations.

For any inquiries, please contact: gpc@unhcr.org.

For more information on who we are, our work and operations, as well as key tools and guidance please visit our website: <https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org>.



FOREWORD BY THE GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER COORDINATOR



It is in times of crisis that our mettle gets tested and for the protection community, 2023 presented a myriad of such tests. From the havoc of war in Ukraine to a deteriorating security in the Sahel, devastating earthquakes in Syria and Türkiye, heart-wrenching eruption of conflict in Sudan and the unfolding catastrophe in Gaza – all serious and stark challenges to the humanitarian imperative that we do all that is possible to protect those ravaged by situations of conflict, violence, disasters or other emergencies.

Throughout my tenure coordinating the Global Protection Cluster, I have taken deep pride in the opportunity to work with and support those helping turn the tide for those exposed to threats of harm, alleviating suffering while reducing risks, and working in and with communities themselves so that we can together prevent and respond to protection needs. With these dedicated colleagues and friends in mind, I hope you allow me to share a few parting reflections.

The time is now for protection efforts to come together and lead. Despite modest gains in protection funding last year, escalating risks and needs still outpace funding, with 86% of our operations less than 50% funded. In such a climate, we have a responsibility as protection actors to sort through the intricate web of risks, threats and vulnerabilities, fully assess political and operational realities, and together land on a coherent strategy for each context that tells us what opportunities we can, should and must act upon, individually and collectively. Our goals must be realistic and achievable, which means they may need to be more local and concrete than national and aspirational, with the chance to pivot often and change course. Only in this way, can protection genuinely lead a response.

Protection responses must speak to the core, beating heart of humanitarian crises. The vast majority of Protection Clusters operate in active conflict, where violations of international humanitarian law and other fundamental rights remain the main driver of protection risks. These environments are typically characterized by shifting frontlines, multiple non-state armed groups and access constraints, among others. Yet in humanitarian response plans today, too little is geared toward preventing or interrupting violence from the outset, or remediating glaring gaps in the protection of civilians, taking into account such fragile contexts. At our last Forum, we heard resounding calls to better be there ‘In the Hour of Need’ for crisis-affected populations – now it is our turn to make the needed shifts in policy and practice.

Our alliance is strong in diversity, localized in identity and able to affect change. As a cluster, we comprise nearly 1,500 partners reporting worldwide, with an impressive array of backgrounds and expertise: human rights, social services, technical, legal, advocacy and much more. Our diversity is our strength, when leveraged together. Local actors are recognized as the driving force of protection, inherent in the work we do, in and with communities and on the frontlines. Time and again, the need to increase resources for them through flexible funding has been identified as crucial to advancing the GPC’s priorities, from improving proactive protection through community-led protection or civilian self-protection, to advancing Access that Protects through community efforts which help make access meaningful, sustainable and quality. We must continue to invest in these and not stop short.



Embrace change on the horizon while keeping our focus on the ground. Our current GPC Strategic Framework anticipates and embraces change, which change has been at our doorstep with multiple IASC reviews and the Secretary General's Call to Action on Human Rights serving as a direct call to the GPC and all humanitarian actors to change the way we do business on protection, lest we fail populations at risk. While there is much more to discuss, I am proud that the GPC and AoR global coordinators were able to agree on several areas to optimize our joined-up approach to protection, which if we follow through on, can be transformative. At the same time, we put our focus not on process and structures, but on results on the ground and in the field, where we have dedicated personnel working in some of the most complex environments, addressing some of the most difficult issues, of all humanitarians around the world. In their good hands, I am confident we will affect positive change on the horizon.

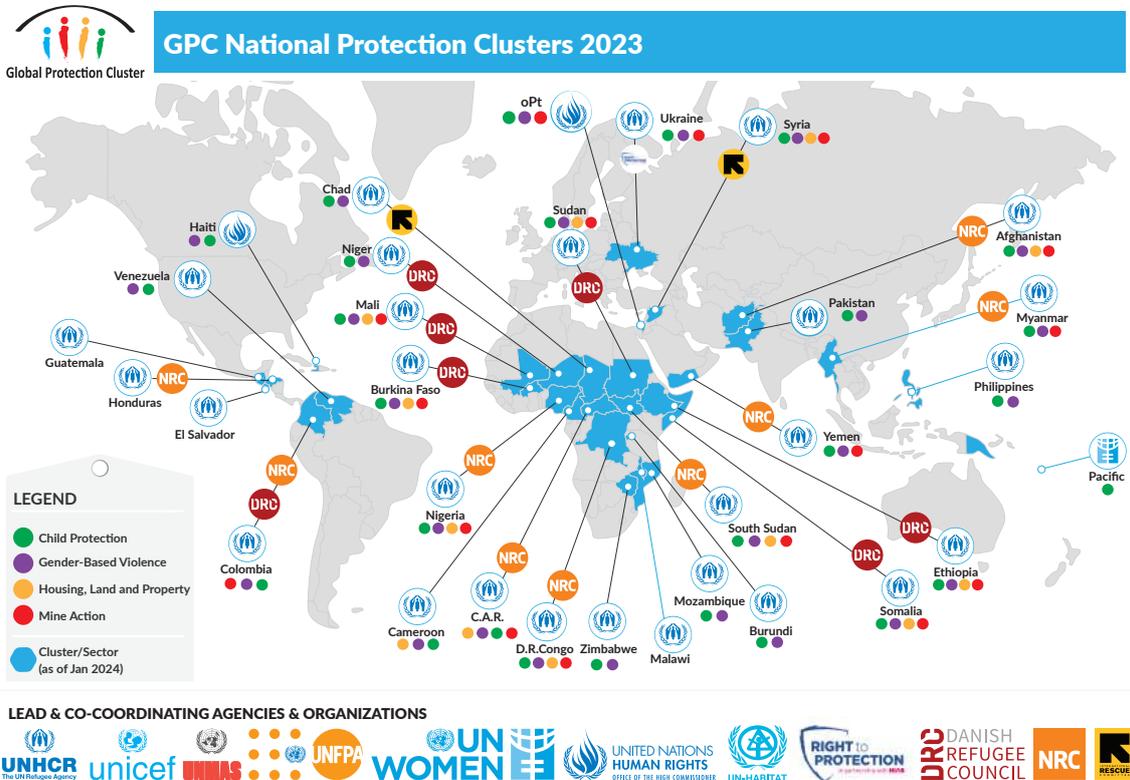
Samuel Cheung
Global Protection Cluster Coordinator



THE STATE OF PROTECTION IN 2023



FIELD PROTECTION CLUSTERS



2023 IN REVIEW

Conflicts, combined with climate shocks, political crises and rising food and energy prices, made 2023 a year of vast humanitarian needs. Violence continued to grow with no signs of deceleration across several countries where Protection Clusters are active. Violations of international law, attacks on hospitals, schools and critical infrastructure and rampant human rights violations continued unabated, including against women and children. In addition, conflict and insecurity were the most significant drivers of high levels of acute food insecurity.

In 2023, the number of people in need of protection across 31 cluster operations increased by 42% in just two years, driven by new cycles of violence and conflict, such as in Gaza, Sudan, DR Congo, Myanmar, Ukraine, and Haiti combined with protracted crises in places such as Afghanistan, Syria and Yemen.

Challenges remained overwhelming in **Afghanistan**, with protection partners seeing an increased reliance

on negative coping mechanisms, following the ban on women humanitarian workers. Hunger continued to be driven by the economic crisis, compounded by decades of conflict, climate shocks, and severe restrictions on the rights of women and girls to work and pursue higher education. A series of earthquakes in Herat in October had profound impacts on already vulnerable communities.

At the beginning of 2023, fighting intensified in **DR Congo** and caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of men, women, and children. Mounting concerns over protection of civilian issues is threatened livelihoods and pushed the population into food insecurity as violence soared in **Mali**, **Burkina Faso**, and **Haiti**.

The devastating earthquakes that hit Türkiye and Syria in February killed more than 6,000, injuring more than 11,300, and displacing hundreds of thousands of families in **Syria**. In early October, new attacks in den-



sely populated areas in **North-West Syria**, including IDP camps, also resulted in displacement.

In March the protection of civilians in **Somalia** was increasingly at stake with an overall deteriorating security environment, the outbreak of the armed conflict in Lascaanood, and the beginning of a military offensive against Al Shabaab in Galmudug and Hirshabelle.

Camp closures were expanded to informal sites in May in **Nigeria**. The closure of the first informal camp, with ongoing profound impacts on the 1.6 million IDPs in Borno state, undermined humanitarian response capacities.

The rainy/cyclone season in **Mozambique** saw the devastating impact of tropical storm Freddy affecting over 1.1 million people. In **Myanmar**, Cyclone Mocha further worsened humanitarian needs in areas already experiencing displacement, violence, and severe protection risks, including in Rakhine state in May. Across the country 2.6 million people were internally displaced and attacks against civilians continued to rise.

