



# Locally-led Protection Analysis Survey – Synthesis Report

The Protection Analysis Local Actor Network (PALAN), in collaboration with the Global Protection Cluster, IRC, Oxfam, Christian Blind Mission (CBM), Danish Refugee Council, Action Against Hunger, ProLAC, and other collaborating agencies are working together to learn about current practices and experiences of local civil society organizations conducting and leading protection analysis. This includes challenges and barriers they face, enablers and promising practices, and recommendations to advance more inclusive and locally led interagency initiatives. As part of this work, a global survey was conducted in December 2025 - January 2026, disseminated by research partners through internal and interagency channels connected to protection, analysis, and local humanitarian action.<sup>1</sup>

The following report outlines the key findings of this survey, including top recommendations highlighted by respondents for international NGOs, coordination fora, and donors.

## Methodology

A total of 113 individuals participated in the survey from diverse organizations, regions and sectors<sup>2</sup>. Overarching demographic data included:

- **Gender:** 57% male / 42% female / 1% prefer not to say
- **Sector of work:** 73% Protection, 12% Diversity and Inclusion, 6% Food Security and Livelihoods
- **Protection sub-specialization:** 44% women’s protection and empowerment / 28% Integrated protection / 18% Child protection
- **Region of work:** 43% East Africa / 14% Central Africa / 12% Latin America / 12% MENA / 10 % Asia / 4% West Africa / 4% Global

- **Organization type:** see Figure 1

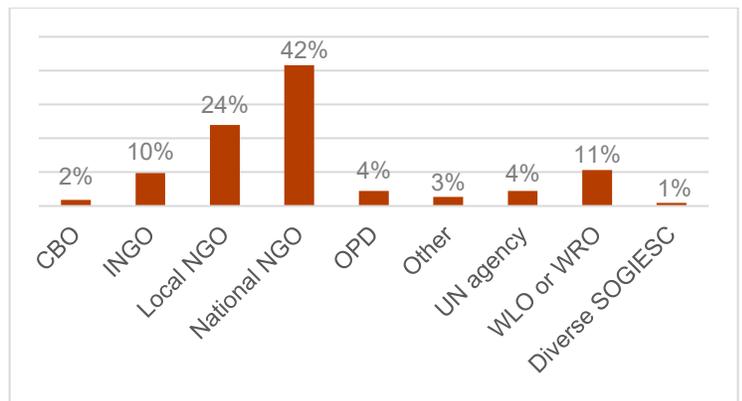


Figure 1: Respondent by type of organization

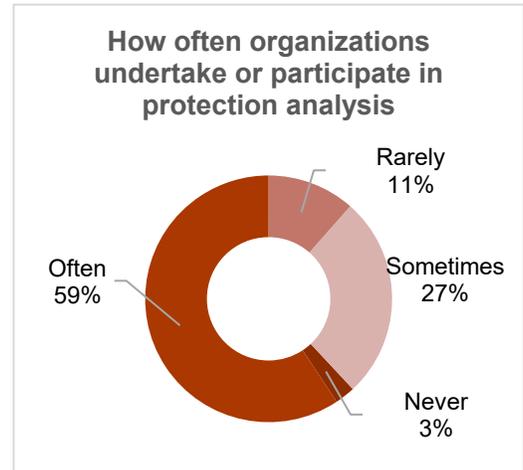
<sup>1</sup> including the PALAN network, the Global Protection Cluster and national coordinators listserv, the Child Protection Alliance, the GBV Call to Action, and relevant internal/partnership channels of collaborating agencies in the research.

<sup>2</sup> The survey was shared (in English, Arabic, French, and Spanish) through global channels linked to protection analysis initiatives, so survey respondents were more likely to have been involved in the coordination system and engaged at some level in protection analysis. These survey findings may not include the views of those outside the coordination or humanitarian protection systems. We also recognize that there is an uneven geographic spread which may reflect how the survey was cascaded. The survey is complemented by a literature review and additional consultations, including with community-based organizations and Organizations of Persons with Disabilities to better understand the specific experiences of these actor types, which are not captured in this specific synthesis report.

## Current practices

**59% of respondents say they often undertake or participate in protection analysis, followed by 27% who sometimes do.** 3% said they have never undertaken an analysis while 11% do so rarely.

