

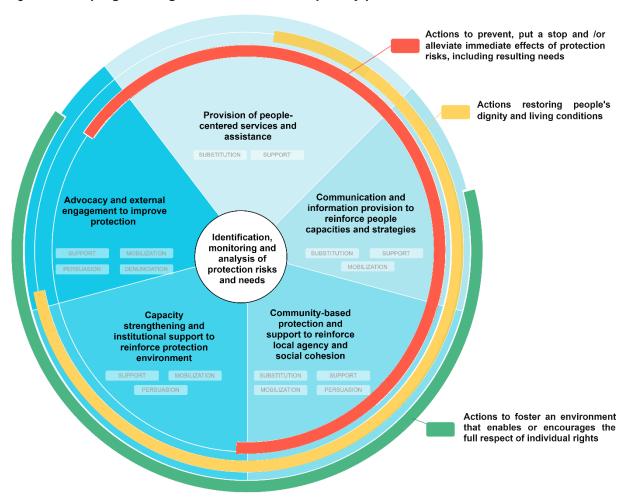
Protection Programming Modalities and Activities in Cluster Settings

Protection Clusters coordinate protection activities and support the identification of priority protection risks and related actions to prevent, address and mitigate them. There are four specialized areas – Child Protection (CP), Housing, Land and Property (HLP), Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Mine Action (MA),. These specialized areas are termed as the 'Areas of Responsibility' or AoRs.

Beyond above areas, a comprehensive protection response includes a wide range of other activities contributing to prevent and/or reduce protection risks of affected persons. The purpose of this note is to consolidate and frame these, noting that, in many situations, modalities and activities described hereafter are also implemented in the response to CP, HLP, GBV and MA. Protection Cluster coordinators have the **dual responsibility** of coordinating the Protection Cluster as whole and of ensuring the coordination of protection actors and activities described in this document.

A Protection Cluster coordinated response is intended to encompass and enable proactive efforts to address the impact of protection risks on affected people in humanitarian crises, through the implementation of a **joined-up strategy**. This includes both collective actions by Protection Clusters coordination teams and partners, and direct implementation of programming modalities and activities by protection actors.

Systematic protection analysis of the situation, aimed at identifying drivers and factors exposing individuals and communities to protection risks and related human rights violations, is foundational to the Protection Cluster response. Based on this analysis which must always benefit from a range of inputs (including from non-protection actors as well as affected people themselves), the **protection cluster response** brings together **core programming modalities** to address **priority protection risks**.





These can involve preventing, put a stop and/or alleviate immediate effects of protection risks, including resulting needs, restoring people's dignity and living conditions and/or fostering an environment that enables or encourages the full respect of individual rights, considering the operating environment, capacities, and context, and enabling pathways to long-term recovery, self-sufficiency and durable solutions from the start in line with the 8 criteria of the IASC framework on durable solutions.

The above diagram¹ illustrates how ongoing identification, monitoring and analysis of protection risks is the starting point for **designing multi-stakeholder operational response strategies** that are **context-specific, localized and prioritized**. The response strategy's design hinges on the PAF and the Protection Cluster joined-up approach to protection analysis. It identifies the severity of protection risks by analyzing the threats affecting people, their effects and the interplay of vulnerabilities and capacities that shape these effects, including access constraints. This ensures that interventions are context-specific, maximize effectiveness, and address both immediate and long-term needs of displaced populations and host communities.

In humanitarian crises, the overarching aim is to prevent, mitigate or end actual and potential risks, including violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, where clusters play a pivotal role in defining early action and rapid response. It is critical that protection strategies ensure a robust focus on **responsive** and remedial measures for high-severity protection risks, including through direct assistance and service delivery, as opposed to solely environment-building efforts. Protection modalities may also differ according to the stage of humanitarian crises, considering:

- Prevention, preparedness and early actions: aim to reduce risks before they occur and to lay down groundwork for solutions from the start.
- Early warning and rapid response activities: identify and respond quickly to emerging or ongoing
 protection risks and resulting needs.
- Emergency response activities²: provide immediate assistance and protection to those at risk or affected by an emergency, with measures that consider future stability and longer-term recovery for durable solution.
- Longer-term recovery and reintegration activities: support the transition from emergency response to longer-term recovery and reintegration of affected individuals and communities, as well as environment building to prevent the reoccurrence of risks, fostering conditions conducive to sustainable, durable solutions.

