



Global Protection Cluster

**GLOBAL
PROTECTION
CLUSTER
ANNUAL REPORT:
2021**



THE ANNUAL REPORT



The Global Protection Cluster (GPC) is a network of local responders and actors, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations and United Nations (UN) agencies, engaged in protection work in humanitarian crises including armed conflict and climate-change related disasters.

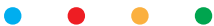
The GPC is mandated by the Inter Agency Standing Committee, coordinated by a Global Coordinator, led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), governed by a Strategic Advisory Group, and serviced by a multi-partner Operations Cell.

The GPC unites members, partners and communities working on the full gamut of protection activities through Areas of Responsibility: Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence, Housing, Land and Property and Mine Action, and through thematic Task Teams: Information and Analysis, Cash for Protection, Advocacy, Human Rights Engagement, Anti-Trafficking and Law and Policy.

The Annual Report presents the work carried out by the GPC in 2021 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 in 32 operations.

The Annual Report is complemented throughout the year by Global Protection Updates, a Mid-Year Review and Centrality of Protection Report.

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



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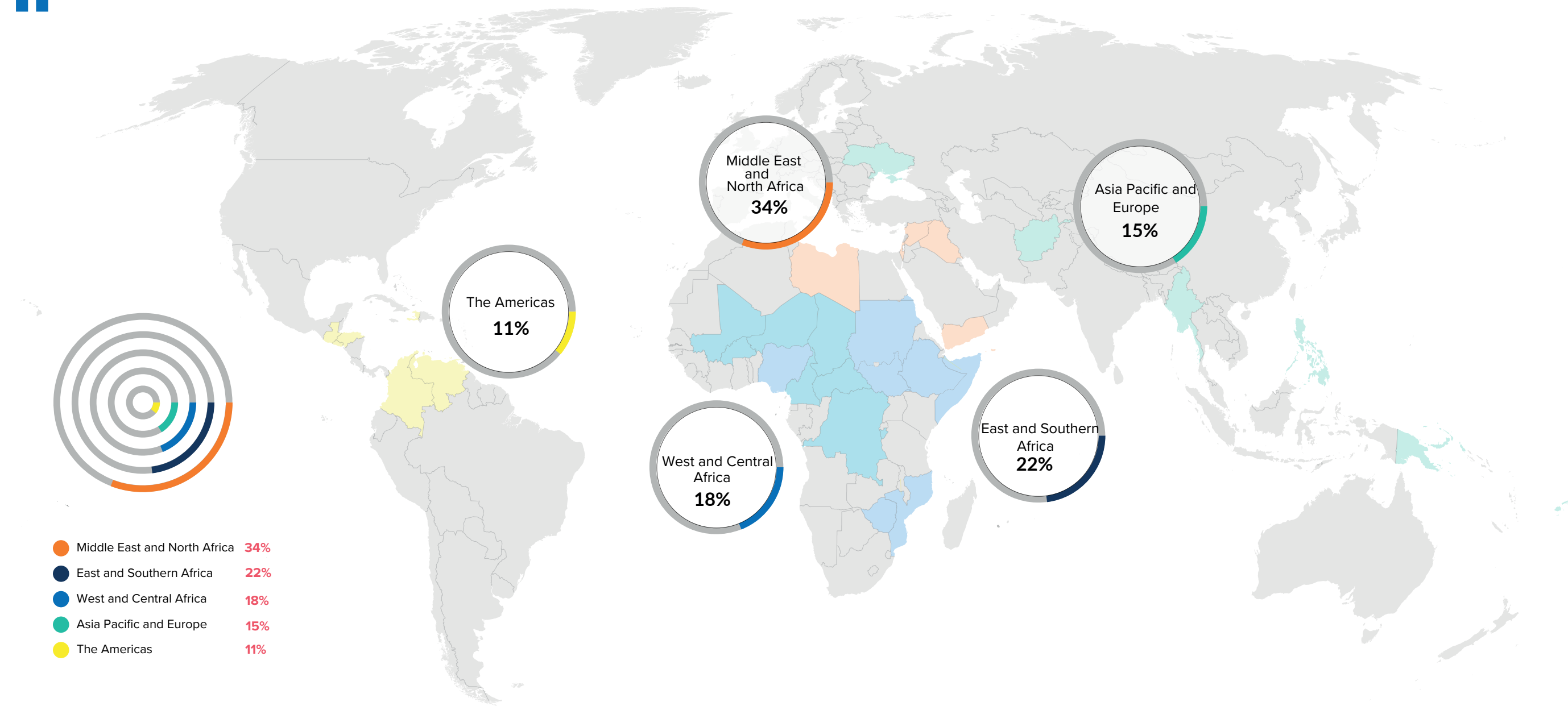
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1. PEOPLE WE WORK WITH AND FOR



NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN NEED AND AT RISK PER REGION IN 2021



- Middle East and North Africa 34%
- East and Southern Africa 22%
- West and Central Africa 18%
- Asia Pacific and Europe 15%
- The Americas 11%

PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED
113M	69M	23M
REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDING (US\$)	OPERATIONS
\$2.3B	\$ 970M	32

REGION					
Middle East and North Africa	38 M	38%	62%	40%	14%
East and Southern Africa	25 M	48%	52%	45%	10%
West and Central Africa	21 M	48%	52%	54%	9%
Asia Pacific and Europe	17 M	51%	49%	34%	11%
The Americas	12 M	54%	46%	42%	9%



2. A DIVERSE NETWORK

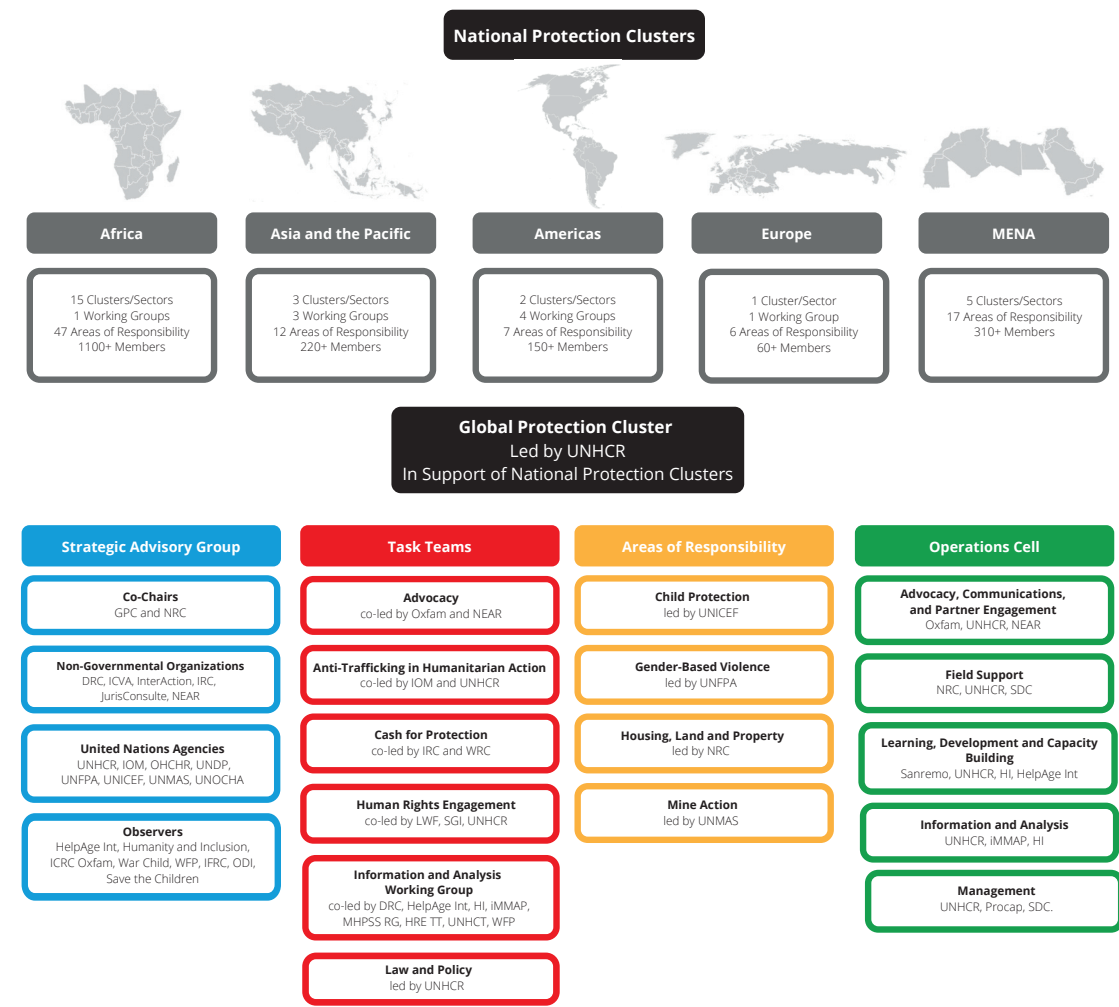


OUR VISION

People are protected in humanitarian crises and their rights respected and solutions found in accordance with international law.

OUR MISSION

Ensuring well-coordinated, effective and principled protection preparedness and responses, and that protection is at the core of all humanitarian action and recognized as essential in any nexus with development and peace.



OUR ACTIONS

1. Support field protection clusters to fulfil their core functions and develop capacity for community-based protection and solutions. This includes building the capacity of protection actors so that humanitarians in all sectors can ensure the rights of affected persons and the obligations of duty bearers under international law are understood, respected, protected and fulfilled without discrimination.
2. Advocate with and on behalf of affected persons to amplify their voices and support Clusters and Humanitarian Country Teams (HCTs) so critical protection issues are acted upon in relevant national, regional and global fora.
3. Promote the Centrality of Protection, including through the mainstreaming and integration of protection, and support other humanitarians to do the same including across the humanitarian, development, peace and security nexus.
4. Influence protection standards and policy development in ways that uphold international human rights law (IHRL) and international humanitarian law (IHL) in complex emergencies.



3. LOOKING BACK TO STEP FORWARD

REFLECTIONS ON 2021



GPC Coordinator, William Chemaly, discussing with the community in the Far North in Cameroon @UNHCR

Very few things that are worth doing can be done alone. This truth resonates strongly when it comes to protection response amidst humanitarian crises. 2021 was no exception.

The year was marked by growing protection risks both in size and complexity. A perfect and devastating storm formed with climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, hunger, economic meltdown and conflict, relentlessly hitting those with the thinnest shields.