In June, 46 female inmates were killed during a fight between gangs in a prison near the capital in **Honduras**. Violence levels showed no signs of abating, as well as crimes of extortion and GBV across the country.

The National Commission for the Primary Election in **Venezuela** opened the candidate registration period from 24 May to 23 June. This period of elections generated tensions in the country at a time where the official Venezuelan exchange rate was devalued by approx. 110%, with inflation a rising threat for the most vulnerable groups.

Despite the signing of a bilateral ceasefire with the National Liberation Army/Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) in July, **Colombia** continued to see armed confrontations persist, causing displacement, confinement, and forced recruitment.

The situation in **Niger** was mainly marked by an upsurge in inter-community conflicts and new trends in attacks on health infrastructures in the regions of Tillabery and Diffa. The July coup d'état threatened an already precarious protection situation.

In **Ethiopia**, flooding caused widespread destruction and displacement in Somali, Oromia, SNNP, SWEP and Afar regions, exacerbating humanitarian needs and resilience capacities already impacted by drought

and conflict. Despite the peace agreement in Northern Ethiopia, inter-communal conflict, as well as conflict between government forces and unidentified armed groups, drought, and flooding continued to exacerbate the protection risks faced by various communities throughout the country.

Severe economic decline, food insecurity and collapse of essential services continued to take an enormous toll on the population in **Yemen**, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities. The security situation deteriorated further in the Northwest and Southwest regions of **Cameroon**, with an imposition of curfews curtailing freedom of movement of the population.

Serious protection risks already impacted people across the **occupied Palestinian territory**. However, the situation in **Gaza** quickly deteriorated into what the Secretary General described as an „epic humanitarian catastrophe” in the final months of 2023 and the High Commissioner for Human Rights warned of „a heightened risk of atrocity crimes”. The widespread shelling, air strikes and the ground military operations carried out by Israel in response to deadly attacks by Hamas and other armed groups, have created a situation where nowhere is considered safe for civilians in Gaza, while people struggle to access clean drinking water and adequate food to survive.

The number of people internally displaced in **Sudan** rose to 3.2 million by the end of 2023. The conflict has left 24.8 million – more than half the population – in need of assistance. In December, the swift takeover of the major city Wad Madani, where tens of thousands of people had fled from the capital, further exacerbated a precarious situation for many vulnerable populations. In **South Sudan**, the conflict in Sudan continued to have a spill-over effect, with thousands of people arriving daily– the majority of which were people returning to South Sudan, adding a strain on limited resources and services and increasing the need for effective coordination.

Ongoing violence in Darfur caused the number of new arrivals to increase, increasing vulnerabilities in eastern **Chad**. Instability along **CAR's** borders with Chad, Sudan, and South Sudan, also negatively impacted the humanitarian and protection situation, with increased community tensions, GBV and violence against children.

Towards the end of 2023, the humanitarian situation in **Ukraine** deteriorated with the onset of the winter bringing additional challenges and risks to people facing harsh conditions.

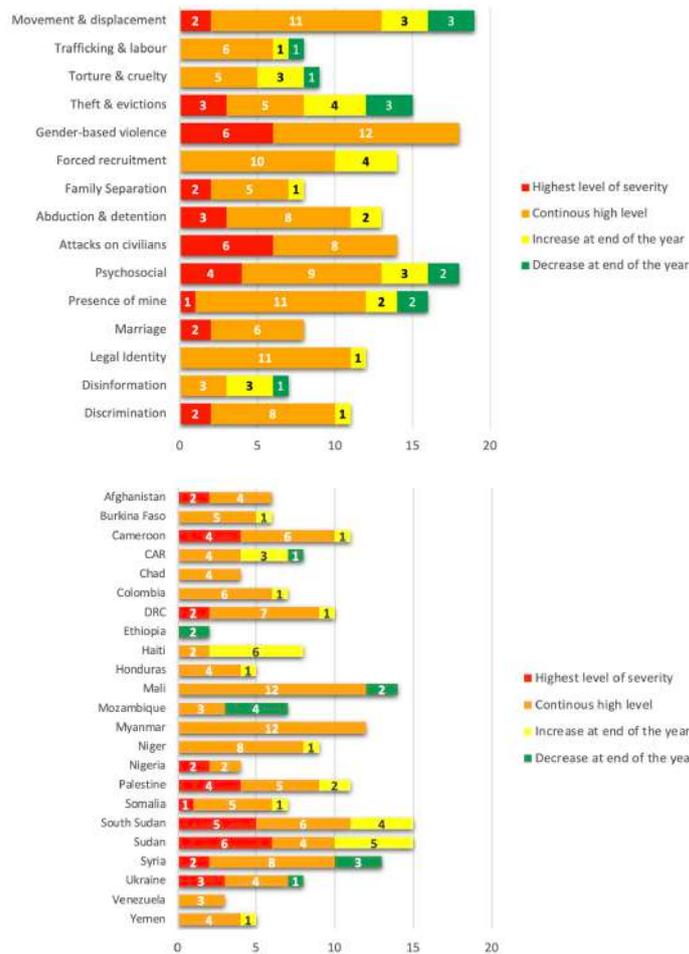


KEY PROTECTION RISKS AND TRENDS

In 2023 the Protection Clusters monitored and tracked [15 protection risks](#), in March, June and October, through the Global Protection Risk Tracker. The reporting is provided as a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 refers to very low severity and 5 to very high severity.¹ Based on the severity level reported for a country in March, June and October, the situation of each of the protection risks has been categorized as follows:

- i) **Highest levels of severity of protection risks** reported by Protection Clusters: severity level 5 for the majority or all reporting periods (worst situations).
- ii) **Continuous high to very high levels of severity of protection risks**: severity level 4 and above for all reporting periods (situations consistently reported as very concerning during the whole of 2023).
- iii) **Positive and negative trends** recorded in October 2023 compared to the rest of the year:
 - Increase of severity of protection risks at the end of 2023: severity level increased to 4 and above in October.
 - Decrease of severity of protection risks at the end of 2023: severity level decreased to below 4 in October.

The figures below provide an overview of the number of countries per protection risk, and the number of protection risks per country, according to the reported situation.²



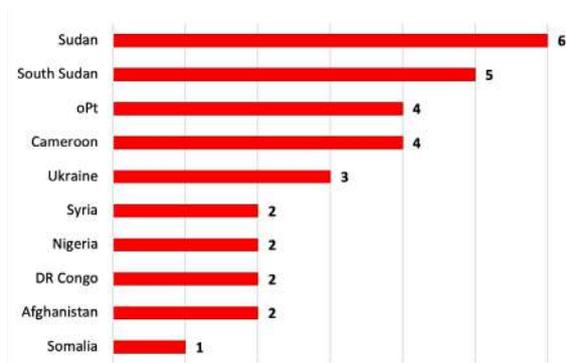
¹The current reporting in risk severity is based on a quarterly survey involving Protection Clusters (co-) Coordinators. The assigned values are revised together with the GPC and endorsed by PC (co-) Coordinators. PC (co-) Coordinators are instructed and supported to consult AoRs and partners in operations to provide the final values for each protection risk. The methodology, while nurtured by PC ongoing assessments and analysis processes, presents several limitations. Hence, the current objective of the protection risks tracker is to illustrate the overall trends of protection risks and the effects across crises, and not to provide a measurement of the actual level of harm, population affected or resulting needs.

²El Salvador, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Pacific, Philippines, Pakistan have not been included in the analysis.



i) Highest Levels of Severity of Protection Risks

In 2023 Protection Clusters reported on protection risks (severity level 5 during all 2023) that posed extreme harm or damage, often with involvement or failure of duty bearers to protect individuals. These risks pose an imminent and grave threat to the lives, safety, and well-being of individuals or groups, demanding immediate and comprehensive action to mitigate their impact. The protection risks related to **gender-based violence** (Syria, Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, DR Congo and Afghanistan) and **attacks on civilians** (Ukraine, Sudan, South Sudan, oPt, DR Congo and Cameroon) were reported at the highest levels in the highest number of countries, followed by **psychosocial** related protection risks reported in Ukraine, South Sudan, oPt and Cameroon.



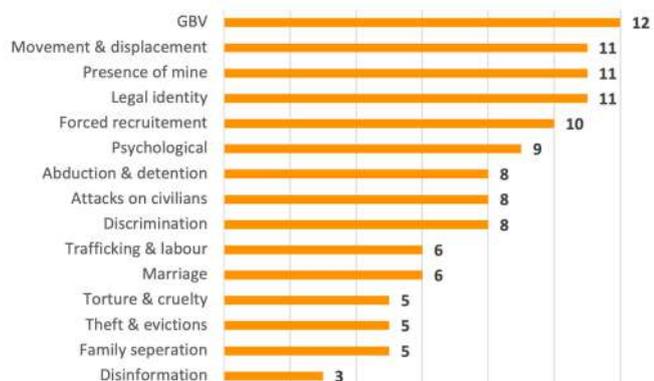
Specific crises were affected by multiple protection risks at the highest level across 2023, showcasing a very worrying situation of multiple compounded harm to affected populations, including high levels of violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation. **Sudan** registered 6 protection risks at the highest levels, followed by **South Sudan**, **oPt** and **Cameroon**.