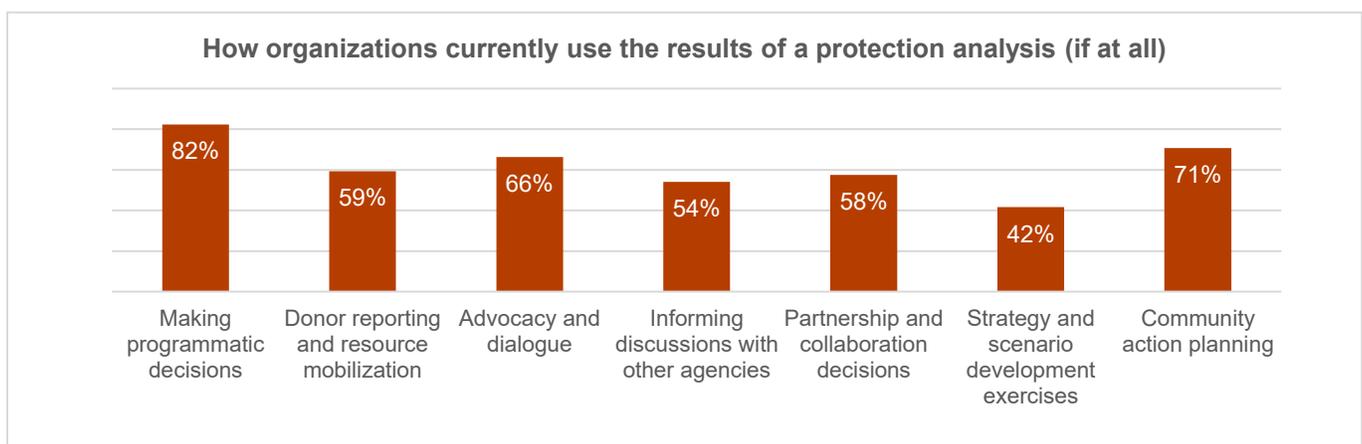
Organizations engaging in protection analysis reported doing so collaboratively at all levels and independently. **The majority (61%) did so through an interagency process organized by the Protection cluster/former Area of Responsibility.** Over half also did so in collaboration with INGOS (58%) or with local communities (58%), as well as with local/national NGOs (56%) or independently (54%). When working with local stakeholders, **nearly all (93%) did so in collaboration with communities.**



Organizations in East Africa and LATAM were far more likely to engage at the interagency level while those in MENA reported the lowest engagement at the interagency level (29%) and were far more likely to conduct protection analysis independently (71%). Moreover, national NGOs engaged at the interagency level at much higher rates compared to local NGOs or WLOs/WROs (70% compared to 42% and 45%). **Only 1 OPD surveyed reported participating in an interagency-led exercise.**

**Whether working with international or local stakeholders to conduct protection analysis, organizations were mostly involved in gathering data (86%),** followed by design (67%), analysis and recommendation-setting (66%) and strategic planning based on the analysis (58%). 77% of all organizations said they had a role in leading the design or implementation of the joint analysis.

**The most common use of protection analysis findings is to inform programmatic decision-making (82%).** Organizations also commonly use results for community action planning (71%) and advocacy and dialogue (66%). The lowest reported use is for strategy and scenario development exercises at 42%. In addition to the specific uses related to risk-reduction activities and strategies, respondents also highlighted the role protection analysis plays in accountability and cultivating community buy-in and trust.



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## Challenges to participate in and lead protection analysis

*“A genuine shift towards “local leadership” requires a structural change in how power and resources are distributed in the humanitarian sector, not merely the involvement of local organizations as implementing contractors.” – OPD from the MENA region*

Survey respondents were asked to rank their three biggest challenges to **meaningful participation** in protection analysis, and three main issues arose distinctly across all responses. **Lack of resources (human, financial, time) was by far the more important challenge, mentioned by 80% of respondents and with the highest score of 66%**<sup>3</sup>. This was followed by barriers related to physical and information accessibility (49% score) and being invited to contribute to some tasks or moments but not the entire process (43% score). Few organizations reported lack of confidence, ability or organizational buy-in as primary barriers to meaningful participation.

**Top 5 challenges faced by local and representative organizations to meaningfully participate in the protection analysis process (including using the analysis)**



When asked to rank the three main challenges to **lead** protection analysis, responses somewhat shifted compared to meaningful participation. Lack of resources remained the main barrier, once again mentioned by 80% of respondents with a weighted score of 66%. Limited technical capacity or understanding of how to lead the process was the second most important challenge (53% score), followed by lack of adapted guidance, tools and materials available (37% score).

<sup>3</sup> Participants ranked their top 3 choices on challenges to meaningfully participate, to lead and the type of support required for locally-led protection analysis. Responses were weighed and combined to provide a score out of 100 for each question.

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## Key recommendations

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*“Protection analysis will be more accurate and impactful when local actors are actively included in all stages of the process, and when their participation is meaningfully supported with resources, technical guidance, and leadership opportunities” – Local NGO respondents from Somalia*

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When asked to how humanitarian actors or coordination bodies could better support local organizations to lead or co-lead aspects of protection analysis, the top five ranked recommendations include:

- ★ Strengthen capacities in the form of trainings, mentoring and coaching based on stakeholder priorities and needs in the context (78%).
- ★ Provide funding or financial support to analysis, coordination, community engagement functions (46%).
- ★ Provide funding to use protection analysis findings and implement recommendations (25%).
- ★ Strengthen accessibility (physical, informational) in joint analysis initiatives (23%).
- ★ Strengthen outreach to local and representative organizations and strengthen leadership pathways (23%).