The following provides a framework of core programming modalities and indicative protection activities and interventions³ that can be used for reference in designing (or updating) a **context-specific**, **localized and prioritized** Protection Cluster response. Protection Cluster coordination teams should work to understand the activities their partners are already doing and those they think are applicable to the context. The programming modalities and subcategories in the table below are intended to be useful to articulate the aims and strategies of an overall response⁴.

The more detailed lists of activities thereafter are not exhaustive and only meant to illustrate examples that can be included in a protection response. They must not be used as either a checklist or a minimum standard. These lists encompass both the functions and processes that facilitate an effective response, as well as the direct activities implemented as part of that response.

The framework is presented in six main programming modalities, as follows:

¹ As indicated, programming modalities can be geared toward different aspects of the "Protection Egg Model," To effectively respond to protection risks identified, protection partners will need a shared understanding of the level of intervention (responsive, remedial, environment-building) together with the modes of action, or the type of protection programming, that are needed and possible in a given context.

² The CERF (Central Emergency Response Fund) Life-saving criteria provide a set of core protection activities.

³ This reference has been compiled by the GPC Ops Cell, in 2024, based on a review of 14 protection cluster response plans and more than 600 activities mapped through 5Ws. The initial mapping was further elaborated to reflect programs and activities implemented by protection partners, and those interventions frequently implemented by partners of the GPC Task Teams and Working Groups.

⁴ The GPC considers this to be a living document that can be updated, based on improvements to reporting and analysis of operational responses. The GPC acknowledges the contribution of protection programming carried out by partners that is not reported under the 5W framework.



IDENTIFICATION, MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF PROTECTION RISKS AND RESULTING NEEDS	PROVISION OF PEOPLE-CENTERED SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE	COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION AND SUPPORT TO REINFORCE LOCAL AGENCY AND SOCIAL COHESION
Identify, monitor and analyze protection risks, and resulting needs to tailor responses for affected people and continually adjust based on changing circumstances.	Promptly address the most pressing humanitarian needs, and actively contribute to prevent, mitigate and respond to the immediate effects of threats.	Empower and equip local communities to proactively reduce protection risks and strengthen their self-protection capacities.
 Protection monitoring Protection assessments and consultations, including risks identification Protection analysis, including prioritization of critical protection risks 	 Individual protection assistance, including protection case management, mediation as well as provision of various forms of assistance, including cash Legal services (information, counseling, legal assistance) Assistance and support to ensure safe spaces and environments Referral to respond to protection risks and resulting needs, including protection desks Coordination and support for intersectional safeguards in preparedness, contingency planning and response 	 Community-based/led activities to prevent, reduce or address protection risks Strengthened community self-protection through community-based/led protection planning and activities Conflict/dispute resolution and social cohesion interventions Establishment or strengthening of community mechanisms, including local structures and networks Protection by presence
COMMUNICATION & PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO REINFORCE PEOPLE'S CAPACITIES AND STRATEGIES	CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT TO REINFORCE THE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT	ADVOCACY AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT TO IMPROVE PROTECTION
Guarantee critical information to individuals to understand and claim their rights and make informed decisions to cope with existing threats and their consequences.	Address critical capacity, skill and capability gaps exacerbating or enabling protection risks and resulting needs of affected people stemming from protection threats and their consequences.	Change drivers of protection risks (including behaviors, norms, policies, practices and laws) that cannot be fully addressed or mitigated through humanitarian protection response alone.
 Rights awareness Protection risks education and awareness Awareness, information, communication and education campaigns to access rights and entitlements Early warning systems 	 Capacity strengthening for local and national authorities, other actors responsible for adhering to laws and policies and protection service providers Institutional and technical support on laws and policies Training of frontline responders and protection actors Training of other humanitarian actors and non-protection service providers 	 Specific advocacy to strengthen protection through law and policy Targeted private or public advocacy actions, strategies and campaigns Advocacy and engagement for the realization of the Centrality of Protection, including integrating and mainstreaming protection into humanitarian response. Mediation, negotiation and conflict resolution Strengthening of advocacy and lobby efforts on protection

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IDENTIFICATION, MONITORING AND ANALYSIS OF PROTECTION RISKS AND RESULTING NEEDS

Objective: Identifying, monitoring and analyzing protection risks and resulting needs to tailor strategies and response for affected people. This enables continuous adjustment based on evolving circumstances, to reduce threats, mitigate related vulnerabilities and strengthen capacities that shape protection risks. It harnesses the efforts of all actors, ensuring effective response to protection needs.