The table below provides the specific protection risks reported at the highest level in the top four affected countries:³

SUDAN	SOUTH SUDAN	oPt ⁴	CAMEROON
Abduction & Detention	Abduction & Detention	Attacks on Civilians	Attacks on Civilians
Attacks on Civilians	Attacks on Civilians	Psychosocial	Psychosocial
Family Separation	Family Separation	Discrimination	Theft & Eviction
GBV	GBV	Movement & Displacement	Discrimination
Theft & Eviction	Psychosocial		
Movement & Displacement			

ii) Continuous High to Very High Levels of Severity of Protection Risks

In 2023 Protection Clusters reported on protection risks (severity level 4 and above during all 2023) that posed substantial harm or damage, with significant involvement or failure of duty bearers to protect individuals. These risks present significant ongoing threats to individuals or groups and require urgent attention and intervention. The protection risks related to **gender-based violence**, **presence of mines**, **legal identity** and **movement & displacement**, were the most commonly reported across crises.



³In addition, Myanmar, Mali, Syria and Niger reported severity level 4 and above during 2023.

⁴This data was collected in early October, before the start of the current severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza.



The table below provides an overview of the crises affected by the protection risks most reported at level 4 and above during all of 2023:

GBV	MOVEMENT & DISPLACEMENT	PRESENCE OF MINES	LEGAL IDENTITY
Cameroon, Chad, CAR, Colombia, Haiti, Honduras, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Ukraine, Venezuela	Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Colombia, DR Congo, Honduras, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Syria	Cameroon, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, oPt, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Yemen	Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, CAR, Colombia, Mali, Myanmar, oPt, Somalia, South Sudan, Syria, Yemen

Positive and Negative Trends

In 2023 Protection Clusters have reported increases or decreases⁵ of the high levels of severity of specific protection risks, registering trends showing positive improvements or worsening of situations.

Compared to the start of 2023, protection risks related to **theft & evictions & forced recruitment** increased in South Sudan, Haiti, CAR, Burkina Faso; **torture & cruelty** increased in Haiti, CAR and Cameroon; **psychosocial** risks increased in Sudan, Haiti and CAR; risks of **disinformation** rose in Sudan, South Sudan, oPt; and **movement & displacement** related risks increased in Yemen, South Sudan and Haiti.

While negative trends were reported more consistently, some improvements were registered with protection risks related to **theft & evictions** reduced in Syria, Mozambique and Mali; **movement & displacement** reduced in Ukraine, Mozambique and CAR; **psychosocial** risks in Syria, Ethiopia; and **presence of mines** reduced in Mozambique and Ethiopia.

Compared to the start of 2023, **Haiti, Sudan, South Sudan** and **CAR** registered the greatest number of increasingly severe protection risks in October 2023. Notwithstanding the methodological limitations of the Global Protection Risk Tracker, the situation in **Haiti** is noteworthy in terms of the growing severity of protection risks at levels similar to **Sudan** and **South Sudan**.⁶

While improvement should be regarded with caution, since the protection risk tracker is limited to a general overview at country level, **Mozambique** reported a decrease in severity level of protection risks related to movement & displacement, theft & eviction, presence of mines and torture & cruelty. **Syria, Mali** and **Ethiopia** reported decrease of the severity of some protection risks.

⁵Protection Clusters reported a severity above level 4 in October, and registered an increase of at least 2 levels of severity (from 3 to 5 or from 2 to 4).

⁶This data was collected in early October, before the start of the current severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

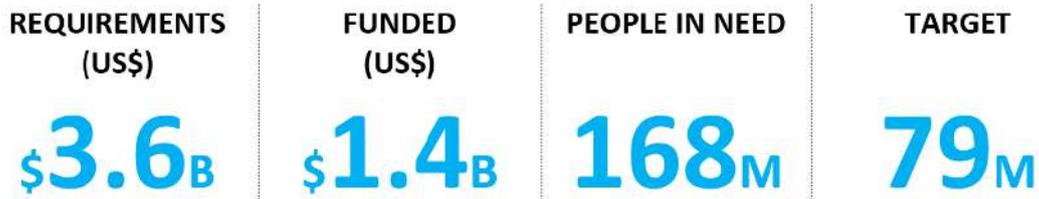


FUNDING

Protection needs continue to grow, with 168 million people in need of protection in 28 cluster operations, representing an additional 30 million people (22%) in comparison to 2022, largely driven by the three scale-up emergencies in DR Congo, Haiti and Sudan, the worsening situations in oPt, Ukraine, Honduras and Burkina Faso, as well as continued high levels of needs in protracted crises like Yemen, Syria and Afghanistan. 2023 saw protection actors at the forefront of crises affecting the lives, dignity and rights of populations.

However, most cluster operations (23 out of 28, or 82%) still record less than 50% of the required funding – hampering an adequate protection response. National and local actors are recognised as the driving force of protection. 20% of the funding reported by October 2023 was managed by national and local partners, compared to 17% in 2022. It is also clear that community-led approaches offer a pathway for advancing prevention and response to protection risks by giving control of decisions and resources to community groups as agents of their own protection.

KEY FIGURES



Source: [GPC Funding Report, October 2023](#).



HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023



OPTIMISING OUR JOINED-UP APPROACH TO PROTECTION

Since the Independent Review of the Implementation of the IASC Protection Policy, the GPC and the AoRs explored ways to optimize and strengthen joined-up approaches to protection as part of a collective response. Welcoming the call for efforts to improve coherence and efficiency and in anticipation of further discussions to come, the GPC and AoR coordinators agreed on the following:

Coordinate protection efforts more effectively and achieve greater protection outcomes through integration, optimisation and enhanced response at country level

We agree and have committed to reinforcing joint collaboration and workplans at the country-level, particularly through protection and AoR coordinators operating more closely as a team, exploring the potential of pooling of cross-cutting information management and technical support capacities, establishing joint priorities and eligibility criteria for pooled funds, and revisiting sub-national and area-based approaches that take into account the context, with possible shared roles based on capacity. We believe a critical responsibility lies with the Cluster Lead Agencies (CLAs), who should meet more regularly at the head of agency level and agree collectively on supporting cluster coordination functions and aligning operational responses with cluster strategies.

Support localisation & Accountability to Affected People (AAP)

Protection has been among the leading voices on localization, not only because of the Grand Bargain, but because community-led and community-based approaches are essential to advance protection. We commit to strengthen these efforts at the country and global levels, including through collaboration with OCHA to support local/national actors in funding submissions and advocacy with donors to provide more flexible funding for community actors, and including amplifying the voice of Women Led and Women's Rights Organizations as well as Organizations of Persons with Disabilities.

Achieve greater integration and optimisation at global level

At the global level, we agree – and efforts are underway – to achieve greater optimization, including through joint protection analysis (e.g. protection analysis updates published in past 2 years), joint missions of the global coordinators, joint annual conferences, refitting the Operations Cell to support the AoRs and a strengthened SAG, and implementation of joint work plans. An inter-agency protection support desk is established through a gradual process by consensus, building on the excellent work of existing AoR helpdesks. We also commit to share and build on learning material for greater synergies around joint trainings for cluster coordination teams.

Further enhancing the advocacy work of the Protection Cluster

We strongly advocate for increased resourcing of country-based protection coordination teams, including for advocacy, protection analysis and, importantly, stronger joint engagement with HCs/HCTs by coordinators and CLAs. We commit to collective approaches guided by protection risks and needs and not based on agency mandates, as the basis of our advocacy with donors and, in support of this, to strengthen collaborative ways of working on the Humanitarian Programme Cycle and country-based funding mechanisms.

GLOBAL PROTECTION CONFERENCE | AMMAN, JORDAN | 08 - 12 MAY 2023

The GPC and the AoRs collaborated on the Global Protection Conference which was attended by 200 participants, including national and subnational field cluster Coordinators, Co-coordinators, Information Management Officers and support staff, as well as regional level colleagues and few external stakeholders. The Conference was operationally oriented and provided opportunities for



the GPC, field coordination teams and stakeholders to engage and exchange on a range of thematic and technical protection priorities, developments, and standards. The field coordination teams discussed the evolution of operational realities and cluster operational capacities required to respond to minimum requirements and emerging needs at field level. The Conference also provided an opportunity to facilitate knowledge and peer-to-peer exchange.

It was structured around key priorities including (i) shaping the future of field protection coordination; (ii) the Centrality of Protection in humanitarian response and (iii) service mapping, referrals, and case management.



