

Consultation event report

# **Coordination and Collaboration with the GPC: The next 5 years**

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On 26 November, the International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection (PHAP) and the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) organized a consultation event on how the coordination role of the GPC could be improved over the coming five years. The event took the form of an expert panel discussion with active participation from attendees via chat, Q&A, and live polls.<sup>1</sup> The event was preceded by a brief survey on the current state of protection coordination; how protection coordination could be improved; and the role of the GPC. This report outlines the results of the webinar and survey and provides recommendations for the GPC Strategic Framework for 2020-2024.

<sup>1</sup> Recordings of the webinar are available at <https://phap.org/26nov2019>

## Key statistics:

 **602** event registrations

 **249** participants in the live webinar<sup>2</sup>

 **162** in the event platform

 **48** in the YouTube video livestream

 **39** in the audio only livestream

 **353** viewers and listeners of recorded events to date<sup>3</sup>

 **14** Adobe Connect recording views

 **68** YouTube recording views

 **271** Audio podcast downloads

 **160** pre-event survey respondents

<sup>2</sup> The count of live participants only includes unique logins. Most webinars organized by PHAP has several groups of varying sizes logging in jointly, in which case they are only counted once.

<sup>3</sup> Recording statistics compiled on 2 February 2020.

## Summary recommendations and key takeaways:

### Pre-event survey:

- There is an overall view of that there is insufficient coordination of protection. This is attributed by many to insufficient resources, a lack of trust between humanitarian actors, as well as a vagueness in the protection concept and shared protection outcomes.
- There is a split view among practitioners regarding protection coordination between most actors as functioning poorly or well. Coordination between government agencies and other actors is, however, seen as functioning particularly poorly.
- The coordination between the GPC and AoR is seen as well functioning in some circumstances and in need of major improvement in others.
- The GPC is currently seen as an important actor for coordination, but there is a considerable discrepancy with the leading role that respondents envisage for the GPC.
- Respondents suggest strengthening the GPC's role in five areas: capacity building, coordination measures, local engagement and localization, recruitment of key personnel, and simplification of protection coordination.

### Webinar:

- Leadership is needed for protection coordination in general, and especially in prioritizing protection issues and defining clear common protection outcomes so that the full range of actors and expertise available can be fully utilized. Clearly defining such outcomes also allows for simplifying coordination mechanisms between humanitarian protection actors.
- The GPC has an important role to play for data management, analysis, and strategy.
- All actors need to better understand what the nexus means in practice for them. When transitioning from an urgent response to a more stable situation, it is critical to strengthen coordination with development actors and other stakeholders and the GPC should provide guidance to help structure relationships on the ground. The GPC should also consider promoting nexus reforms in wider humanitarian reform discussions in general and for protection in particular. However, there are existing actors nationally that can help bridge the humanitarian-development-peace divides.
- We should actively counteract a division between protection and assistance, which is often counterproductive in itself, and also results in excluding actors without an explicit protection mandate. Similarly, the GPC should support a less rigid approach to response in mixed situations with IDPs and other groups of affected people.
- There is insufficient engagement and learning between national protection clusters. The GPC should expand its work to regularly engage and bring together national clusters.
- Regionalization is an opportunity for improved coordination, but the GPC could help clarify the roles and mechanisms at the global, regional, and local levels.
- The roles and responsibilities of cluster coordinators and co-coordinators require clarification, and the GPC should consider drafting a global template MoU for the relationship between the two.
- More training is needed for coordinators and co-coordinators on soft skills related to coordination, but this can be standardized and delivered globally by the GPC.
- There is need for further global guidance on several operational issues for protection, including needs assessment, strategic planning involving government agencies, and interfaces between coordination mechanisms, especially in transition periods. Importantly, any such guidance needed to be practically oriented in a way that it can be contextualized for different responses.

## Survey results

In order to gather the views of a broader range of practitioners in the sector ahead of the webinar, a survey was organized for the webinar registrants. The survey served dual purposes: on the one hand to inform the webinar planning and on the other to provide direct input to the Strategic Framework drafting process.

Crosstabs have been carried out in terms of region based in, geographic scope of work, and organization type and any notable differences in responses are reported. However, as the selection of respondents was not randomized, no formal statistical tests were carried out on the data.

Free-text responses have been cleaned up and categorized by primary theme. The full list of responses can be found in *Appendix 1*.