As we begin 2022 it is clear this crisis curve is far from being flattened, with 150 million people estimated to need protection. This is 40 million more than 2021 – the highest increase in one year we have seen in a long while.

In this context, we feel more committed to our shared aims and actions than ever before. And as one aspect of our re-focusing as the challenges loom large at the start of the year, we are pleased to share the first Global Protection Cluster Annual report.

The report is designed to (i) take stock of the results achieved against the GPC's 2020-2024 strategic framework, (ii) show how the many different contributions from a range of protection actors and allies to the GPC's priorities come together for shared impact (iii) to transparently acknowledge where the gaps are and identify how to best focus our shared efforts going forward.

At the onset of our strategic cycle, one challenge was clear: how to encourage shared leadership and yet retain clear accountability? Here are four things we did in 2021 to make sure leadership remains both shared and accountable.

First, we ensured everyone is reading from the same page and that the protection story was shared loudly and clearly.

Building on our [strategy](#), we defined a [field minimum operational footprint](#) that clearly identifies the gold standard for our operations, a collective [Protection Analytical Framework](#) that enables coherent analysis and subsequent evidence-based action to effectively address protection risks, continued issuing our flagship review of the [Centrality of Protection](#) report and brought together all willing actors to be part of an [all-inclusive cluster workplan](#).

We ensured the protection priorities and experiences of the people we work with were at the forefront, including through regular [National Protection Updates](#), quarterly [Global Protection Updates](#), a [Mid-Year Review focused on funding for local protection actors](#).

We have continued [supporting operations](#) in their advocacy with authorities, agencies, and humanitarian country teams while also amplifying frontline perspectives and influencing at global levels. Such efforts have included our [Global Protection Forum](#), dedicated [public and closed-door briefings](#) convened for over a dozen operations, and a range of other public and private advocacy efforts, including with [UN Security Council members](#), the [UN Human Rights Council](#), and humanitarian leadership.

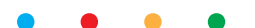
We have pushed our standards forward and effectively shared our collective, evidence-based protection story is being listened to, ensuring protection priorities and outcomes remain at the core of humanitarian action and that people remain at the core of protection.

Second, we embraced the power of the network.

Rather than trying to narrow and control it, we expanded the proverbial tent and sought to create space for the diverse expertise and leadership of our members to flourish. We continued efforts to ensure that [local members](#) of clusters are in the driving seat and have increasing resources.

We strengthened support to operations through [multi-agency task teams](#), gathering over fifty specialists that supported over two dozen operations.

We increased support for and reliance on [co-coordinating organizations](#) that bring expertise and strong civil society leadership to our work. We continued enhancing coherence and mutual support among our four [Areas of Responsibility](#). We continued diversifying our [Operations' Cell](#) that gathers over a dozen organizations and member states in one team. And we brought a community of 5000 experts together in our [Global Protection Forum](#).



Third, we kept our focus on the frontlines.

We ensured that our biggest investment is in supporting operations with enhanced impact through: *regional hands-on help desks and thematic task teams* in addition to *our areas of responsibility*; *remote missions* and *in-person missions to provide technical support* and *dedicated staffing to fill critical gaps*; a global support center for the *Humanitarian Programme Cycle*; connecting operations for *field-to-field peer support* and through a *community of practice*; and organizing a global *Protection Coordination Training* and *specialized training sessions* to over 500 staff.

We continued working on *Mental Health and Psychosocial Support* and rolling out its *Minimum Service Package*, and we put to the test our *Joint Operational Framework for Health and Protection*.

We continued professionalizing support for the *inclusion of persons with disabilities* and *the elderly*, defining how to work in contexts of *climate change*, combating *trafficking in persons*, using *cash for protection*, and supporting efforts to strengthen the *laws and policies* that protect.

Fourth, we advanced protection across the humanitarian spectrum and beyond.

Our drive is to make sure protection is central to humanitarian work and recognized as essential in peace and development. Through our active presence in *all Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Results Groups* we backed the *elevation of protection* efforts across the humanitarian system; committed to monitoring how well the system is *accountable to affected populations* through our national clusters; and made sure that the Grand Bargain-triggered *Joint Inter-Agency Analysis Framework* recognizes protection risks as key for defining people in humanitarian need. We continued taking leading roles in the *Global Cluster Coordinators Group* to review the humanitarian coordination system and strengthen collaboration with *Peer-to-Peer* and the *Emergency Directors Group*.

We continued advocating for the *Protection of Civilians*, took a leading role in support of the *UN Secretary General's Agenda for Protection* and, together with UNHCR and the Special Rapporteur for the Human Rights of Internal Displacement launched the *IDP Protection Expert Group* to further advance protection in displacement situations.

While we have achieved real and meaningful progress throughout the year, challenges and gaps remain. We would like to highlight four cross-cutting challenges we're grappling with as we move into the new year:

1. Finding the right balance between three modes: having the basics in place everywhere, addressing the advanced requirements of fast moving, large scale crises, and testing out new innovations that can keep driving protection coordination towards our future realities.
2. Finding a work tempo that is fast and responsive to accompany the rhythm of our operations and smooth to keep ownership of global partners.
3. Ensuring focus and progress on big-picture and overall protection issues while carving out space and visibility for specific protection interventions and continuing to advance emerging and new best practices.
4. Moving away from a "we are underfunded" attitude and recognizing that while still falling far short of the needs, the financial and diplomatic resources invested in protection are in fact increasing. We must continue to use these resources in the most impactful ways possible, ensuring protection outcomes are front and center and continuing to build financial and political support through our actions and impacts.

Finally, before we leave you to dive into this report, it is important to recognize that the cluster system is ripe for change after 15 years of its creation and substantive shifts in operating environments.

We hope that our collective work, including the strides we are making, failures we are facing and lessons we are learning will contribute to a much needed and urgent evolution in the system. With or without clusters, coordinated protection action, with clear accountabilities and spaces for shared leadership will be required for the years ahead. We have much to build on to keep moving onwards and upwards.



GPC Coordinator, William Chemaly, and global SAG member Symphorien Bikubusyo Alimasi visiting a facility for displaced children in Goma (DRC), run by the local NGO "Children's Voice" (September 2021) © UNHCR/David Winiger

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SAG Member

William S. Chemaly
Global Protection Cluster
Coordinator

4. THE GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER IN 2021



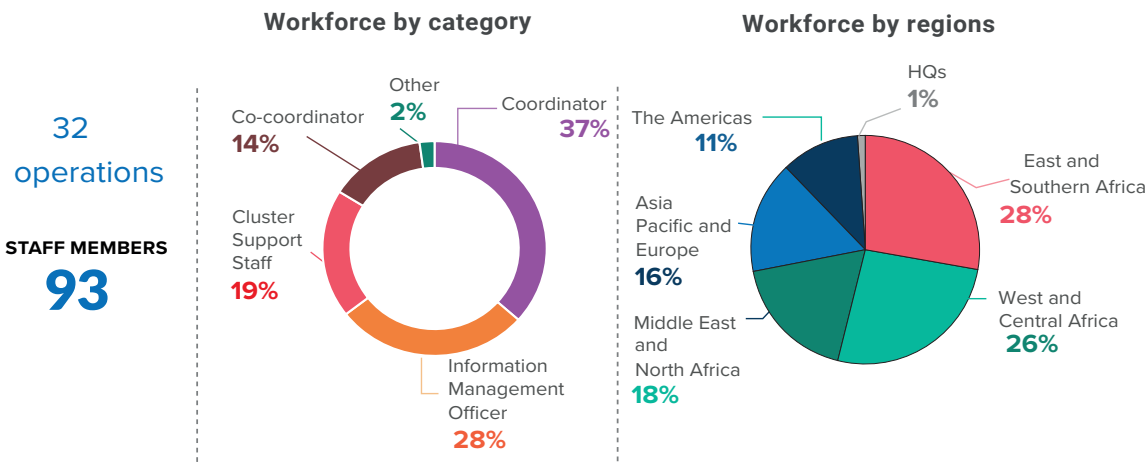
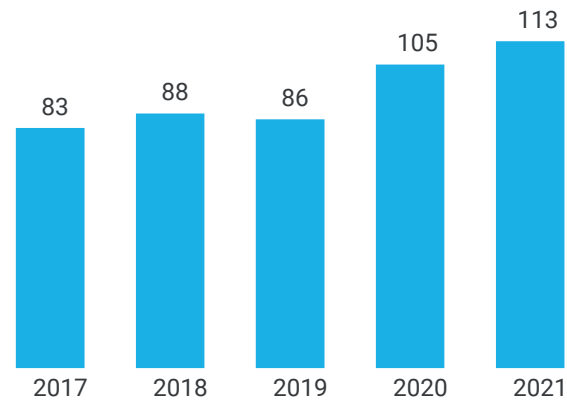
To protect and assist 113 million people in need in 32 operations

GPC's budget was
\$2.3 billion

It received
\$970 million

Out of the 69 million targeted, GPC was able to reach 23 million people with a multitude of protection services

People in Need (millions) | 2017 - 2021



NATIONAL PROTECTION CLUSTERS OPERATIONAL FOOTPRINT

The Global Protection Cluster rolled out a standard Operational Footprint on minimum benchmarks and expectations around 9 pillars to enhance operational effectiveness and ensure basics of coordination and programming are in place in all field operations.