PROTECTION FUNDING EVENT | GENEVA, SWITZERLAND | 03 OCT 2023

The GPC and the AoRs conducted an annual funding data collection exercise and published the report: [Protection Funding: Where do we Stand in 2023?](#) 28 countries participated in this exercise, compared to 23 countries in 2022 and 12 countries in 2021, allowing for a more detailed analysis of the protection funding situation than ever before. The findings of the report were presented at the GPC Annual Donor Meeting on 3rd October, which was co-chaired by Norway and widely attended by diverse donors in Geneva, including EU, US, UK, Switzerland, Sweden, Serbia, Norway, Australia, Laos, and Canada. The event was an opportunity to convey to donors and external stakeholders an up-to-date picture of protection priorities and the status of protection funding, with a related spotlight on operational needs and requirements in real time.

GLOBAL PROTECTION FORUM | ONLINE | 24 OCT - 02 NOV 2023

This year's Global Protection Forum organized by the GPC and the AoRs, was joined by over 2,100 participants from 143 countries to explore the theme - *In the Hour of Need: Advancing Prevention and Proactive Protection*, focusing on the range of approaches and interventions being advanced by protection actors to prevent and respond to violence, conflict, and human rights abuses. The [six core Forum sessions](#), as well as an official Opening Ceremony and two side-events offered the chance to unpack emerging challenges and share promising practices that respond to the risks and needs experienced by diverse populations - in their hour of need - and ensure a clear focus on achieving protection outcomes. With 50% of those registered joining from sub-Saharan Africa and 10% from Latin America and the Caribbean, registrations were more diverse than ever before - both geographically and by type of organization.

GPC / AOR COORDINATOR JOINT MISSIONS TO SOMALIA AND UKRAINE

The first of its kind, the GPC Coordinator and Coordinators for the four AoRs carried out a joint mission to Somalia 26 February - 3 March 2023 and to Ukraine 25-29 September. The coordinators met with the people affected by the crisis, national and local organizations, authorities, (I)NGOs, UN entities, PC and AoR lead entities, OCHA, Coordinators of the national Protection Cluster and AoRs, Inter Cluster Coordination Group and Cluster leads, Humanitarian Country Team,



Humanitarian Coordinator, donors and academics. While majority of the meetings were in the capitals, the coordinators visited Baidoo (Somalia) and Dnipro, Kharkiv, Chernihiv and other sites around Kiev (Ukraine). General observations and recommendations were shared with both cluster operations.

ACCESS THAT PROTECTS CAMPAIGN

In 2023 humanitarian access constraints continued to pose a key challenge to effective, principled, humanitarian action in crisis contexts around the world, with profound reverberations on protection actors' access to affected communities, and the access of those communities to humanitarian assistance and protection. The GPC recognizes the strong link between access and protection and the need to further reinforce this critical connection. This includes the importance of placing protection aims at the center of access-related negotiations and strategies, as well as the foundational role that protection actors play in strengthening the kind of sustained, quality access needed to support protection outcomes. Reflecting on the access-related challenges the overwhelming majority of Protection Clusters are grappling with, the GPC developed and launched a campaign, *Access that Protects*, calling for strengthened quality of access that enables protection for people impacted by crisis. This included the publishing of the report [Access that Protects: An Agenda for Change](#) in collaboration with OCHA. The GPC has sought to advance key recommendations put forward in the report in 2023.

To strengthen the capacity of protection partners to negotiate access for protection, including with armed groups and duty bearers, the GPC developed a partnership with the Center of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation (CCHN) - a joint initiative of UNHCR, ICRC, MSF Switzerland and WFP - and UNHCR to design and deliver negotiation trainings for Protection Cluster members and partners. In 2023, the GPC, CCHN and UNHCR organized several tailored protection negotiation workshops in the Horn of Africa (particularly Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, and South Sudan) as well as Colombia and Mali. Other efforts with the campaign have included setting up needed systems to improve the quality of data Protection Clusters and the GPC are collecting on the protection impacts of access constraints and ensuring clear, evidence-based advocacy efforts, drawing on key data points and leveraging a range of global events, briefings and advocacy products to advance key messages and engagement in support of Access that Protects.



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



OPERATIONS CELL, TASK TEAMS AND WORKING GROUPS



Strategic Objective 1: We will put basics of coordination and collaboration in place in all our operations.

Consistently put in place principled and effective coordination, collaboration, and analysis to meet cluster responsibilities and to contribute to timely and informed decisions by Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams.

- For an overall view of the GPC field support, see the [GPC Dashboard](#).
- 31 operations supported with 396 **field support requests**.
- 9 **in-person support missions** in 8 countries.
- 2 **joint Ops Cell / AoR missions** to Ukraine and Somalia.
- 11 operations supported on **HPC process**.
- 12 operations supported with **dedicated mentoring, training and capacity building on protection analysis**.
- 16 operations directly supported in the design and drafting of **Protection Analysis Updates**.
- 5 courses delivered as part of the GPC's **Specialisation Program on Protection Coordination**, organized in partnership with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law with 3 courses in English, 1 in French, and 1 in Spanish for a total of 118 participants from 21 operations – including 2 dedicated courses for South Sudan and Ethiopia coordination teams. Participants included 37 Protection Cluster staff, 17 Child Protection staff, 30 GBV staff, 20 HLP staff, and 14 Mine Action staff.
- **oPt Emergency Cell Support** – the GPC assembled a team to support the oPt Protection Cluster, with expertise in analysis, IM, coordination and advocacy. One staff was fully dedicated to the Protection Cluster for 7 weeks and two staff supported on a stand-by basis with advocacy and coordination.
- **In-Person Global Protection Conference**.
- **In-Person Information Management and Analysis Training** was developed and delivered in Nairobi to enhance the skills and knowledge of Protection Cluster Information Management staff with the broader goal of improving overall service delivery, support for robust protection analysis, and the Humanitarian Program Cycle. The training served as a platform to provide valuable learning opportunities, with a keen focus on real-world examples, field practices, and the most recent guidance. The sessions allowed participants to engage directly with the latest IM techniques and tools, improving their abilities to manage, process, and utilize information more effectively.
- **Protection Negotiation Trainings** developed and delivered by the GPC in partnership with the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiations and UNHCR. Trainings were delivered via 3 country-focused workshops with Protection Cluster members and partners from Colombia, Ethiopia and Mali and 1 regional workshop for the Horn of Africa, including Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia.
- **Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring 2023:** The roll out focused on targeting Strategic Advisory Groups in field operations, though many expanded the scope to other key partners and sub-national coordination colleagues. The results informed the GPC field support priorities for 2023-2024.





Strategic Objective 2: We will ensure voices of crisis affected persons and communities are heard, especially the forgotten ones.

Amplify the voices of persons affected by humanitarian crises and ensure consistent and predictable representation of their issues, so they can be addressed by the relevant responsible parties.

In 2023, the GPC Ops Cell further strengthened its efforts with protection advocacy, seeking to advance and amplify the protection advocacy priorities of field Protection Clusters and their members. We do this through dedicated capacity-building, guidance and technical support to country-level colleagues and partners, as well as advancing opportunities for influencing via relevant global mechanisms and stakeholders.

- **Responsive technical support to Protection Clusters** in the design and implementation of collaborative protection advocacy strategies and actions, aiming to increase the impact of advocacy efforts at local, national and global levels. Ongoing advocacy field support included support with developing advocacy strategies and plans, developing positioning and messaging on key protection issues, drafting advocacy products, organizing key events and briefings with target audiences and building coalitions to advance joint advocacy initiatives.
- **8 private Member State and Donor Briefings** convened by the GPC on pressing country and thematic protection priorities, featuring interventions by Protection Cluster and AoR Coordinators, national and international protection partners and other humanitarian leaders.
- **Public and Private Advocacy Notes, Letters and Statements** issued at global level, including:
 - * [Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Global Risks, Trends and Priorities, GPC Advocacy Note](#), May 2023.
 - * [Statement by the Protection Cluster for the occupied Palestinian Territory and the Global Protection Cluster](#), November 2023
 - * [Statement of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs and the Global Protection Cluster Coordinator on North-West Syria](#), November 2023
 - * [Statement on the Occasion of the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons](#), July 2023
 - * Private Advocacy Notes and Protection Messages related to a range of country contexts, including Ethiopia, Gaza, Myanmar, Nigeria, Niger, North-West Syria, Afghanistan, Venezuela and beyond.
- **GPC lobby trip to New York and Washington, D.C.** in May 2023 for engagement and briefings with UN Security Council Members and Member States, donors, GPC members, think tanks and other protection allies on a range of priorities and needed actions to support strengthened protection in crisis contexts around the world. This included briefings with 15 different UN Security Council Members and other Member States at the New York level as well as engagement with US government representatives, including from USAID as well as the US House of Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees.
- **6 confidential briefings and submissions** to Special Procedures Mandate Holders, along with ongoing information sharing and engagement, done in collaboration with 9 field Protection Clusters as well as with AoRs, GPC Task Teams and Working Groups and diverse national and international protection partners on a range of thematic and country-specific protection priorities.
- Publication and roll out of the [Protection Advocacy Toolkit](#), including core modules, tools and case studies, published by Oxfam, GPC, NEAR and ODI. Including:
 - * Launch event and roundtable discussion with protection partners in Istanbul (March