Operational Description

Implementing these actions entails making efficient use of available information and data and tailoring rapid protection assessments, household visits, focus groups, and community visits to each context to identify and refer people in need, and obtain critical data on protection risks and resulting needs. Monitoring displacement trends and tracking protection risks is part of this process, ensuring that operational analysis is thorough without overburdening affected people with excessive data collection. These activities yield invaluable insights for informed decision-making, strategic design and response planning, aiding in the prioritization of interventions, building on the agency of affected people and local/national actors defining advocacy priorities and messages, and allocating resources where they are most essential.

Indicative activities⁵

- Coordination and support to IM and analysis
- (Rapid) Protection assessments and consultations, including to identify obstacles and barriers driving risk
- Establishment or reinforcement of monitoring systems for protection risks and resulting needs
- Preparation of risk assessment tools before disaster Assessment of national capacity for protection and assistance to affected people
- Tracking and analysis of displacement trends
- Protection analysis, including prioritization of most critical protection risks and resulting needs
- Protection monitoring, including of protection incidents, returns, arrests/detention, etc.

- Monitoring and analysis to prevent discrimination, including of persons with specific needs
- Mapping of people who are hard to reach
- Mapping and identification of safe locations for access to essential services
- Mapping of potential sources of security concerns
- Conflict sensitivity analysis, including assessment of community tensions, potential sources of violence or exposure
- Risk assessment of sites where affected people continue to stay or have fled to
- Analysis of safety routes and key sites
- Safety audits and identification of hotspots
- Incident monitoring

Coherence with norms and policies

The critical importance of in-depth, continuous and integrated analysis of the protection situation is grounded in several protection and humanitarian policies and principles. Both the <u>ICRC's Professional Standards for Protection Work</u> and the <u>IASC Protection Policy</u> emphasize the critical role of continuous protection analysis in informing effective humanitarian interventions and strategic decision-making.

Joined-up approach

Protection actors from all technical sectors should work together on both holistic and specialized analysis, that recognizes, from the perspective of the community, how protection risks inter-relate with one another. An approach to identification and monitoring of protection risks must build on significant joined-up efforts across the diverse protection areas of work, around a set of agreed outcomes that can provide an understanding of the collective contribution to them. By combining the identification and monitoring efforts of all protection cluster members, including those delivering specialized services, one ensures a comprehensive grasp of community-specific protection risks and resulting needs. This integration streamlines data collection and lessens the burden on affected people while enhancing responsiveness to ever-changing situations. It emphasizes the principle of asking less but delving deeper to gain a nuanced understanding of the situation. This approach promotes an efficient, timely, and data-savvy response, maximizing the effectiveness of each actor's contributions, and fosters collective protection risk reduction.

⁵ Enabling functions and processes are highlighted in light blue.



PROVISION OF PEOPLE-CENTERED SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

Objective: Targeted essential services, case management and individual protection assistance aim to promptly address the most pressing humanitarian needs in a people-centered manner. The services actively contribute to reducing vulnerabilities and enhancing the inherent capacities of affected people, preventing their exposure to further risks, and to mitigating and responding to immediate effects of threats.

Operational Description

Operationalizing this core action requires the delivery of essential assistance, including legal services, mental health and psychosocial support, victim/survivor assistance and any other required protection services. It also involves creating referral and outreach systems to ensure individuals access the right services. The activities are not designed in isolation from other sectors and involve ensuring and integrating intersectional and protection sensitive actions, and that services are extended to hard-to-reach populations.