1. Deliver essential quality services to populations in need	2. Coordinate service delivery	3. Inform humanitarian strategic decision making	4. Plan and implement clusters strategies	5. Monitor and evaluate response
Population Targeted in relation to PiN above 75%	3/4/5/Ws in place	Protection monitoring system in place	Cluster strategy in place	Regular progress review in place
Core services in place	Service mapping in place	Protection needs assessments conducted	Contribution to HPC done	Regular funding review in place
	Referral pathways in place	Joint protection analysis conducted	Contribution to other planning processes done	Activities' quality monitoring conducted
	Info Sharing Protocols in place	Regular HCT briefings conducted	Contribution to funding proposals done	Cluster Coordination Protection Monitoring conducted
6. Build National Capacities in preparedness and contingency planning	7. Support robust advocacy	8. Ensure accountability to affected pop. and engagement with communities	9. Cluster resources and leadership	
Contingency plan (conflict/violence) in place	Advocacy strategy in place	Membership standards established	Working groups on disability and elderly inclusion, MHPSS and trafficking established	
Contingency plan (natural hazard) in place	Regular contribution to HCT messages / products conducted	Training on standards conducted	Staffing in place including coordination, co-ordination and information and analysis	
Contingency plan (disease outbreaks) in place	Regular Donors' and member states briefings conducted	Accountability to Affected Population Trainings conducted	AORs Established	
Transition strategy in place	Dissemination channels in place	RCCE harmonized approach in place	Cluster SAG established	



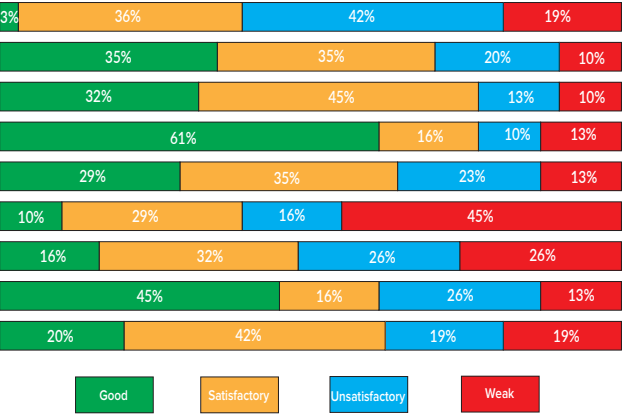
Monitoring these benchmarks per operation allows us to: highlight critical gaps for proactive field support and regular consolidation and analysis of information around protection field coordination and programming situation.

The information is collected through regular surveys with national teams, knowledge from our help desks, and Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring.

We report on the situation publicly in our Global Protection Updates. Performance in 2021 is presented below as percentage of operations in good, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, and weak situations.

Performance of Key Benchmark Areas

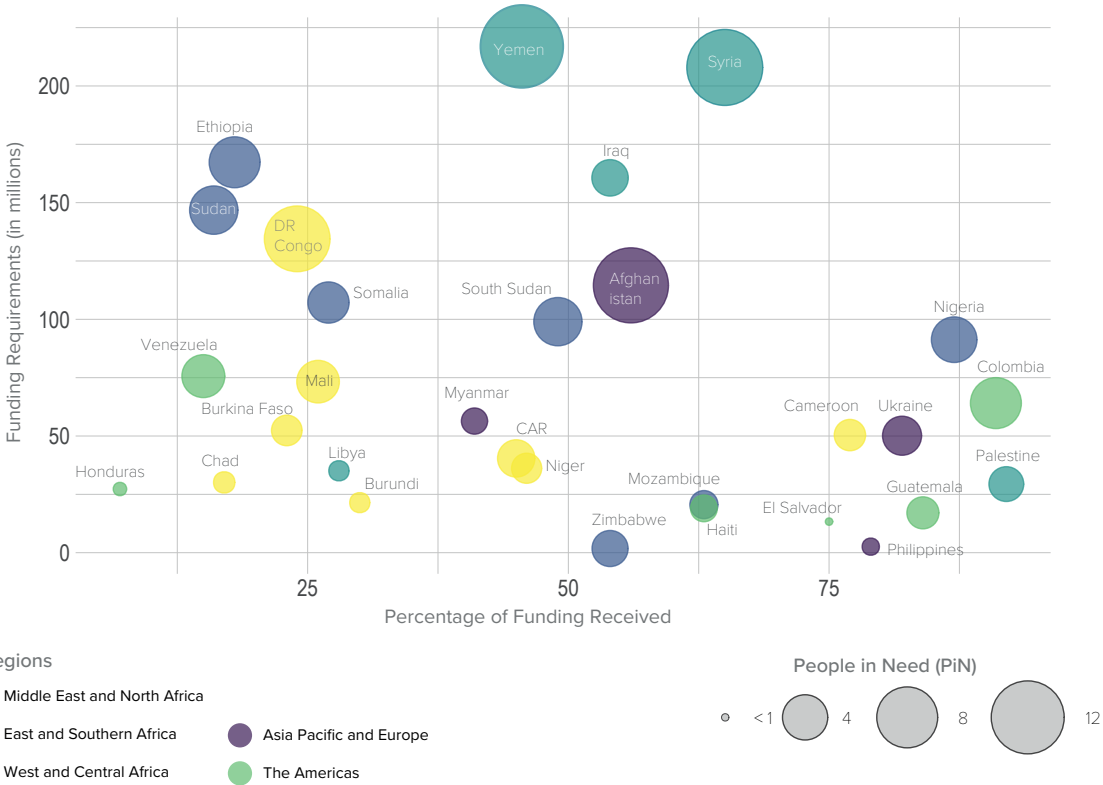
- 1- Deliver essential quality services to populations in need
- 2- Coordinate service delivery
- 3- Inform humanitarian strategic decision making
- 4- Plan and implement clusters strategies
- 5- Monitor and evaluate response
- 6- Build National Capacities in preparedness and contingency planning
- 7- Support robust advocacy
- 8- Ensure accountability to affected population and engagement with communities
- 9- Cluster resources and leadership



Operational footprint



PERCENTAGE OF FUNDING RECEIVED BY OPERATIONS IN 2021



5. WHAT RISKS ARE PEOPLE UP AGAINST?

PROTECTION TRENDS THAT MARKED 2021



Far North Cameroon © UNHCR/2021

Context

2021 was marked by a deepening of protection crises across the 32 protection cluster operations active at year's end: **the convergence of armed conflict, the climate crisis, economic shocks, rising hunger and the COVID-19 pandemic have contributed to increasingly complex and severe protection risks for people living through crisis.**

In several contexts, crisis accelerated in particularly pronounced ways, including with rapidly spiraling humanitarian needs, displacement and rates of hunger in Afghanistan and Ethiopia. In Myanmar, violence and protection risks expanded well beyond previously conflict affected areas following the military coup that began in February 2021. Other crises, such as in Syria and Sudan, saw the continuation and deepening of protection risks, including with multiple displacements, the killing of civilians and protracted insecurity. In Colombia, internal armed conflict persists, with a resulting 1 million people faced with heightened protection risks as per international law, while in Venezuela violence, persecution and economic collapse continue to drive a humanitarian crisis of staggering proportions. Across multiple countries in the Sahel region, humanitarian needs and protection risks also rose, reflecting unprecedented food insecurity and malnutrition alongside ongoing displacement and violence.



The impacts on the millions of people living through these daily realities are profound. **Despite the enormous challenges, local leaders, communities and organizations were on the frontlines of protection response efforts, delivering life-saving interventions** and supporting the dignity and rights of people together with a range of global protection partners. Protection Cluster members, the majority of whom are national actors, provided a range of support across high-risk operating environments, from protection by presence, to anti-trafficking interventions to de-mining efforts and beyond.

However, in the face of often overwhelming protection risks, those already facing particular and intersecting forms of exclusion, ranging from children living with a disability to women from ethnic or religious minority groups, continued to experience greater protection risks with increased barriers to accessing needed support.

Importantly, conflict and related violations of humanitarian and human rights law remained the biggest drivers of protection risks in 2021. With 90% of protection clusters operating in active conflict settings, widespread and indiscriminate attacks on civilians represented key protection risks: airstrikes, shelling and gunfire ripped through communities while a staggering number of health and humanitarian workers were killed.¹

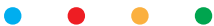
In the final days of the year, 35 civilians, including 4 children, were killed in Myanmar, adding to the loss of an estimated 1,400 lives since the military coup in February 2021.² In Ethiopia, a joint investigation by OHCHR and the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission found that parties to the conflict “carried out attacks on civilians resulting in the deaths of and injuries to men, women, boys and girls”, with likely hundreds of civilian lives lost over the course of fighting in 2021. In Afghanistan, a staggering 1,659 civilians were killed and 3,254 wounded during the first six months of the year, a 47 percent increase from the same period in 2020.

Humanitarian workers and human rights defenders (HRDs), particularly women HRDs, also faced violence in conflict zones, with colleagues being threatened, kidnapped and killed in the course of their duties, alongside an estimated 234 health workers who died amidst 788 attacks across 14 countries and territories.³









Grave violations of children’s rights in new and protracted conflicts have remained alarmingly high, with the coronavirus pandemic increasing their vulnerability to abduction, recruitment and sexual violence.⁴ Based on the first three months of 2021, verified cases of child abduction and sexual violence rose at alarming rates compared to the same period in 2020 - by more than 50 and 10 per cent, respectively, with Somalia and the DRC particularly impacted.

Across protection cluster operations, 30 reported violence against children as a major concern, with 61% describing the risk as severe or extreme. In Afghanistan 32% of all civilian casualties recorded at the mid-year mark were children, with 468 killed and 1,214 wounded.⁵

¹ [Global Protection Update, September 2021](#)
² [Remarks UN Special Rapporteur on the situation in Myanmar October 2021](#)
³ [WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care](#)
⁴ [Report UNSG Children and Armed Conflict, May 2021](#)
⁵ [UNAMA Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict Update July 2021](#)



Attacks on schools and threats to students and teachers are dominant in Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Niger, and Yemen, exposing children to increased risks of forced labour, sexual exploitation, and forced recruitment. Mozambique and Syria clusters reported violence against children as being an extreme risk. Family and child separation was reported in all field operations with the majority (55%) describing the risk as moderate, 32% as severe and 6% as extreme.⁶

AT A GLANCE	SEVERITY OF PROTECTION RISKS AS REPORTED BY PROTECTION CLUSTERS		
 <p>Active conflict or violence is occurring in 28 operations. 82% report the situation as severe or extreme.</p>	 <p>30 operations report forced movement and displacement, including forced returns. 58% of operations classify the situation as severe or extreme.</p>	 <p>Explosive ordnance contamination is a risk across 24 operations. In 48% of operations the risks for civilians are severe or extreme.</p>	 <p>Every field operation describes psychological distress and growing mental health needs amongst the affected populations. 71% rate the risk of distress as severe or extreme.</p>
 <p>Every field operation reports Gender-Based Violence as a protection concern; 80% describe the GBV risk as severe or extreme.</p>	 <p>30 operations report violence against children as a major concern, with 61% describing the risk as severe or extreme.</p>	 <p>30 operations report risks related to housing, evictions, land and property. 36% rate the risk as severe or extreme.</p>	 <p>26 operations report child marriage is occurring. 42% of operations rate the risk as severe or extreme.</p>

Displacement also reached record highs throughout 2021, with UNHCR estimating that global forced displacement surpassed 84 million at mid-year. Behind this staggering number, each forcibly displaced person faces complex protection risks, with displacement often eroding coping capacities while creating new risks, including those related to trafficking, sexual violence, child marriage and hunger.