- 2023)
- * Global protection advocacy training for Oxfam and protection partners (March 2023)
 - * Protection advocacy and human rights engagement training and workshop with Burkina Faso Protection Cluster members and allies (Sept 2023)
 - * Online protection advocacy sessions with Protection Cluster staff and partners, including country-specific sessions and ones delivered as part of the Specialized Course on Protection Coordination, delivered in partnership with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law.
- Implementation of a **global campaign on Access that Protects**, in partnership with OCHA, taking forward recommendations included in the report [Access that Protects: An Agenda for Change](#). Campaign actions in 2023 included:
 - * Organizing high-level events and discussions focused on Access that Protects, including an event jointly organized with the Norwegian, Belgian and French Permanent Missions to the UN held during Protection of Civilians week in New York, focused on how protection efforts at the local level are driving access.
 - * Forging a partnership with CCHN and UNHCR to help build the capacity of protection partners in taking forward negotiations for access and protection, including with in-person trainings for Protection Cluster members and partners.
 - * Advancing Access that Protects related data and messaging as part of a range of events, briefings and products throughout the year, including via the GPC's Global Protection Updates, the Global Protection Forum and Advocacy Notes, such as the Note on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict.
 - 3 [Global Protection Updates](#).
 - Stronger social media outreach.
 - Global Protection Forum
 - [Protection Funding Event](#).
 - Legal Aid in Humanitarian Settings Project: The project aims to: 1- improve the capacities of international and national actors to understand and assess the legal aid and access to justice landscape in crisis settings, and 2- promote collective and/or coordinated interventions to address jointly identified needs. During the past two years, a set of tools were produced to help bridge humanitarian, development, human rights and peace actors' legal aid and access to justice interventions and to support the positioning of legal aid and access to justice at the center of the protection intervention. In 2023, the tools were piloted and refined, accompanied by a set of webinars collecting good practices in 3 areas - one of them being collaboration of humanitarian actors with development, peace and human rights actors, including speakers from UNDP, IDLO and others.





Strategic Objective 3: We will meet the challenges to make protection actions contextually appropriate and complementary.

Achieve – through joint analysis - effective and appropriate collective protection outcomes with development, human rights, peace and security actors especially in mixed, climate change response and violent extremism situations.

- Publication of 15 **standard definitions of Protection Risks**.
- Coordination of a **Protection Analysis Stocktaking** exercise at the end of 2022. The findings led to a Protection Analytical Framework (PAF) Lessons Learned Workshop in February 2023, with the participation of UNHCR, OCHA, IRC, DRC, InterAction, Oxfam, IOM and other protection partners and donors. During the workshop a road map on the use of the PAF to support collective protection risk analysis was developed.
- Revision, publication and dissemination of a renewed **Protection Analysis Update format** ([standard](#) and [short](#) versions) and related [guidance](#).
- Publication of 21 **Protection Analysis Updates**, including 13 national, 5 sub-national and 3 thematic in 18 operations (downloaded 12,551 times as of 20th of January 2024).
- Capacity building on protection risks and protection analysis updates, composed of 6 **dedicated webinars** for Coordinators, Co-coordinators, IMOs and other Cluster partners.
- Design of dedicated **training material for protection analysis**: protection analysis session in SPPC, PAF and protection analysis in IOM DTM learning program, PAF and joint protection analysis process in GPC HPC revised training package, co-design and revision of DRC-led PAF-DEEP support project to South Sudan, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, support material for strategy definition in North West Syria, including guidance for IOM protection strategy.
- Direct support to Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia and oPt for the **revision of the monitoring systems to identify and prioritize protection risks**.
- Development of global trends analysis and insights for dedicated advocacy actions and publications: Protection of Civilians Week in New York, IASC Report *The Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action 2022*, GPC report *Protection Funding: where do we stand in 2023?*, ECO-SOC Official Side-Event *Protection Risks & Food Insecurity: Strengthening Community-led Solutions to Complex Crises*, GPC SAG and Global Protection Updates.
- Dedicated analysis support to operations and country-specific advocacy.
- Participation and contribution to protection initiatives and processes: revision and support to the development of the *Legal Aid Analysis Framework*, support to InterNews *Information and Risks: A Protection Approach to Information Ecosystems Guidelines*, support to IRC *Localizing Protection Analysis Capacities for Impact*, and support to DRC *Strengthened Collective Protection Analysis Contributing to Humanitarian and Development Planning and Response*.
- Supported **HCT Protection Strategies**.





Strategic Objective 4: We will champion and advance durable solutions that meet protection standards through a nexus of humanitarian, peace and development action.

Promote protection as central to humanitarian work to address protection problems and to create conditions conducive for durable solutions that are recognized as essential in development and peacebuilding-related actions.

- IDP Protection Expert Group Mission to Ukraine (November).
- Global Cluster Coordination Group Mission to Haiti (July).
- [Cross-Regional Forum on Law and Policy on Internal Displacement.](#)
- 8 workshops/events at national and regional levels on IDP law and policy.



Strategic Objective 5: We will continue adapting to the shifting operational environment and keep looking forward.

Contribute to the identification of protection response gaps and challenges, including emerging and growing trends and engage partners to respond creatively.

- [Annual Centrality of Protection Report.](#)
- [Protection and Health Clusters Joint Operational Framework.](#)
- Optimizing a joined-up approach to protection.
- Enhancement of protection analytical frameworks and tools to adapt to emerging gaps, trends and priorities.



Anti-Trafficking

In 2023, the Task Team on [Anti-Trafficking in Humanitarian Action \(ATTT\)](#), co-led by UNHCR and IOM, surveyed and interviewed Protection Cluster members to better understand the progress made and challenges in anti-trafficking action in humanitarian responses. The 2023 review, discussed at an expert meeting with the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, reveals that over the past few years, trafficking has received increased attention in many cluster responses as reflected in various Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Humanitarian Response Plans, and with its inclusion in the [Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#). Trafficking is now included in the GPC's risk tracker and is increasingly reported on, but it remains under-addressed by the existing monitoring mechanisms. However, action to respond to trafficking in persons (TIP) is yet to be systematically embedded within humanitarian responses as awareness of TIP as a protection risk across clusters is uneven, and resources and capacities to detect, mitigate risks and address specific protection needs of survivors are limited.

In 2023, the ATTT continued to disseminate the [Introductory Guide to Anti-Trafficking Action in Internal Displacements Contexts](#); IOM and UNHCR delivered in-person and online trainings to the Protection Cluster in Northwest Syria, reaching out to 28 staff from NGOs, INGOs and UN working with the cluster. In addition, the Task Team provided technical support on demand to other national Protection Clusters including oPt, Myanmar, etc. Throughout the year, the ATTT maintained a strong partnership with the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking to support advocacy on addressing trafficking in humanitarian crises, increase funding and strengthen the capacity to respond.

Cash for Protection (C4P)

In 2023, the Task Team reviewed the following tip sheets: Mine Action and Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA), Child Protection and CVA, HLP and CVA. All tip sheets have critical linkages on how cash can support protection outcomes. They will be disseminated in January 2024. The C4P stocktaking paper was also revised and will be circulated in January 2024.

The C4P Ukraine Task force produced a research paper on [Cash and Protection in the Ukraine Response - The CALP Network](#). It highlights the C4P programmatic experience and lessons learned from different agencies engaging in C4P as part of the response while contributing to the global bank of operational learning C4P programmatic experience. A small working group was activated within C4P TT to implement the recommendations from the [Rome workshop in May 2023](#). The group is currently working on defining the key terminology, targeting, and transfer values for C4P. The outputs will be shared for review with the C4P broader TT and the GPC at the beginning of 2024.

Community-led Protection (CLP)

In 2023, the Community-Led Protection Task Team (CLPTT) has been committed to fostering a unified approach aimed at enhancing understanding of community-led and civilian self-protection activities among international, national, and local stakeholders. Efforts have been exerted to heighten the visibility of indigenously driven protection initiatives, ensuring their explicit recognition within relevant humanitarian frameworks. During the Global Protection Forum, the Task Team organized a [session](#) to draw attention to the imperative for protection actors to prioritize local understanding of protection threats and strategies in advancing prevention. The cases presented during the Forum illustrated that such an approach not only empowers local communities but also enhances the effectiveness of protection actors. In the same year, the CLP TT endeavored to articulate the operational framework for a GPC Working Group led by local actors. Furthermore, the Task Team has played a pivotal role in convening diverse protection actors to facilitate discussions on CLP, exchange insights on best practices, and address challenges specific to their respective contexts.



Additionally, the recent election of a third co-lead from a national NGO marks a significant stride towards more inclusive and participatory approach within the GPC. The election process, characterized by inclusivity, and active participation of local NGOs through engagement in the CLP TT, emphasizes the commitment to amplifying diverse voices. Introductory sessions have been organized to familiarize NGOs with the GPC, aiming to enhance visibility and understanding. These efforts underscore a dedication to fostering collaboration, transparency, and mutual comprehension within the GPC framework.