Indicative activities

- Mobile and remote service delivery
- Implementation and management of a referral pathway system
- Support and capacity strengthening on referral mechanisms
- Ensuring intersectional approach in preparedness and response
- Access to gender-responsive & confidential services
- Safe and accessible feedback and complaints mechanisms
- Integration of protection and health services
- Establishing and managing safe multipurpose protection desks
- Individual case management for survivors of violence
- Provision of legal assistance, including on documentation and HLP issues
- Provision of psychosocial counselling, MHPSS support
- Family tracing and reunification

- Assistance for hard-to-reach individuals
- Provision of financial or in-kind assistance (cash, voucher / CVA) for protection outcomes
 - Support for evacuated persons' reception and protection
 - Reaching out to injured persons and persons with disabilities for specific health, rehabilitation and assistive needs
- Psychosocial and material support for reunified families
- Identification and material, financial & psychosocial support for care arrangements within the community (e.g. for persons with disabilities or older persons)
- Facilitating access to restorative justice programs
- Referrals to professional mediators, provision of mediation support
- Transportation assistance (access to assistance for persons with disabilities, older persons, others)
- Communication assistance (cell phones, solar chargers, etc.)

Coherence with norms and policies

The provision of protection assistance is enshrined into several IHL and IHRL frameworks and procedures, including the Geneva Conventions, the <u>UDHR</u>, <u>ICCPR</u> and the <u>ICESCR</u>. It is further inscribed both in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the Kampala Convention. The <u>ICRC's Professional Standards for Protection Work</u> outline the need to respond to humanitarian protection needs, along with the necessity of concerted and complementary efforts to address protection outcomes. Finally, the <u>IASC Protection Policy</u>, as well as the IASC Policy for the protection of IDPs underline the importance of direct assistance to people subjected to violence, abuse, coercion and deliberate deprivation occurring in humanitarian crises.

Joined-up approach

A joined-up approach to the provision of services and assistance must capitalize on the streamlined collective efforts of all areas of protection, including gender-based violence, child protection, mine action, and housing, land, and property. Knowledge, expertise and resources should be combined, when feasible, to deliver a comprehensive response that also accounts for the specific intersectional vulnerabilities arising from various protection risks. This integrated approach should aim to avoid fragmentation by establishing services that are people-centered and mitigate the immediate effects of threats while fostering a resilient and responsive protection model e.g. by addressing the needs of children and parents concomitantly.



COMMUNICATION AND PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO REINFORCE PEOPLE'S CAPACITIES AND STRATEGIES

Objective: Ensuring access to critical information for individuals to exercise their fundamental rights and make informed decisions to cope with existing threats and their consequences. It reduces vulnerabilities, enhances protective capacities and supports decision-making in response to threats and their consequences.

Operational Description

Implementing this action involves discussing with people about the type of information they have and need, their preferred methods of communication, how they can provide and receive feedback and how they can support monitoring protection impact. It is about fostering discussions and community-level awareness on rights and obligations, protection risks and conflict resolution, and contributing to concrete areas of knowledge that are essential to ensure people have and can harness their own agency.

Indicative activities

- Mapping of communication preferences
- Regular discussion groups
- Organizing family messaging services in a language understood by affected people
- Preparation of community safety messages and protocols during displacement, evacuations or returns
- Joint discussion, documentation and analysis of protection trends with communities
- Thematic or focused awareness campaigns, including on protection risks, human rights, IHL and others
- Awareness-raising among persons exposed to disaster consequences about new risks
- Contact initiatives (i.e. community events, public announcements, activity days)
- Distribution of information material, including information packages in accessible language for different groups (brail, audio, etc.)
- Comprehensive public information campaigns on return, local integration, and settlement
- Community-level information sessions on protection risk awareness

- Legal awareness campaigns and information provision (e.g., on civil documentation, evictions, tenure agreement, etc.)
- Information/consultation, including with the general public
- Installation of signposts indicating evacuation routes/shelter locations in high-risk areas
- Specific education campaigns on the risks of landmines, gender-based violence and child protection
- Awareness-raising on risks posed by armed forces and groups and risks of human trafficking
- Establishing information/ communication mechanisms (media reports, databases, information centers) for IDPs
- Awareness raising for non-protection humanitarian actors and/or non-humanitarian actors
- Establishment of locally-led early warning mechanisms and systems
- Door-to-door calls, employing media for hearingand sight-impaired persons
- Targeted information campaigns for hard-to-reach groups in local languages in accessible format

Coherence with norms and policies

The right to seek, receive or have access to information is clearly stated in specific treaties and declarations, such as in Art. 19 of the UDHR and Art. 19 of the ICCPR. The fundamental role of ensuring people's access to information is well established in the application of Accountability of Affected Population principles in humanitarian settings.