In Sudan, hundreds of thousands of people were newly displaced in parts of Darfur, with over 200 incidents of violence reported in that region; in Mozambique increased attacks by non-state armed groups, deliberately targeting the civilian population, also triggered new displacement.

As noted in the [June 2021 Global Protection Update](#), with the intensification of conflict across several cluster operations, displacements were often occurring on several occasions, severely depleting critical assets as people were left unable to consistently pursue livelihoods activities, with real impacts on rising food insecurity.

Gender-Based Violence was continuously reported as being amongst top protection concerns across cluster operations in 2021, with 80% describing the GBV risk as severe or extreme.⁷

In South Sudan, safety audits conducted in a number of areas, from May to August, identified a surge in rape and sexual assaults. In Palestine, following the May 2021 escalation, an increase in the number of GBV cases in need of medical and sheltering services were reported.

⁶ [Global Protection Update, September 2021](#)
⁷ [Global Protection Update, September 2021](#)



In December, UN Human Rights Experts released a statement condemning the shocking levels of sexual and gender-based violence committed against women and girls in Ethiopia, noting that “From November 2020 through June 2021, a total of 2,204 survivors reported sexual violence to health facilities across the Tigray region. One of the one-stop centres reported that the victims in over 90 percent of cases were underage girls and estimated that visits to the centre had quadrupled since the conflict erupted a year ago.”⁸ The cluster in Colombia has also raised the alarm regarding GBV risks, with women and girls further exposed due to the consequences of the pandemic, loss of livelihood and incomes, and limited school attendance.

IMPACTS & COPING

Importantly, rising civilian casualties are also accompanied by Protection Clusters reporting rising degrees of psychological trauma and mental health needs. As highlighted in the [September 2021 Global Protection Update](#), **every single one of the field operations described psychological distress and growing mental health needs amongst the affected populations.**⁹ 71% of operations rated the risk of distress as severe or extreme while also highlighting the link between psychological distress and human rights violations or the fear of violence and abuse. In the wake of another escalation of conflict between Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups in 2021, the levels of psychological distress amongst children and adults are of paramount concern as communities live in constant fear of the next spike of violence and the ever-compounding impact that this has on every aspect of their lives.

Protection risks also have direct implications for the coping strategies available to people living through crisis. As protection risks and rights violations increase, a vicious cycle where people’s capacities to handle such shocks and crises are eroded often takes hold and many of the limited strategies available ultimately further erode the rights and wellbeing of communities.

With hunger being driven upwards in 2021 due to conflict and climate crises, women and girls tend to be disproportionately affected as they are often “eating last and eating least”.¹⁰ Increasing levels of household debt, often accompanied by exorbitant interest rates, mean that such a coping strategy can have lasting impacts on poverty levels. As noted by the Protection Cluster in Afghanistan, the rise of negative coping strategies in light of already depleted household assets in the country has meant people are increasingly resorting to actions like early and forced marriage and child labour, which are themselves serious protection risks.¹¹ Across operations, **26 Protection Clusters reported the occurrence of child marriage, with 42% reporting this risk as serious or extreme.**¹² In Syria, the cluster reported the sale or exchange of sex as a coping mechanism as an extreme risk.¹³

While often less visible, local community members and protection actors are also continuing to build on community-based protection efforts, supporting the ability of people to stay safe and be protected, in partnership with protection clusters and global stakeholders. From local negotiations with armed actors to ensure safe access to schools and clinics, to women’s groups supporting the reintegration of child soldiers, these local-level interventions are truly the backbone of response efforts and the protection of rights and resilience.

⁸ OHCHR Special Rapporteurs Statement on Tigray December 2021

⁹ Global Protection Update, September 2021

¹⁰ Oxfam, Facing impossible choices: women bear the brunt of hunger

¹¹ Afghanistan Protection Analysis Update 2021 Q3

¹² Global Protection Update, September 2021

¹³ Global Protection Update, September 2021

LOOKING AHEAD

We begin 2022 on a somber note in light of the many lives lost over the past year and the staggering level of protection risks that million around the world face. We expect this year to be full of challenge as multiple crises are set to continue, creating new dimensions of risk linked to the interplay of conflict, climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, demanding even more joined-up and integrated protection response efforts.

One important dimension for protection actors, including the GPC, to focus on will be around securing and expanding meaningful access to affected communities. The past years have seen the troubling narrowing of access in multiple contexts and yet protection by presence remains an absolutely foundational area of action that supports effective protection and humanitarian response more broadly.

Going beyond the one-off delivery of assistance, access must take on a more ambitious agenda, aiming to ensure ongoing protection monitoring, sustained community engagement and the continued delivery of protection services.

As part of this push for ‘presence’, the need to further ensure integrated approaches, with protection forming the core of humanitarian, development and peacebuilding efforts, as well as being closely linked to sectors such as health and livelihoods is critical.

Underpinning effective protection efforts, as always, is the need to deploy the full spectrum of collective advocacy efforts, to call out the violations that are driving protection risks, to engage with duty bearers and to work with impacted communities to bring their protection priorities to the forefront.





Afghanistan. Community Based Protection Project, Empowerment of 20 Women Through Provision of Midwifery Skill Training. © UNHCR/Roya Heydari

6. PROGRESS AGAINST STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



In 2021, we mark the end of two years of our strategic framework. Two years largely influenced by COVID-19 that forced us to reprioritize and change our ways of working. The two years were also marked by an incremental increase of our workforce and operational partnerships. The overall progress on the strategic framework is satisfactory, with the bulk of our investment and progress going towards the first two strategic objectives linked to field operations and advocacy over the past year. In the remaining two thirds of our strategy's life cycle, we see a stabilization of the progress on the first two objectives and a shift to invest more in objectives 3,4 and 5. Across this section we use a simple visual to portray if we are on track against a strategic objective.



Coloured squares mean that progress against this objective is being achieved. Blank squares indicate more progress on the objective is needed.









<p>SO1 We will put basics of coordination and collaboration in place in all our operations.</p> <p></p> <p>This strategic objective took most of our investments in 2021 and we have achieved notable progress with more structure, responsiveness and proactiveness to our field support delivered through the operations cell, the areas of responsibility and the task teams. Key progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 32 operations supported ✓ Protection Coordination Training ✓ 29 Strong Humanitarian Programme Cycle ✓ Global Protection Forum ✓ Global Operational Footprint ✓ Mental Health and Psychosocial Support ✓ Protection & Health Joint Operational Framework ✓ Disability and Age Inclusion ✓ Conflict Sensitivity Analysis ✓ Human Trafficking 	<p>SO2 We will ensure voices of crisis affected persons and communities are heard, especially the forgotten ones.</p> <p></p> <p>This area has seen significant progress in 2021, with a dynamic task team in place and strong links to field operations being prioritized. Frontline perspectives were amplified across the range of advocacy tools developed and initiatives implemented. Key progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 8 operations extensively supported ✓ Full range of advocacy methods activated ✓ Advocacy task team and procedures established ✓ Global Protection Updates issued ✓ Increasingly dynamic social media ✓ Global Member States engagement
<p>SO3 We will meet the challenges to make protection actions contextually appropriate and complementary.</p> <p></p> <p>The progress on this strategic objective is foundational, having ripple effects on the way we work with others and ensure that protection is central in practice, with a strong localization focus.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Global Protection Framework ✓ National Protection Updates and Reports ✓ Centrality of Protection Review ✓ Humanitarian Country Team Strategies ✓ Human Right Engagement 	<p>SO4 We will champion and advance durable solutions that meet protection standards through a nexus of humanitarian, peace and development action.</p> <p></p> <p>This is an objective that has seen some progress, particularly in terms of active filed support on Law and Policy and Internal displacement through the IDP Protection Expert Group. The GPC will grow its investments in this objective in the second half of the strategic cycle.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Law and Policy Engagement ✓ GP2.0 ✓ IDP Protection Expert Group
<p>SO5 We will continue adapting to the shifting operational environment and keep looking forward.</p> <p></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Cluster System Review ✓ Cash for protection ✓ Climate Change 	







SO 1. PUT BASICS OF COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION IN PLACE IN ALL OUR OPERATIONS.

For this objective we pledged that we will 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.

How was the GPC engaged	Progress initiated, on track, advanced
Supporting 32 operations to have minimum coordination and responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32 operations supported through missions/deployments (8), training workshops & webinars (32); help desk/dedicated remote support (32); advocacy (8) 60% of field operations completed their CCPM process 72% operations with dedicated coordination team 2/3 operations with services mapping and referral pathways 100% operations with system tracking 3-5Ws 54% of operations with “limited” or “very limited” access to populations
Supporting 29 operations for Humanitarian Programme Cycle (HPC) for 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 operations extensively supported 18 operations have high quality 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview¹⁴, visit: HNO minimum requirements tracking tool
Supporting 32 operations to have regular protection analysis guiding Humanitarian Country Teams (HCT) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2/3 of operations with monitoring and needs assessments 81% of operations with collective protection analysis. 50% do it on a quarterly basis and produce reports. 77% of operations present analysis regularly to HCTs.
Training all operations on protection coordination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Milestone Protection Coordination Training to 80 experts from 29 operations Specialized trainings conducted
Supporting operations to better engage on combatting trafficking in persons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combatting trafficking guidance rolled out 3 operations extensively supported on anti-trafficking 75 protection specialists trained on anti-trafficking 15 organizations joined up in a field support anti-trafficking task team
Improving integrated planning, programming and response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesis on challenges and bottlenecks of integrated response Protection and Health Clusters Joint Operational Framework in progress

¹⁴ HRP minimum requirements tracking was not available at the time of publishing this report, it will be available during the first quarter of 2022.

Supporting operations in contributing to Mental Health and Psychosocial support responses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum Services Package for MHPSS developed and rolled out in 5 operations MHPSS and protection clusters guidance rolled out Advocacy on MHPSS emphasized in publications events Active collaboration with MHPSS Reference Group
Supporting operations in contributing to disability and inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Protection Cluster strategies have disability explicitly mentioned in the narrative for strategic objectives Protection HNO and HRP including disability in Protection chapters Expert disability and inclusion field support team established
Bringing frontline protection responders together 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Protection Forum conducted bringing together 2,000 protection professionals from over 32 operations Community of practice platform bringing together all coordinators
Establishing robust flow of information from national cluster to the GPC and regularly reporting on the status 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 32 operations adopted framework for minimum Operational Footprint Information system developed and rolled out 4 Quarterly reports published

“In 2021, we became present in the most remote locations through virtual connection, defying the confinement and physical distance. We have seen our team adapt quickly together in a new way of working in Aleppo, Cabo Delgado and Ndele while teleworking and under confinement from Geneva, London, Cairo, Lisbon, Madrid, Vienna, Melbourne, Ticino, and France.”
Julien Marneffe, Head of Operations

During 2021, field support remained the primary area of focus for the GPC. We have professionalized the way we conduct field support through a number of actions, including:

Establishing a help desk and activating a community of practice. The GPC formalized its helpdesk modality building on experiences from its areas of responsibilities (AoRs). For all operations of one region, an *Operation Cell Focal Point* was appointed to work with the team in country on a day-to-day basis, to ensure communication flow, provide technical guidance and act as referral person to the *Thematic Focal Points* for areas that require expert support. Some of our AoRs have decentralized their field support functions to the regions, with dedicated regional experts and help desks.