Disability Inclusion (DI)

The GPC has made significant progress in advancing the inclusion and empowerment of persons with disabilities in humanitarian protection response in 2023. In 2023, we continued the implementation of the GPC Strategic Framework that prioritizes inclusion and addresses the risks and barriers affecting persons with disabilities of all genders and ages in humanitarian settings.

This included: Firstly, organizing and participating in global-level events that highlight the importance of involving persons with disabilities in all stages of humanitarian response, such as the GPC annual Global Protection Forum and the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week. Secondly, sharing and applying essential documents and tools that provide guidance and support to specific operations on how to include persons with disabilities in humanitarian response, such as in, South Sudan, Venezuela and Tigray to address risks facing persons with disabilities. Thirdly, raising awareness and building capacity of humanitarian actors and stakeholders on the rights and needs of persons with disabilities in humanitarian contexts, through advocacy, training, and coordination, such as in Yemen, Ethiopia, oPt, Syria, and South Sudan. Fourthly, coordinating and contributing to other initiatives and groups that work on DI, such as protection case management task force, disability advisory group, and disability reference group. Fifthly, contributing to the development and dissemination of good practices and lessons learned on capacity development of humanitarian protection actors on DI. Finally, the release and dissemination of the [IMAS 13.10 Victim assistance in mine action](#).

These achievements demonstrate the GPC's commitment to promoting the rights and well-being of persons with disabilities particularly in conflict-affected situations, and to achieving the SDGs for, with and by persons with disabilities. However, the GPC also recognizes the need for continued efforts and innovations to ensure that persons with disabilities are fully and effectively included in humanitarian protection.



Law and Policy

The Task Team on Law and Policy (TTLP), co-led by UNHCR and NRC, provided support to Niger, Honduras and Chad in organising events and activities to raise awareness and promote the implementation of IDP laws Honduras and Chad adopted their laws respectively in March and May 2023, including as a result of successful advocacy by protection partners. The TTLP also conducted technical support missions on IDP law and policy in Guatemala, Iraq, Mexico and Mozambique. A new [Global Report on Law and Policy on Internal Displacement](#) and an updated Global Database were developed to be published in early 2024. The TTLP continued to support capacity-building and sharing, including through regional and global peer exchanges among states. As part of its project on legal aid in humanitarian settings, the TTLP refined its Legal Aid Analysis Tools (Conceptual Framework, Analysis Framework, Analysis Guide) incorporating learning from various country pilots, including Iraq and Libya. To collect and share effective practices in the area of legal aid and access to justice in humanitari-



an settings, webinars were organised focusing on legal identity, reparation contexts and engaging with informal and customary justice.

Advocacy Working Group (AWG)

The Advocacy Working Group, co-chaired by Oxfam and Save the Children, transitioned from the time-bound Advocacy Task Team to the ongoing Working Group structure enabling continued leadership with informing and helping to shape the collective advocacy efforts of the GPC. A workstream within the Advocacy Working Group, focused on advocacy grounded in human rights and related mechanisms, was also initiated as part of the phase down of the Human Rights Engagement Task Team. The AWG's core group is comprised of over 25 members from UN agencies, international and national organisations, based in Geneva, New York, Washington DC, London and other hubs. The focus for 2023 was on increasing the link between field and global, and ensuring that all global advocacy was informed directly by field realities and priorities. This included monthly briefings to the AWG by Protection Clusters and other international and national organisations on protection crises and thematic protection issues, followed by strategizing on needed collaborative advocacy efforts and taking forward relevant actions. This informed collective alignment on messaging and a strengthened voice, especially for less visible or 'forgotten' crises.

Based on identified priorities and the strengths of members, the AWG developed private advocacy notes and messaging, convened learning events, participated in briefings with key actors, including donors, Member States and Special Procedures Mandate Holders, and supported a successful lobby tour by the GPC to New York and Washington DC in May 2023, with the AWG co-chair joining the GPC for various briefings and engagements. The AWG also helped shape key events at the global level, including via a [side event](#) led by Save the Children as part of the ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs (HAS) in Geneva in June 2023 which brought in a specific child rights lens in relation to Access that Protects. The AWG also published and launched the [Protection Advocacy Toolkit](#) with the GPC, NEAR and ODI and developed a podcast series, [Advocating for Protection](#). The podcast series features impactful protection advocacy efforts from a range of national and global experts, with a focus on different approaches and learnings related to collaborative protection advocacy. With 3 episodes released in 2023, more will be added to the series in 2024.

Information and Analysis Working Group (IAWG)

In line with the GPC Strategic Framework 2020-2024, the GPC agreed to transform the GPC's Task Team on Protection Information Management and Analysis, co-led by GPC and DRC, into a permanent Information and Analysis Working Group (IAWG) led by the DRC, IRC and UNHCR. Thus, in 2023 the IAWG resumed its meetings and activities. The purpose of the IAWG is to enhance Protection Clusters' (and their members) capacities on protection information management and analysis for quality protection outcomes in a principled, harmonized, collaborative, and structured manner, supporting the effective implementation of their core functions, ensuring that the protection trends and concerns of affected populations drive strategic and programmatic decision-making, and that protection remains central to humanitarian interventions. Within this scope, the IAWG contributed to the organization and facilitation of the Protection Analytical Framework (PAF) lessons learned event (February 2023) during which protection actors discussed lessons learned, good practices and opportunities to improve protection analysis approaches that inform risk mitigation strategies. In addition, the IAWG has worked in a collaborative manner and updated the ToRs of the working group and agreed on clarity with regards to the roles and responsibilities of the co- chairs. To ensure an inclusive and representative process, the IAWG underwent a series of consultations with members to identify priority areas of work which are reflected in the draft IAWG work plan. The IAWG work plan will align with the GPC priorities aiming to complement and reinforce interagency and cluster work towards joint, coordinated protection analysis. Supporting coordination and complementarity of members' activities, the IAWG has worked on the mapping of capacity strengthening protection analysis initiatives and relevant resources produced which will be regularly updated and become available to all members.



AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY



[Child Protection Area of Responsibility \(CP AoR\)](#), led by UNICEF.

Field presence in 30 operations with extensive support given to all operations through the Global, Arabic, French and Spanish Help Desks and the Global Team. Our aim is to lead the coordination of child protection efforts in humanitarian settings in order to ensure children in emergencies are protected from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence.

2023 Achievements:

The Global CP AoR **deploys its cluster coordination and information management experts** to support the child protection response in new and escalating humanitarian crises. In 2023, the **deployments covered 23 countries in 399 days**, with surge missions comprising 219 days. Europe and Central Asia, Eastern and Southern Africa and Middle East and North Africa were the main regions covered with Syria (3 deployments – 72 days) and State of Palestine (1 deployment – 62 days) receiving most days of support. For more detail see: [Deployments | Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility](#).

The Global CP AoR operates four Help Desks – Global (English), Arabic, French and Spanish – which provide rapid, remote and tailored quality support to Child Protection coordination groups in humanitarian crises. In 2023, the Help Desks received and responded to over **500 requests covering 40 contexts**. The main topics for which requests were received were child protection coordination and working across sectors. For more info see: [Help Desk Support - Overview of Trends](#).

The Global CP AoR developed and started implementing its **Learning and Development (L&D) Strategy 2023-2026** which – together with its learning resources – was launched in December ([Learning and Development Strategy and Learning Resources](#)). The aim of the L&D Strategy is to enable the Global CP AoR to provide structured and strategic support in order to strengthen the current and future capacity and competence of Child Protection coordination teams to effectively coordinate quality Child Protection services in humanitarian responses at national and sub-national level. The CP Learning Channel with all the short self-paced courses for coordinators and information management officers will go live early 2024. In the meantime, the online modules that are now available can be found here: [CP Foundations Program Catalogue](#).

Furthermore, the Global CP AoR developed the Working Across Sectors workshop training package, informed by Help Desk needs analysis and key informant interviews and reviewed extensively by child protection colleagues, along with colleagues from Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), Education, Food Security, and Nutrition clusters, at both country and global levels. These sectors were prioritized for the workshop package. The package consists of the following modules: Child Protection Principles and Concepts; Understanding Child Wellbeing, Child Protection Mainstreaming, and Working Across Sectors; Child Protection Mainstreaming; Child Participation; Integrated Child Protection Programmes in Practice; Developing a Collaborative Framework; Safe Recognition and Referral Guide and Module; and Child Safeguarding. The launch and roll out will happen in 2024.



In partnership with War Child Holland, the Global CP AoR established decentralized support on localization through the **MENA Regional Localization Specialist** (Arabic-speaking), who works in collaboration with the Arabic Help Desk. So far, the CP AoRs in the Sudan and Yemen have been supported to assess their status in integrating localization and to develop and commence implementation of action plans to advance localization within their cluster coordination mechanisms. In addition, Lebanon, Northeast Syria, Northwest Syria and Whole of Syria CP AoRs have been supported to conduct orientation sessions on localization for coordination group members.