Joined-up approach

A joined-up approach to communication and information provision must be grounded in a coherent, targeted process to collectively address specific protection risks. Rather than engaging the affected people in multiple and isolated awareness sessions and other activities with the risk of exhausting their availability and attention, agencies should plan collaborative approaches to community engagement and information sharing and should seek to minimize the amount of time and burden these take for community representatives and members. A more joined-up approach ensures that awareness efforts are context-specific and empower communities with comprehensive knowledge to create a safer culture of protection from their perspective, not from the perspective of humanitarian actors. This approach enhances the overall response to their needs and promotes efficient knowledge sharing and management.



COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION AND SUPPORT TO REINFORCE AGENCY AND SOCIAL COHESION

Objective: Community-Based Protection actions aim to empower local communities to proactively reduce protection risks and strengthen their self-protection capacities, creating an environment where individuals collectively and safely support one another and take agency to reduce protection risks and address immediate needs resulting from protection threats.

Operational Description

Operationalizing community-based protection involves supporting, strengthening or establishing community mechanisms, structures and committees. Activities include community dialogues on conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and informal conflict management. It also encompasses support for socioeconomic and educational reintegration, as well as specific projects led by community members, particularly by groups facing systemic marginalization..

Indicative activities

- Support for community-led initiatives in various sectors and for different population groups using an age, gender and diversity (AGD) lens
- Community outreach for protection awareness
- Community-based decision-making processes, strategies and planning
- Support and strengthening of community selfprotection capacities
- Support or creation of local committees (protection, disaster management, others)
- Activities promoting conflict/dispute resolution, peaceful coexistence and social cohesion
- Mediation services at community level
- Community dialogue on formal and informal conflict management mechanisms
- Disaster risk management planning at the community level
- Protection by presence

- Community activities for risk mitigation, including in disaster-prone areas
- Quick impact projects or support to specific community micro-projects to address protection risks
- Community-based psycho-social support programs for adolescents and youth
- Establishment and management of community centers
- Deployment of community frontline protection responders
- · Community mobilization to prevent violence
- · Recreational activities
- Community activities for de-escalation of tensions caused by environmental degradation, resource competition, exclusion, etc.
- Establishment of local paralegal structures and networks.
- · Community-based risk reduction initiatives

Coherence with norms and policies

International humanitarian law, human rights frameworks and established policies recognize the centrality of enabling and empowering local communities to actively contribute to their own protection, emphasizing it as a core aspect of a rights-based approach in humanitarian action.

Joined-up Approach

Communities can identify the protection risks as well as how they should be addressed. A joined-up approach to community-based protection putting people first cultivates a sense of ownership among affected populations, strengthens social cohesion, and reduces harm and vulnerability to threats. Such a joined-up approach unifies efforts across various protection areas, fostering synergy rather than parallel mechanisms. It optimizes efficiency and strengthens accountability by avoiding duplication. Protection actors must jointly assess both their individual approaches and combined efforts to ensure they directly strengthen the agency of affected people. Aligning tools and mechanisms to preserve community agency is essential, as it enables emergency response to leverage the self-protection capacities and collaborative development of affected people, allowing for more immediate, community-driven action rather than exclusive reliance on humanitarian actors.



CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT TO REINFORCE THE PROTECTION ENVIRONMENT

Objective: Capacity strengthening actions should aim to address critical capacity, skills and capability gaps exacerbating or enabling the effects of protection threats to affected people that shape protection risks and resulting needs.

Operational Description

To implement this action, training programs, workshops, and knowledge-sharing initiatives are organized. They cover a wide array of topics, including human rights, international humanitarian law, advocacy, and crosscutting issues like gender, inclusion, and protection risks. Capacity strengthening also involves strengthening institutions, communities and partners to support and sustain protection efforts. It is a proactive approach to ensure a resilient protection environment.