This modality is complemented by *monthly regional meetings* with all coordinators and by-weekly written *operational updates*. For the second year, the GPC Coordinator sent *mid-year operations letters* to cluster lead agencies highlighting the annual priorities and encouraging further investment in coordination. The community of protection coordinators brought together through this approach benefitted from a *reinvigorated online Community of Practice platform*.

GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER'S FIELD SUPPORT MODEL

GPC Field support is triggered by:

- Field request from coordination team, partners, humanitarian country team or lead agencies
- Gap against benchmark or standards
- Need identified through Country Coordination Performance Monitoring

Field support could take the shape of:

- Technical guidance and sharing of good practice
- Workshop and training
- Gap filling mission and support
- Closed door advocacy and mobilization
- Public advocacy and mobilization
- Connection and escalation to the GCCG, EDG, Peer to Peer and IASC Principals
- Activation of Emergency Field Cell

Field support is coordinated through the help desk and can be done through:

- Operations' cell help desk focal points
- Operations' cell thematic focal points
- Areas of Responsibility
- Task Team

Responding to requests of support from operations. Requests from operations remained the primary modality of engagement with the field. Our Operations Cell responded and engaged with 100% of requests. The top 5 areas of requests for 2021 were related to: Recruitment and gap filling, Information Management & Analysis, Humanitarian Programme Cycle, Protection Mainstreaming and Advocacy.

Our field support has taken several forms starting from [day-to-day technical guidance](#) and bouncing ideas to running [trainings and workshops](#) for the coordinators, information managers, clusters members and authorities; [local-to-global trouble shooting](#) within, across and at inter-agency level as well as with donors; [mobilizing human and financial resources](#); providing comprehensive and intense support during the [Humanitarian Programme Cycle](#); conducting support missions and gap filling to countries like Afghanistan, Colombia, Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Niger, Sudan and Venezuela; and given the operational complexity of Ethiopia and Afghanistan the GPC activated an [Emergency Field Cell Support](#) to strengthen effectiveness and coherence of field coordination, collective planning, analysis, and advocacy. This meant a de facto merger of capacities between the GPC and the national coordination teams.

Defining standards and benchmarks for operations. This included the definition and benchmarking for various key standards, measuring them, and supporting operations to meet them: in addition to responsiveness, a major headline for our field support in 2021 was proactiveness and drive towards benchmarks and standards. This was achieved through a tripod of clarity of footprint, monitoring and course correction and active partners' feedback.

First, we rolled out a well-defined minimum [Global Operational Footprint](#) that outlines key deliverables and tasks of field operations.

Second, we started monitoring its implementation and addressing gaps in operations. The monitoring results are publicly published in our [Global Protection Updates](#).

Third, we stepped up the feedback mechanism from partners through [Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring \(CCPM\)](#).

Defining key areas of strategic priority for operations and supporting them through collaborative task teams. The focus on field support took also a stronger strategic focus in 2021. This materialized itself by the use of multi-partners task teams in addition to the operations Cell. The key areas of focus are: (i) Strong localization agenda, (ii) High quality Humanitarian Programme Cycle (iii) Smarter predictable analysis and advocacy, (iv) Better Human Rights and Law and Policy engagement, (v) Predictable response to areas of protection that do not have an accountable Area of Responsibility including disability and elderly inclusion, combatting trafficking in persons, mental health and psychosocial support and cash for protection.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support. The GPC has made considerable progress in upgrading its capacities to contribute to multi agency and clusters delivery on MHPSS services. This materialized through [upgrading expertise in the CP and GBV AoRs](#). The GPC actively supported and took a leading role in the development and roll out of the [MHPSS Minimum Services Package](#) and strengthened its participation and contribution to the [MHPSS Reference Group](#).

Task Team on Cash for Protection – Co-Leads: Lauren Murray, Tenzin Manell, Julia Grasset

“In 2021 the Task Team piloted online trainings for protection and GBV practitioners in MENA to use CVA in GBV response and led a training on CVA and CP in Amman to over 25 participants from 5+ organizations operating in Egypt, oPt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan.”

Disability and Inclusion. In 2021, a stronger focus was put on Disability and Inclusion, a protection issue that does not have dedicated accountable structures within the protection cluster. We are working towards a more systematic inclusion of persons with disability and the elderly in humanitarian action. The objective is to institutionalize an inclusive analysis and predictive planning, coordination, and response to persons with disability and develop scale-able tools and guidance to facilitate and ensure better integration of context analysis and disability and age inclusion into the design and development of protection cluster strategies.

Conflict sensitivity analysis. In addition to being aware of the socio-economic realities at play, an adequate conflict and contextual analysis is the basis of a conflict sensitive approach, providing evidence for quality programming, advocacy and ensuring a 'Do No Harm' approach of protection interventions. In all our operations, conflict sensitivity must be mainstreamed across clusters and integrated into all phases of the project cycle, accompanied by capacity building measures.

Task Team on Anti-Trafficking – Co-Lead: Andria Kenney





“In 2021 trafficking in persons was further entrenched as a significant protection issue within humanitarian operations and the Anti-Trafficking Task Team is increasingly consulted as a resource for technical guidance as well as contributions to policy discussions.”

Global Protection Cluster's Task Teams and Areas of Responsibilities Field Support

TASK TEAMS

 ADVOCACY	 ANTI-TRAFFICKING	 CASH FOR PROTECTION
<p>Task Team with more than 40 members from 20 different organizations and groups. Led by Oxfam and NEAR.</p> <p>Focused support given to Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, Syria, DRC, Colombia, Cameroon and Niger.</p> <p>Flagship: the GPC's End of Year Event: 'On the Frontlines'; The GPC's Mid-Year Stock Take on Protection Funding in Humanitarian Crises (report and event); development of protection advocacy tools and SOPs, protection key messages, private briefings and public statements.</p>	<p>Task Team with 15 member organizations, co-led by UNHCR and IOM</p> <p>Dedicated anti-trafficking support provided to Afghanistan, Cameroon, and Venezuela.</p> <p>Flagship: launch event of Guidance on Anti-Trafficking, training delivered to 7 operations, strong collaboration with Special Rapporteur on Trafficking, policy panellist at human rights webinar, Global Forum Thematic Event on Digital Technology and anti-trafficking in crises.</p>	<p>Task Team with over 50 members across 30 organisations, Led by the Women Refugee Commission and Save the Children.</p> <p>Piloted online trainings for protection and GBV practitioners in organizations operating in Egypt, oPt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Jordan.</p> <p>Flagship: Cash and Voucher Assistance for Protection Stocktaking Paper, UNHCR Guidance on Promoting Child Protection Outcomes through Cash-Based Interventions, Cash COVID-19 Cash for Protection Tip Sheet, Cash & Voucher Assistance and GBV Compendium: Practical Guidance for Humanitarian Practitioners, CVA and CP MEAL Toolkit (in collaboration with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action).</p>
 HUMAN RIGHTS ENGAGEMENT	 INFORMATION AND ANALYSIS	 LAW AND POLICY
<p>Task Team on Human Rights Engagement with 57 members, led by: UNHCR, Soga Gakkai International and Lutheran World Federation.</p> <p>Support was provided to 14 clusters, with focus on Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Whole of Syria, and Venezuela. Infographics showing the impact of the TT's efforts in terms of support provided to the eight pilot countries in the first half of 2021 can be found here.</p> <p>Flagship in 2021: 9 webinars, 15 trainings and 3 peer to peer exchanges, research piece with ODI on collaborative advocacy between human rights and human rights actors and related high-level event, and a Guidance Note for field Protection Clusters on Engagement with National Human Rights Institutions.</p>	<p>Working Group with 62 members, led by GPC Operations Cell and Danish Refugee Council.</p> <p>Support given to all operations where the cluster is active through the establishment of standards and training on good practices.</p> <p>Flagship: Global Protection Analysis Framework, HPC Guidance in JIAF Process and PIM trainings.</p>	<p>Task Team with 35 members, led by UNHCR</p> <p>Support given to Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, and Philippines.</p> <p>Flagship: Global Database on Laws and Policies on internal displacement; New Training Package on IDP law and Policy (English and French), piloted in Burkina Faso; Strategy for 2021-2024; template Concept Note and Analysis Methodology for legal reviews of national legislation relating to the protection of IDPs; IDP Legislative advocacy workshop in the Philippines.</p>

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITIES (AOR)

 CHILD PROTECTION	 GENDER BASED VIOLENCE	 HOUSING, LAND AND PROPERTY
<p>Area of Responsibility with Strategic Advisory Group, led by UNICEF</p> <p>Field presence in 30 operations</p> <p>Extensive support given to 32 operations through Regional Help Desks and Global Teams.</p> <p>Flagship: Needs Identification and Analysis Framework (NIAF), GBV-Child Protection Field Cooperation Framework in collaboration with the GBV AoR, Framework for Strengthening Institutional Capacity of National and Local Actors (in collaboration with the Global Education Cluster)</p>	<p>Area of Responsibility with Key Members Group, led by UNFPA</p> <p>Field presence in 32 operations</p> <p>Extensive support given to 32 operations through Regional Gender Advisors and Global Team.</p> <p>Flagship: New Strategic Framework, 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, San Remo specialization program participation, GBViE program for local actors.</p>	<p>Area of Responsibility led by Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) with broad NGO, UN, Member State, practitioner, policymaker, academic membership.</p> <p>Field presence in 21 operations – new for 2021 in Mozambique, Sudan, Yemen. Ongoing support given through Global Coordinator and active HLP expert roster.</p> <p>Flagship: Ongoing collaborations with Global Shelter Cluster, CCCM Cluster; key focus on Displaced Women's HLP rights – specially commissioned global update on security of tenure for displaced women and accompanying session at the GPC forum; Essential Guidance on due diligence and demystifying security of tenure. See HLP AoR workplan for 2021 and 2022.</p>
 MINE ACTION		
<p>Area of Responsibility with Strategic Advisory Group, led by UNMAS.</p> <p>Field presence in 16 operations; Extensive support given to all operations through Global Team.</p> <p>Flagship: Mine Action Area of Responsibility Strategy 2022-2024, Staying the Course: Mine Action Financing in Times of Scarcity - 24th NDM-UN event, Mine Action Analysis Framework, MA AoR 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence.</p>		





South Sudan / Adult education (English classes for men and women) under a fabulous old tree at dusk in the UNHCR Camp Doro, Mabaan County, Southern Sudan. © UNHCR/Sebastian Rich

SO 2. ENSURE THAT THE VOICES OF CRISIS AFFECTED PERSONS AND COMMUNITIES ARE HEARD.