Based on requests, the Global CP AoR provided technical support to Myanmar and North-East Nigeria to assess **how well localization is integrated within the coordination structures and mechanisms at country level**, in line with the [conceptual framework on localization](#) (governance and decision-making, participation and influence, partnerships, funding and institutional capacities). These assessments were conducted using the localization dashboard toolkit. These processes resulted in the development of the [North-East Nigeria CP AoR Localization Strategy](#), whilst in Myanmar, the CP AoR established a localization working group co-chaired by a local actor. The Global CP AoR has also supported the establishment of a resource mobilization help desk in Myanmar (in addition to Iraq and Ukraine) that supports access to funding for child protection local and national organizations and continued to provide technical support on co-ordination, including to the selection process of a national NGO to co-ordinate the South Sudan CP AoR.

Child Protection in Humanitarian Action Coordination and Information Management Training, Budapest, Hungary, 30 May - 2 June 2023

The CP AoR organized a 4-day in-person training in Budapest focusing on Coordination and Information Management (IM) for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. The training involved both separate and joint Coordination and IM sessions and simulation activities. A total of 18 participants from 10 countries successfully completed the coordination training, with an additional 6 individuals completing the IM course. Participants included coordinators, co-coordinators and IM officers from INGOs (War Child Holland, Save the Children, NORCAP), NNGOs (from Colombia and Türkiye), UNICEF and one donor agency (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation).



Unprotected: Special Editions - Analysis of Funding for Child Protection in Armed Conflict in 2021 and 2022

Despite its undeniable importance, child protection consistently receives less funding compared to other sectors. To shed light on this critical matter, the CP AoR collaborated with Save the Children International, the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, and the [Humanitarian Funding Forecast](#) to present the [Analysis of Funding for Child Protection in Armed Conflict](#). This report is a special edition within our annual Unprotected series, which was first initiated in 2019.





[Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility \(GBV AoR\), led by UNFPA.](#)

The GBV AoR supports country coordination teams to address the needs of GBV survivors through the provision of life-saving multi-sectoral services, with the vision of eliminating GBV in all humanitarian settings and addressing the needs of GBV survivors via life-saving service provision. In doing so, the GBV AoR applies a feminist perspective in promoting collective action to improve the effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian action for the prevention and mitigation of and response to all forms of gender-based violence, to ensure that the agency and capacity of survivors in all their diversities is recognized and reinforced, and that prevention efforts are effectively employed to address and transform underlying gender inequality.

The GBV AoR provides this support through the [Global Coordination Team](#), the [Regional Support teams](#) across five regions (Asia and Pacific, Arab States, East and Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, and Latin America and Caribbean Regions), the [GBV AoR Helpdesk](#) and the [GBV AoR Community of Practice](#).

2023 Achievements:

In 2023, two important independent reviews were completed: An external review of the GBV AoR, commissioned by the UNFPA; and an external review of the GBV Regional Support Teams (REGAs) commissioned by NorCap. The GBV AoR external review results highlighted the appreciation and strong relevance of the GBV AoR and its support services. The REGA review also found that the regional teams meet a critical need for high-level technical expertise on GBV in emergency settings. There was a strong consensus among actors who took part in the review, regarding the high relevance of the REGA mechanism's objectives, within the wider ecosystem and environment within which it operates. The GBV AoR has been providing comprehensive support to country coordination teams across 32 diverse humanitarian contexts. This support, delivered through a combination of in-person and remote means, has been facilitated by the GBV AoR global and regional teams, including in-country missions in support of new or scaled up emergencies, including **Sudan, Haiti, DRC, Ukraine**, in addition to **Gaza** (remote), **El Salvador, Honduras, Pakistan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, Yemen, Chad, Iraq, Malawi, Burundi, Madagascar** and **Colombia**.

A range of support mechanisms has been deployed to provide this support, including extensive training sessions including two regional in-person trainings on the [GBV Coordination Handbook](#) (in Arab States and in West and Central Africa Regions), and remote coordination training for new sub-national coordinators in Ukraine, targeted bilateral support to address context-specific challenges, sharing of best practices and lessons learned, and assistance in conducting analyses related to Humanitarian Program Cycle (HPC) processes. In addition to training, a significant focus has been placed on the induction and onboarding of GBV coordinators and Information Management Officers (IMOs). This ensures that the teams are well-equipped and aligned with the overall objectives of the GBV AoR.



GBV coordination teams and their members have also accessed technical and peer-to-peer support through the Community of Practice and GBV AoR Helpdesk; support included online discussions, training seminars and written briefs and guidance notes in response to specific queries. The GBV AoR Helpdesk has also developed a number of guidance notes to address the emerging issues in the field, including [Annotated Bibliography on Engaging Boys to Become Allies in GBV Prevention](#), [Gender-Based Violence and Artificial Intelligence \(AI\): Opportunities and Risks for Women and Girls in Humanitarian Settings](#), [Finding Ways and Means to Deliver Gender-based Violence Programming in Hostile Environments](#), and [Improving Justice Systems for GBV Survivors through Survivor-Centered Processes](#).

GBV AoR Capacity Strengthening Strategy (2023-2028): GBV AoR developed and launched the [GBV AoR Capacity Strengthening](#) in 2023. The first objective of the strategy guides GBV AoR capacity strengthening for GBV coordinators and GBV IMOs. The second objective focuses on the capacity strengthening needs within the broader GBViE community.



GBV Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs): The [GBV Standard Operating Procedures \(SoPs\) Resource Package](#) was also finalized and launched in 2023. 13 countries initiated or completed revised inter-agency GBV SoPs in 2023, with dedicated regional support, and enhanced participation of local and women-led organizations in the process. The GBV SoPs clarify expectations for GBV referral, the role and responsibilities of each actor to multi sectoral service provision and common standards, increasing accountability to agreed prevention and response actions.

Nairobi University GBViE Diploma Course: The Nairobi University GBViE post-graduate diploma program (e-learning, lectures and groups) was launched in September with more than 20 students from the African continent. The regional GBV AoR advisor in Nairobi has led this partnership. The aim is to increase the pool of certified GBV responders from the Global South.

Policy and Advocacy Engagement: On 6 November 2023, a High-Level Roundtable with IASC Principals was convened in collaboration with Germany, as the Call to Action lead, on GBV funding and prioritization in emergencies. The Roundtable was co-organized by the GBV AoR, and resulted in new, practical commitments to address the chronic GBV funding shortfalls and persistent barriers of local women-led organizations' (WLOs) in accessing funding.

Advancing the Localization Agenda: GBV AoR in partnership with Trocaire, implemented a participatory action research project focusing on fostering meaningful participation of WLOs in GBV Coordination. Two WLOs in South Sudan and Somalia were supported to take on the role of coordination GBV working groups through this project. Based on learnings drawn from the experiences of these two contexts, a [Women-Led Organizations' Leadership in GBV Coordination Resource Package](#) was developed that captures the local co-leads' challenges and successes. The package contains recommendations and resources on how to establish more equitable and meaningful co-ordination and how to create space for women's leadership.

Building Consensus between GBV and MHPSS Actors Around Shared Guiding Principles and Recommendations for Progressing Practice: Trocaire and the George Washington Institute (GWI) engaged the GBV AoR and the IASC MHPSS Reference Group in the development of a [Guidance on Best Practices for Survivor-Centered MHPSS in Emergencies](#). This guidance aims to address this critical knowledge gap and the current lack of consensus on safe, effective MHPSS interventions for GBV survivors and those at risk. Many of the GBV AoR Core Members were part of the Advisory Group.





[Mine Action Area of Responsibility \(MA AoR\)](#), co-led by UNMAS and the Danish Refugee Council.

Field presence in 16 operations with extensive support given to all operations through the Global Team in Geneva. The Global MA AoR organized quarterly meetings with members and coordinators to discuss country and thematic mine action issues, share best practice and address common challenges.

2023 Achievements:

Global Level

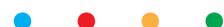
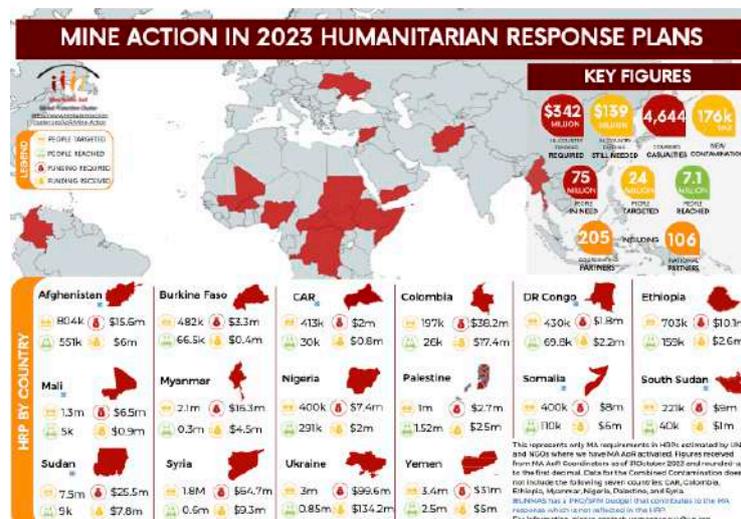
- Provided a reliable coordination platform at the global level and in countries where it is activated.
- Updated the guidance to calculate People in Need of mine action.
- Organized the induction training of new MA coordinators in collaboration with the GPC and the Sanremo International Institute of Humanitarian Law.
- Analysis of funding and beneficiary data.
- Enhanced support to MA AoR in Gaza and Sudan to adapt to new context.
- Took part in joint missions to Somalia and Ukraine.
- Contributed to the reflection on optimization of the GPC.