Indicative activities

- Peer-to-Peer support
- Training and mentoring on case management or referrals
- Reinforcement of services availability
- · Capacity building for service provision
- Capacity strengthening for local authorities and service providers
- Capacity strengthening on crosscutting issues (AGD, inclusion, AAP, protection risks), including for authorities, protection providers, frontline responders, community volunteers, the media, etc.
- Support for the adoption or amendment of laws and policies
- Support for the domestication of the Kampala Convention
- · Training on IDP protection and Guiding Principles

- Institutional support to strengthen national legal frameworks
- Building law enforcement capacity to respond to trafficking, exploitation and other forms of violence
- Support to inclusion of trained female law enforcement/ security staff
- Training on protection mainstreaming for governmental authorities in evacuation exercises
- Training law enforcement personnel for emergency situations
- Support community evacuation exercises before disasters
- Capacity building, additional staff, and support for administrative and judicial authorities
- Capacity building on human rights and international humanitarian law

Coherence with norms and policies

Strengthening capacities as critical to effective application of protection mechanisms is fundamental to the realization of States and other duty bearers' obligations under IHL, several Human Rights treaties, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, etc. The IASC Protection Policy underlines the importance of capacity building to consolidate an environment conducive to full respect for the rights of individuals.

Joined-up approach

A joined-up approach that leverages the collective efforts to address protection risks of all protection partners and actors, requires a coordinated effort in capacity strengthening. By identifying common capacity gaps that contribute to increasing harm from existing protection threats, protection actors should design and implement comprehensive capacity support strategies, training and knowledge-sharing programs that are targeted at the holistic needs of institutions and communities to specifically address protection risks. Synergies between specialists and pooling of expertise is critical to address the gaps exacerbating or enabling harm to population. The joined-up efforts should build only on capacity strengthening strategies that effectively contribute to reduce consequences of threats, and not on general support to bolster protection capacities across the humanitarian system.



ADVOCACY AND EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT TO REINFORCE PROTECTION

Objective: Change drivers of protection risks (including behaviors, policies, practices and laws) that cannot be fully addressed or mitigated through humanitarian protection response alone.

Operational Description: Advocacy and lobby efforts include targeted campaigns, continuous dialogue with decision-makers, external engagement and partnerships with other actors. This action engages with government authorities, donor agencies, humanitarian clusters, and civil society to foster a protective environment. It also involves the publication of public and private reports, lobby notes, targeted briefings, and discussion papers to communicate protection risks and solutions effectively. By advocating for the rights and needs of affected populations, this core action reinforces the overall protection framework.

Indicative activities

- · Coordination and support to advocacy campaigns
- Dissemination and presentation of Protection Analysis Updates and analysis findings
- Capacity Strengthening on Protection Analysis
- Recommended key protection outcomes for different sectors in work plans and immediate response
- Engagement and coordination to ensure protection into humanitarian planning and response
- · Advocacy campaigns
- Protection negotiation, including on humanitarian access
- Sensitization campaigns on protection risks and protective factors
- Protection-sensitive solutions mapping and advocacy
- Mediation and negotiation with national authorities, duty bearers and with parties to conflict
- External engagement to ensure evacuation plans address the needs of hard-to-reach people

- External engagement to ensure training programs avoid reinforcing existing social or gender divisions of labor
- External engagement to ensure equal access to material, financial, and legal assistance
- Inclusion of analysis of potential tensions into humanitarian response planning
- Inclusion of strategies to prevent sexual violence in food and nutrition programs
- Advocacy for setting up special mechanisms with simplified procedures when necessary
- Advocacy on behalf of affected persons faced with prohibition of return not in accordance with international standards
- Advocacy for amendments to laws and procedures to safeguard specific rights, including removal of legal and administrative obstacles hindering protection, local integration, and settlement of IDPs

Coherence with norms and policies

Mobilization, persuasion and denunciation are critical actions to guarantee the realization of States and other duty bearers' obligations under IHL, several Human Rights treaties, and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The IASC Protection Policy underscores advocacy as a transversal action critical to protection.

Joined-up approach

The joined-up approach must build on the interconnectedness of various areas, like the links between gender-based violence and displacement, child safety and landmines, or property disputes and protection risks. Collaboration and information sharing among experts in gender-based violence, child protection, mine action, and property matters are vital. While gender-based violence specialists advocate for survivors' rights, mine action teams ensure physical safety and access for protection efforts. This collaborative approach should focus on reducing immediate risks and resulting needs, as well as addressing underlying causes and systemic issues that need action by duty bearers and decision makers to guarantee sustainable long-term solutions. While communication on specific funding gaps is critical, the consolidated approach should inscribe them in the most critical drivers of harm and abuse independently from specific mandates.