For this objective we pledged that we would amplify the voices of persons affected by humanitarian crises and ensure consistent and predictable representation of their issues, so they can be addressed by relevant responsible parties.

How was the GPC engaged	Progress initiated, on track, advanced
Supporting at least 6 forgotten crises in their advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 operations provided with focused advocacy support and a range of advocacy efforts implemented across crisis contexts, including through closed-door diplomacy, donor/member state briefings (2) and public events (3), advocacy messaging (3), public statements on protection crises (3), media monitoring (1) and social media campaigns (14)
Reporting comprehensively on protection crisis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 National protection updates & 5 public reports 3 Global Protection Updates viewed 50,000 times Stronger outreach through social media +3,500 followers 5 global social media campaigns 2 public statements on critical thematic protection issues
Reporting on the state of protection response and centrality of protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Mid-Year Review of Protection Funding report and event Annual Centrality of Protection Report published Annual Global Protection Forum End of Year Event Active participation in the IASC mandated protection policy review
Emphasising and recognising leading role of local actors and communities in protection response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operations with improved local actors' leadership Operations working with local language 1 out 4 operations have developed harmonized approaches for community engagement and RCCE 18% of operations resources operated by local actors GPC SAG improved local actors' representation and leadership GPC flagship events, including Mid-Term Funding Review and End of Year Event, featuring national protection leaders from different crisis contexts.
Leading advocacy on protection and COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading IASC narrative definition on Covid and Protection Operations integrated COVID and protection minimum package 32 operations received technical advice
Collaborating or leading on advocacy research pieces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication and high-level event on collective advocacy by humanitarian and human rights actors

Focusing on where it matters. In 2021, we focused our advocacy efforts on 8 operations that received support through varied GPC tools and approaches. Several operations, including Afghanistan and Ethiopia, benefitted from public or private advocacy events bringing together Humanitarian Country Teams, National Clusters, Areas of Responsibilities, agencies and organizations, donors and member states. Events were complemented, in some instances, by public statements on [Ethiopia](#), [Syria](#), [Sudan](#), key messages on [Afghanistan](#) and [Ethiopia](#), and reports and articles on [Cameroon](#), [DRC](#), [Colombia](#) and Niger. We continued to organize behind-closed-door meetings with operations experts and member states to influence and strengthen protection-related actions, grounded in the priorities of affected communities and protection partners.

Keeping an eye on what the world is saying: For the first time this year, the GPC broadcasted a [Media Monitoring Brief](#) following the emergency in Afghanistan which was extensively used by colleagues and partners to inform and complement analysis of existing protection risks. The GPC will continue to use this innovative tool for protection analysis and advocacy to support new and large-scale emergencies.

Task Team on Advocacy - Co-Leads: Alison Kent and Carolina Montenegro

“Over the course of 2021, the Advocacy Task Team drove forward a number of important advocacy-focused events as well as research, messaging and capacity-building efforts, all aimed at putting local and national protection leadership and priorities across crisis contexts firmly at the center of humanitarian decision-making.”

Bringing the community together. We organized a virtual annual [Global Protection Forum](#) with a broad participation consisting of four main segments held for partners and field coordinators with the objectives of reviewing challenges and opportunities in protection coordination, discussing emerging protection thematic events and planning activities to ensure the centrality and mainstreaming of protection at global and field levels. The [Technical Segment](#) in April brought together close to 400 Protection Cluster coordinators, co-coordinators, AoR coordinators and information managers to foster cross-learning and collaboration across regions and agencies. The mid-year [Taking Stock of Protection Funding Event](#) (22 June) reviewed the funding levels for protection and drew attention to areas of underfunding, spotlighting the critical funding gaps that are hampering the ability of national actors to deliver life-saving protection responses. A [Thematic Segment](#) in October with over 2,000 participants was dedicated to a broader constituency of the GPC and fostered dialogue on current protection priorities, discussed emerging issues and presented new evidence and good practice. On 8th December the closing event of the Forum, entitled [On the Frontlines: Insights into the State of Protection in 2021](#), featured the release of the GPC’s annual [Centrality of Protection Review](#) and reflected on the state of protection in 2021, while showcasing the dynamic work led by four national protection leaders in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, occupied Palestinian territory and Yemen.

GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER’S COLLECTIVE ADVOCACY MODEL

GPC advocacy is triggered by:

- Field request from coordination team, partners, humanitarian country team or lead agencies
- Event that requires a position, advocacy, or narrative shaping
- Strategic advocacy decision by the Task Team on Advocacy on issues or forgotten crisis

GPC uses the following tools for advocacy:

- Comprehensive advocacy campaign
- GPC bilateral engagements: dialogue, letters, briefings, and roundtable discussions
- GPC public engagements: GPC messages, articles, media monitoring, open letters, research products, policy briefs, statements, media release, and social media campaigns.
- GPC joining others: sign off on statements, participation in campaigns, work through the IDP Expert Group, Peer to Peer, Emergency Directors Group, and IASC Principals.

GPC uses these flagship reports and events for advocacy and communication:

- GPC Global Protection Updates
- National Protection Clusters Updates
- National Protection Clusters Advocacy Messages
- Mid-Year GPC Protection Review
- Centrality of Protection GPC Annual Review





Kenya. Congolese tailor's skills help her overcome disability. © UNHCR/Rose Ogola

SO 3. MEET THE CHALLENGES TO MAKE PROTECTION CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE AND COMPLEMENTARY.

For this objective we pledged that we will - through joint analysis - achieve effective and appropriate collective protection outcomes with development, human rights, peace and security actors especially in mixed, climate change response and violent extremism situations.

How was the GPC Engaged	Progress initiated, on track, advanced
Developing and rolling out a standard Protection Analysis Framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Framework developed and rolled out 8 countries produced Protection Analysis Updates 15 PAF trainings provided
Supporting the promotion of Centrality of Protection in inter-sectoral and other clusters' needs analysis and planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All operations promoted the Centrality of Protection in inter-sectoral and other clusters' needs analysis and planning, and reported at least some level of success Annual Review on the Centrality of Protection conducted and disseminated Benchmarks on Centrality of Protection developed HCT Protection Strategies Review conducted Operations supported to produce and implement HCT Protection Strategies
Supporting operations to better engage with and use human rights mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 operations supported on human rights engagement 100+ protection specialists trained on human rights engagement 57 experts joined up in a field support human rights engagement task team Collaboration with 5 special procedures and rapporteurs Active support to the Secretary General Agenda for Protection



A global framework to analyse protection risks: In 2021 the GPC, with the leadership of the Danish Refugee Council and the International Rescue Committee produced for the first time a Protection Analytical Framework (PAF) and the corresponding PAF guidance which guides all operations to produce a quarterly Protection Analysis Updates. This is a major step forward that will support consistency and predictability of protection analysis. [Niger](#), [Mali](#), [Afghanistan](#), [Iraq](#), [oPt](#), [Colombia](#) are already producing protection updates based on the PAF and several additional operations like Ethiopia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Venezuela and Syria are using the PAF logic to present analysis to Humanitarian Country teams. The aim is that all operations produce regular Protection Analysis Updates in 2022 and use their production to facilitate the Humanitarian Needs Overview in countries and engagement with Peace and Development machineries as well as drive evidence-based advocacy.

Engaging globally and nationally to ensure that protection is central. The GPC has actively contributed to the work of the IASC thematic results groups with a focus on centrality of protection, accountability to affected populations, collective advocacy and humanitarian and development collaboration. Working with the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the GPC will revise the HCT Protection Strategy Guidance after conducting the [HCT Protection Strategies Review in 2020](#). The GPC also published its Annual [Centrality of Protection Review](#), which takes a collective look at how the system has been able to move from declarations regarding the Centrality of Protection to its operationalization in varying degrees. The review consequently reflects on the status of protection financing, emerging trends, and cost-effective approaches.

IMPLEMENTATION OF CENTRALITY OF PROTECTION ELEMENTS – BASELINE			
 67% of consulted operations have established collective protection outcomes . These are mostly recorded in HCT protection strategies/ action plans and HRPs.	 83% of consulted operations have conducted an overall protection context analysis .	 33% of consulted Protection Clusters/ Sectors support regular protection risk analysis for other sectors and the ICCG.	 83% of consulted operations have mechanisms in place for meaningful engagement with crisis-affected populations in developing and implementing protection programmes.
 100% of consulted Protection Clusters/ Sectors provide protection mainstreaming support to other clusters/sectors.	 100% of consulted operations have established referral mechanisms for protection services.	 83% of consulted Protection Clusters/ Sectors support inclusion of protection in other system-wide frameworks than HCT protection strategies and HRPs.	 50% of consulted operations have a monitoring and evaluation plan for HCT protection priorities/ outcomes.



The [Task Team on Human Rights Engagement](#) is opening a new page on GPC work on human rights issues as part of protection action. The GPC supported [8 countries](#) with a sustained follow-up and concerted engagement and advocacy at local and national level with authorities and relevant stakeholders, as well as related advocacy at global level. In addition, the TT-HRE led a series of [webinars](#), [trainings and peer to peer exchanges](#) on strategic engagement with Human Rights Council, tackling racism in internal displacement or designing human rights education interventions, as well as a [research piece](#) on collaborative advocacy between human rights and human rights actors, and a [Guidance Note](#) for field Protection Clusters on Engagement with National Human Rights Institutions.

Task Team on Human Rights Engagement – Lead: Valerie Svobodova

“In 2021 the Task Team opened a new page of GPC work related to human rights engagement by, for example, supporting eight countries with a sustained follow-up and concerted engagement and advocacy at local, national, and regional levels with authorities and relevant stakeholders, as well as related advocacy at global level and engagement with relevant UN human rights mechanisms.”