Country Level

- Coordinators continued to implement the [Mine Action Area of Responsibility Strategy 2022-2024](#).
- Activation of MA AoR in the Central African Republic and revitalization in Ethiopia.
- Advocacy for accreditation of mine action organizations and data-driven prioritization with Government.
- Special Explosive Ordnance Risk Education in South Sudan for people fleeing the conflict in Sudan.
- Localization of mine action in DR Congo.
- Connecting mine action to development goals in South Sudan.

2023 Challenges:

- Increasing contamination in densely populated areas and funding gaps.
- Lack of standby capacity to address gaps in mine action coordination and information management.
- The MA AoR online repository of resources containing [policy](#), [guidance and tools](#) had limited accessibility during the transition to the new GPC website.





[Housing, Land and Property Area of Responsibility \(HLP AoR\)](#), co-led by Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) and United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat).

The HLP AoR continues to work closely with global and national colleagues from the protection, shelter and CCCM clusters to offer support to the HLP response in over 19 humanitarian operations. Support comes from the global coordination team, now including a dedicated AoR Information Management adviser, based in Dakar, Senegal, and an active HLP expert roster drawn from the AoR's membership of NGOs, UN, Member States, practitioners, policymakers, and academia. The AoR aims to see a more systematic and integrated approach to addressing Housing, Land and Property issues; by promoting collaboration and complementarity of efforts amongst agencies undertaking HLP activities, by addressing gaps in policy and technical area and by making the connections with durable solutions and nexus approaches.

2023 Achievements:

2023 has been a year of expansion and growth for the HLP AoR. Now led by NRC and UN-Habitat, the global HLP AoR established dedicated information management capacity and begun the transformation of operational IM possibilities.

The **HLP AoR's HelpDesk** function continues to respond to technical and coordination requests from HLP practitioners. In 2023, this has included work with colleagues in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, DR Congo ([HLP thematic Protection Analysis Update](#)), Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Somalia (including coordination support), South Sudan (including support to a women's HLP training workshop), Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen. This included in-person training and coordination support to the Northwest Syria HLP AoR and partners, joint GPC/AoR missions to Somalia and Ukraine, and peer-to-peer exchanges on evictions and documentation safeguarding. **IM support** has been provided to Mali, Burkina Faso, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Cameroon as well as wide-ranging country support for the HPC process, especially for Francophone countries in Central and West Africa. Mali received dedicated IM support to establish a dashboard that monitors their HLP 2023 response monitoring activities. A new global HLP dashboard is under construction which will enable better understanding, analysis of HLP needs and activities, and more effective use and communication of relevant data for both operational and advocacy impact. The HLP AoR continued its regular support sessions for all coordinators and co-coordinators of country level HLP AoR and working groups.

The [quarterly global meetings and global newsletter](#) updates remain a rich opportunity to gather colleagues from across clusters and sectors to share resources, update on collaboration and to discuss specific issues related to Housing, Land and Property programming, practice and policy.

Collaboration with other clusters continues with the aim of better integration of HLP-sensitive approaches into programming across sectors. We were pleased to continue the partnership with the CCCM Cluster, culminating in the launch of the searchable [CCCM HLP toolkit](#), developed in response to priorities identified by CCCM and HLP practitioners to strengthen HLP responses in various camp settings. This included a [joint technical meeting as part of OCHA's Humanitarian and Network Partnerships Week \(HNPW\)](#).



The HLP AoR continues to work closely with the HLP Advisers and coordinators of the Global Shelter Cluster at global and country level, including participation at the Shelter Cluster annual meeting to discuss the significance of HLP in shelter response with a view to durable solutions. The partnership continued through joint events and the development of an HLP Shelter toolkit to be finalised early 2024.

One of the AoR's key strategic objectives is to **increase HLP capacity and awareness**. It drives much of our collaborative advocacy work. Specific initiatives we have supported in 2023 include:

- The GPC and AoR's Specialised Programme on Protection Coordination (online and in-person)
- The International Institute of Humanitarian Law's course on Internal Displacement (HLP modules facilitated in English, French and Spanish).
- UN-Habitat and the Global Land Tool Network's [Training animation on Women, Land and Peace](#), available in [Arabic](#), [English](#) and [French](#), and [advocacy video](#), also available in [Arabic](#), [English](#), and [French](#) (both developed in collaboration with the HLP AoR)
- [HLP and Displacement: an Interactive Learning Experience](#), developed by International Organization for Migration (IOM) with the Global Shelter Cluster and HLP AoR, in which learners step into the shoes of CCCM and Shelter practitioners tasked with addressing issues such as tenure verification (due diligence), property restitution for returnees and women's access to land rights.)
- Somalia – HLP, Climate Change and Disasters training manual, to be piloted in 2024.



The **GPC Annual Conference** in Amman, Jordan included a **dedicated HLP AoR stream**, bringing together coordinators and partners to discuss key HLP challenges, finalise the AoR workplan and strategy for 2023-2024, create a clear plan for the community of practice, drawing on the diverse perspectives, strengths and capacity from across the AOR membership. We also had a collaborative session with the Mine Action AoR, a partnership we continue to explore at country and global level going into 2024.

The HLP AoR hosted a session at the online Global Protection Forum in October - [Housing, Land and Property Rights as Proactive Protection: Custom, Climate and Community](#), as well as a webinar exploring HLP as a 'golden thread' between humanitarian response and solutions ([OCHA's HNPW event](#)), featuring operational experiences in Mali, South Sudan, Somalia, Syria and perspectives on HLP's role in policy, system reform and nexus approaches. Beyond these fora, the HLP AoR was an active participant for the inaugural HLP in Crises conference held in Washington DC, and supporting the [HLP multistakeholder pledge](#) at the Global Refugee Forum – presented and discussed in the occasion of the GRF [side event on Securing Housing, Land and Property Rights from Emergency Response to Durable Solutions](#).

The impact of climate crisis is an emerging theme in 2023 which will continue to shape the work of the AoR, and the sector, in 2024 and beyond. NRC launched a [global policy brief](#) in collaboration with the HLP AoR and supported by the Government of Liechtenstein, ' [Housing Land and Property in the context of Climate Change, Disasters and Displacement](#)' here, including best practices from Somalia and Mozambique.



CLOSING COMMENTS



We would like to thank all stakeholders for your constant support throughout 2023, acting and advocating at both global and local level. As we move into 2024, we aim to enhance the quality of our programmes and impacts on the ground via further multi-agency and Member State contributions and deployments, with thanks to iMMAP, Germany, HelpAge International, Humanity and Inclusion, Norwegian Refugee Council, Switzerland, Sweden, UNHCR, United States, and Walk Free Foundation, amongst others – building on comparative advantages and expertise within the sector.

We would also like to express our thanks to Member States and donors for their continuous engagement and constructive contributions that have helped strengthen our shared protection narrative and supported our collective capacity to stay and deliver in humanitarian crises. Thanks to your generosity and collective investment, our partners have reached collective protection outcomes through smarter funding, multi-sectorial approaches and integrated programming.

Our gratitude goes to our field colleagues, Protection Cluster Coordinators and Co-coordinators, IMOs, AoRs, protection and non-protection partners, HCs and HCTs who prioritized protection, raised the profile of forgotten protection crises and invested in advancing protection across complex crises contexts. Thank you all, frontline actors, for being there for those who needed it most, for those who were the most affected by discrimination and inequality on the ground.

We thank all SAG members who helped ensure a system-wide response to guide the GPC strategy: NRC (Co-Chair), UNHCR (Cluster Lead Agency), IOM, OCHA, OHCHR, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP, UNICEF, UNMAS, UN-Habitat, Abs Development Organization (Yemen), Centre de Développement Intégral de l'Enfant Rural (DR Congo), Community in Need - Aid (South Sudan), Right 2 Protection (Ukraine), Danish Refugee Council, Humanity and Inclusion, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Oxfam, Centre for Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation, ICVA, Interaction, ICRC and last but not least, the GPC Operations Cell.

A special thanks also goes to the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs and the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons.

Finally, thank you to everyone who contributed and participated in events, forums and initiatives that were co-organized by the GPC this year. We look forward to continued collaboration with you all in 2024.

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