GLOBAL PROTECTION CLUSTER’S WORK ON LOCALISATION

The COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the critical role of local actors in responding to humanitarian crisis around the world. Amidst the crisis, the GPC has further operationalized its commitment to galvanize the participation of local and national protection leaders in the global humanitarian leadership, fostering meaningful action for people in need. This translated in 2021 into more equitable and innovative partnerships, NGOs co-leading national Protection Clusters, and 18% of the protection funding being directed to local and national actors. In striving to implement the Grand Bargain[1] Commitment and enhance access to humanitarian funding, the GPC has guided coordination groups to encourage and support local and national actors to participate in key coordination mechanisms, including in the development and implementation of humanitarian protection strategies (e.g. Protection Cluster Strategies, Humanitarian Needs Overview and Humanitarian Response Plan, HCT Protection Strategies).

Through the IASC, further action led to the production and publishing of a series of reference materials for setting standards on localization to the humanitarian community: [“Guidance Notes on Localisation”](#), [“Guidance on Localisation and the COVID-19 Response”](#), [“Guidance Strengthening Participation, Representation and Leadership of Local and National Actors in IASC humanitarian coordination mechanisms”](#).

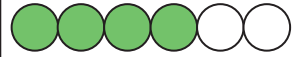

In 2022, to overcome persistent barriers and create collective decision-making structures for humanitarian responses, the GPC is also investing heavily in advocacy for localization and capacity strengthening of local and national actors for more effective complementarity on the delivery of protection coordination and protection services.



Bangladesh. Monsoon rains and flash floods hit Rohingya camps in Cox's Bazar. © UNHCR/Amos Halder

SO 4. CHAMPION AND ADVANCE DURABLE SOLUTIONS TO MEET PROTECTION STANDARDS THROUGH A NEXUS OF HUMANITARIAN, PEACE, AND DEVELOPMENT ACTION

For this objective, we pledged that we would 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.

How was the GPC engaged	Progress initiated, on track, advanced
Supporting operations to better engage on and use laws and policies for protection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8 operations supported on law and policy• States developing national laws or policies on internal displacement in line with the Guiding Principles and the Kampala Convention.• 80 protection specialists trained on law and policy• Virtual Workshop Series: “Developing a Research and Policy Agenda for Addressing Displacement and Migration in the Context of Disasters and Climate Change in Africa”• 35 experts uniting in a field support task team on Law and Policy
Supporting operations to advocate for durable solutions of IDPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establishment of the IDP expert Group with the Special Rapporteur for IDPs and UNHCR.• Supporting operations and global policy makers on finding through GP2.0 initiative

Task Team on Law and Policy – Lead: Martina Caterina

“ In 2021, the Task Team on Law and Policy continued to promote and support law and policy-making processes that are participatory and inclusive of crises-affected populations. In line with this, we co-organized capacity-building activities directly targeting these populations and strongly advocating for them to be able to meaningfully participate in relevant decision-making processes.”


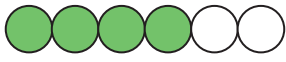
Laws and policies that protect and give a basis for durable solutions to internal displacement. The focus during this strategic framework period was to ensure that national clusters are active in promoting and supporting the development and use of national laws and policies that protect. To that purpose the GPC united laws and policy experts in a field support task team that undertakes negotiations with governments and parliaments, co-organizes capacity-building activities in countries like a legislative advocacy workshop in the Philippines, or through sharing experiences from other countries like national workshop on Kampala Convention domestication in Burkina Faso, or through building global level capacity such as an e-learning “Introduction to Law and Policy on Internal Displacement”.

In some contexts, high level advocacy is required with governments’ counterparts. To enable such advocacy the GPC supported the set up of the IDP Expert Group. The Group brings together UN Member States, international organizations, and other key stakeholders to champion protection in situations of internal displacement. Co-led by UNHCR, the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs and the Global Protection Cluster, the Group mobilizes high-level interventions and collaboration on protection for the internally displaced.

Solutions mainstreamed. Overall our approach to solutions and working with development and peace actors has been mainstreamed through varied elements of our work including, an analysis system that speaks to all actors, and advocacy that uses regional development bodies as much as security council briefings, a focus on areas intersecting between, peace, development and humanitarian actors such as our work on law.

SO 5. CONTINUE TO ADAPT TO THE SHIFTING OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND KEEP LOOKING FORWARD.

For this objective, we pledge that we will contribute to the identification of protection response gaps and challenges, including emerging and growing trends and engage partners to respond creatively.

How was the GPC engaged	Progress Initiated, on track, advanced
Integrate climate change and adaptation in protection response 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operational Guidance on Preparedness for Protection in the context of climate change and disasters and accompanying toolkit.
Reviewing the cluster system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-leading the Stepping Back Looking Forward Initiative in the GCCG that identifies areas that require evolution in the cluster system.

Climate change. A new Guidance on Preparedness for Protection in the context of climate change and disasters and accompanying toolkit for field protection clusters was produced in 2021 and, will be rolled out to the field in early 2022. This Guidance is meant to serve as a reference document for field protection clusters and AoRs as well as other protection partners when it comes to addressing the connections between protection, climate change and disasters. A Public event on [“Enhancing preparedness for Protection in the context of climate change and disasters”](#) took place during the Thematic segment of the GPC Forum in October. The session shared recent research and experiences from field operations helping to envisage the protection risks in the context of climate change, current protection practices, protection gaps, and recommendations moving forward.

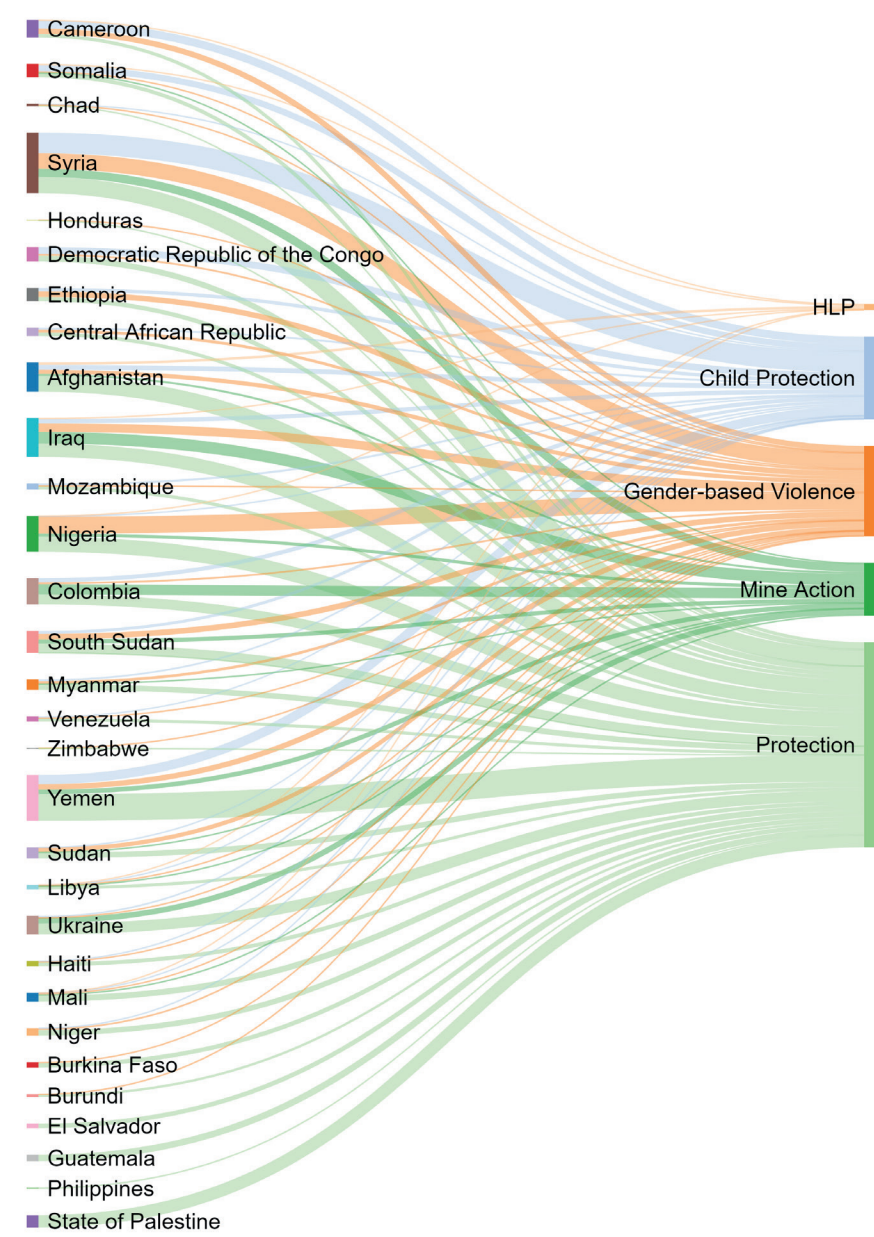
Light review of the Protection Cluster functioning. The GPC is an active stakeholder in the consultations regarding a light review of the protection cluster functioning in light of the changing work environment. The Stepping Back to Looking Forward’ initiative (SBLF), developed by the GCCG, is a key stock taking effort of challenges and opportunities of the cluster approach. Based on the SBLF, findings were shared with IASC Principals and a Letter was sent to the Emergency Relief Coordinator, focusing on common issues which require decision by the IASC.

7. FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

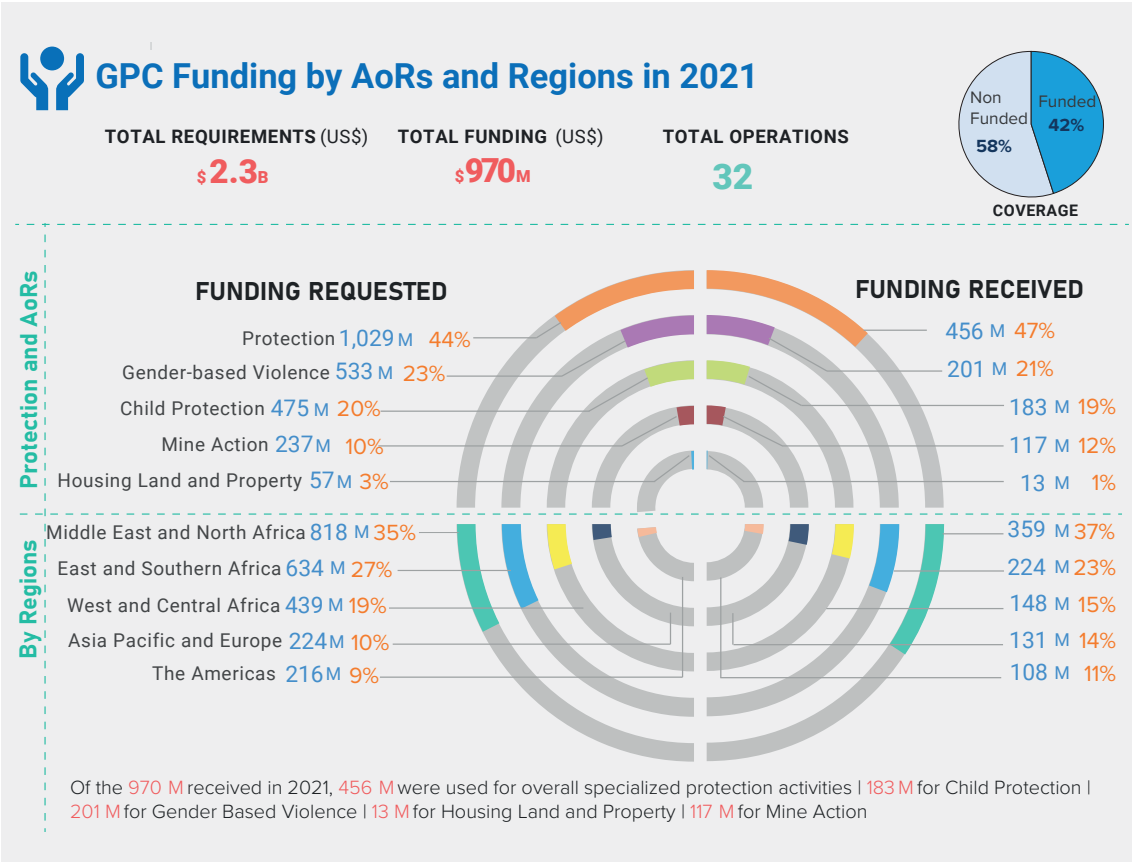


This year Protection Clusters managed to mobilize close to \$1 billion (\$970 million) in support of our protection field operations. This represents a 47% increase in funding compared to 2020 (\$659 million). \$456 million went to overall protection while \$183 million went to Child Protection, \$201 million went to Gender-Based Violence, \$117 million went to Mine Action and \$13 million went to Housing Land and Property. This represents a step forward in terms of how we are galvanizing increased support for protection. And the bottom line is that this boost in resources reflects increased buy-in and commitment from a range of donors. However, the situation remains far from rosy: these funding increases are being made at the same time that protection risks are dramatically escalating, with needs ultimately far outpacing the gains.

Protection & AoRs Funding received in 2021

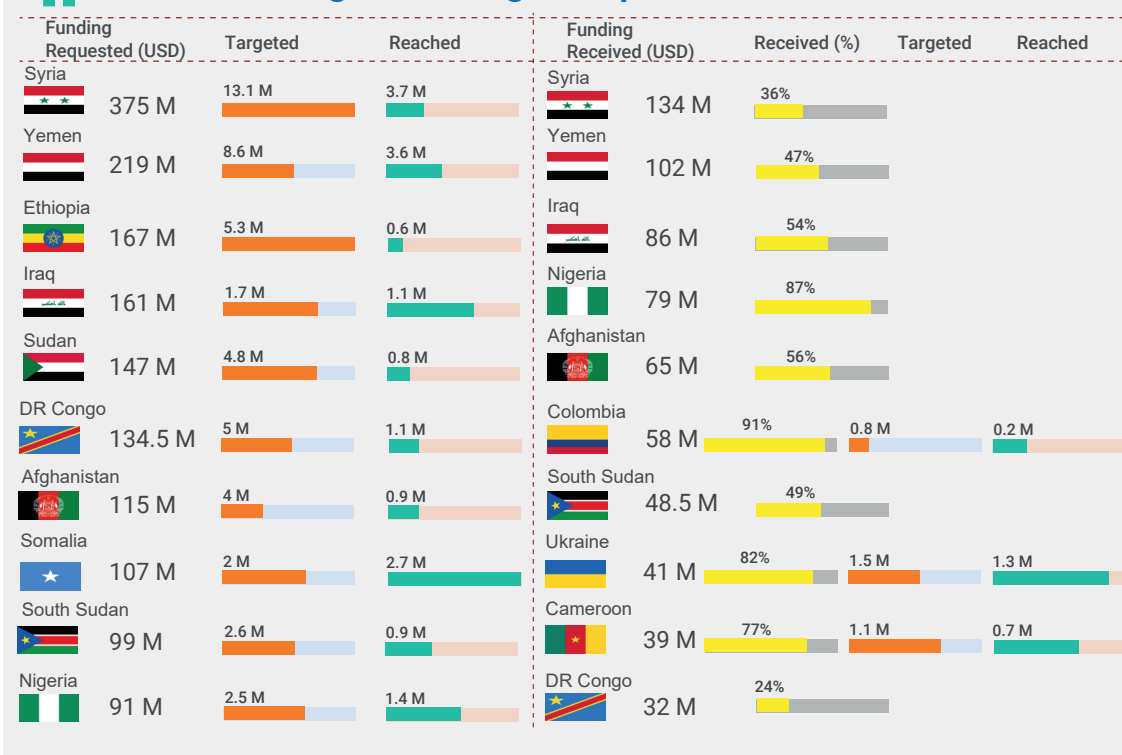


Thus, we take the good news of more robust protection resources in stride, recognizing that while on the one hand we are headed in the right direction by investing in strong protection outcomes, which are being increasingly recognized as core to effective humanitarian response by a range of stakeholders. On the other hand, the gap between available funding and severe protection needs is growing at a rapid pace. We are simply not keeping up. This means millions of people will remain without the very basic protections they need and deserve. More lives will be lost and more lives will be forever damaged by violence, deprivation and trauma. In the year ahead, we will continue to recognize where we are making gains with available resources, celebrating progress when it happens and maximizing protection outcomes with the funds we have across the sector. We will also continue to keep a close eye on the gaps, calling attention to the very real consequences for people and ensuring donors are holding to their commitments.





GPC Funding: Ten Largest Operations in 2021



8. FINAL WORDS



In 2022, we project that approximately 150 million people will be in need of protection, largely driven by the worsening situations in Ethiopia, Sudan, Myanmar and Afghanistan, as well as continued high levels of need in Yemen, Syria and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Hence, we call on donors and member states to ensure the Protection Sector and its Areas of Responsibility receive an equitable proportion of humanitarian funding. Importantly, 25% of such resources must go to local actors, ultimately providing them with urgently needed funds to deliver protection programmes and outcomes.

But protection is not just a matter of money. The GPC Annual Review of the Centrality of Protection reminds us that protection needs to be at the centre of every plan, every response effort, every discussion we have with people affected by earthquakes, floods, violence and war. Donors and international organisations need to continue to empower local protection actors by investing in their long-term capacity and promoting principled and strategic partnerships. Local actors also need room to meaningfully influence decision-making spaces and take on leadership roles in coordination mechanisms and the humanitarian system writ large.

Building on our collective push for more locally-led responses and coordination, humanitarian access for protection will be a key theme of our work in the coming year. We will look at addressing the multiple constraints, from armed hostilities or physical barriers to excessive and time-consuming administrative requirements, which hamper humanitarian protection access in different contexts - using community-based protection, advocacy and humanitarian negotiation, and protection by presence as effective tools to achieve protection outcomes.

Last but not least, we would like to thank all stakeholders for your constant support. In 2021, the Global Protection Cluster was able to count on the support of a wide range of stakeholders, acting and advocating at both global and local level. As we move into 2022, we aim to enhance the quality of our programmes and impacts on the ground via further multi-agency and member state deployments and contributions, with thanks to the European Union, Danish Refugee Council, IMMAP, Germany, HelpAge International, Humanity and Inclusion, Norwegian Refugee Council, NEAR, Oxfam, ProCap, Switzerland, United States, Walk Free Foundation and UNHCR, 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. Critical debates, active advocacy and diplomatic attention on the state of protection in our operations galvanized strategic action and supported in improving quality protection outcomes.

This support had a direct impact to national and local protection actors, community groups, women's rights organizations and others who have been leading action and engaging in responding to the most vulnerable individuals through daily efforts. 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.



Our gratitude goes to our field colleagues, Protection Cluster Coordinators and co-coordinators, 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.

The GPC is grateful to our main donors that have generously supported our operations and our protection field colleagues in raising awareness and advocating for the rights of persons affected by crises. Thanks to your generosity and collective investment, our partners have reached collective protection outcomes through smarter funding, multi-sectorial approaches and integrated programming. The GPC also welcomes multi-agency and member states deployments and contributions from the European Union, Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Australia (Walk Free Foundation), the Danish Refugee Council, HelpAge International, Humanity and Inclusion, IMMAP, IOM, IrishAid, NEAR, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam, ProCap, Save the Children, UNHCR, WRC – building on comparative advantages and expertise within the sector.

We would like to express our gratitude to all Representatives of Cluster Lead Agencies and organisations that are heading the Areas of Responsibilities: NRC (HLP AoR), UNFPA (GBV AoR), UNICEF (CP AoR), UNMAS (MA AoR) and the GPC Task Teams, namely the TT on Law and Policy (UNHCR) the TT on Human Rights Engagement (UNHCR, SGI, the LWF), the TT on Anti-Trafficking (IOM, UNHCR), the TT on Advocacy (NEAR, Oxfam), and the TT on Cash for Protection (Save the Children, WRC).

We thank the SAG GPC members who, despite other commitments, ensured the system-wide response guided the GPC strategy. Thank you to UNFPA, UNICEF, UNMAS, UNDP, OCHA, OHCHR, DRC, IOM, NRC, DRC, Interaction, IRC, ICVA, JurisConsulte, UNHCR, NEAR, WFP, ICRC, International Rescue Committee, HelpAge International Humanity and Inclusion, IFRC, ODI Oxfam, Save the children, WFP, the GPC AoRs, the GPC TTs and last but not least, the GPC Operations Cell.

Finally, a special thanks to the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons and everyone who contributed and participated in events, forums and initiatives that were organized by the GPC this year.

We would like to thank you all warmly for your generosity and your sincere commitment to people with protection needs.

We look forward to strengthening collaboration with you in the coming year.