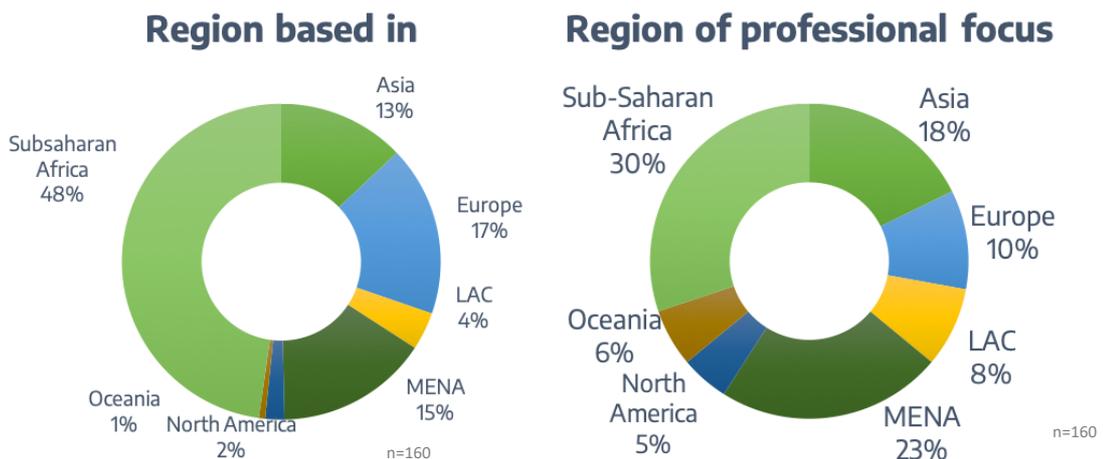
## Survey respondent demographics

### Basic demographics

The pre-event survey gathered a total of **160 responses**<sup>4</sup> from webinar registrants from **64 countries**. Respondents based in **Sub-Saharan Africa** were particularly well represented. However, when taking into account the **regions that their work is focused on**, the representation of **Asia** and **MENA** grew to about a fifth each of the respondents, and **LAC** and **Oceania** to 8% and 6% respectively.

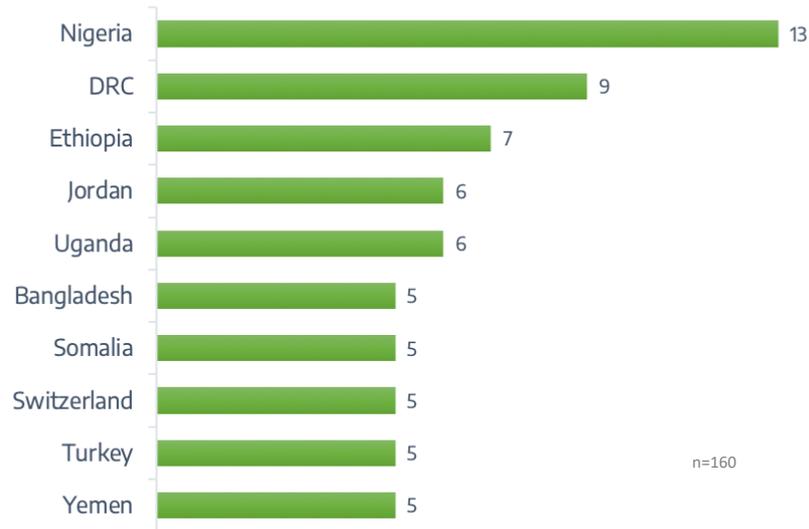
There was an **even split** between those with an **international and national scope of work**. The respondents included respondents from **all organization types**, but unlike previous events, there was a particularly strong turnout among **UN and other intergovernmental organizations**. The **gender balance** was **fairly even**, but with a slight majority of female respondents.

71% of respondents were protection specialists, which is a considerably higher proportion than in the previous two consultation events.

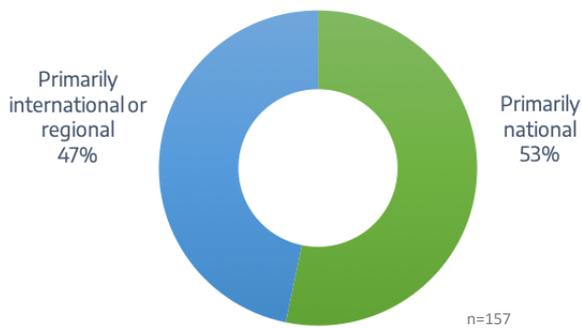


<sup>4</sup> Of the 160 responses, 141 were complete responses and 19 were incomplete but responded to the demographic questions and at least one of the substantive questions.

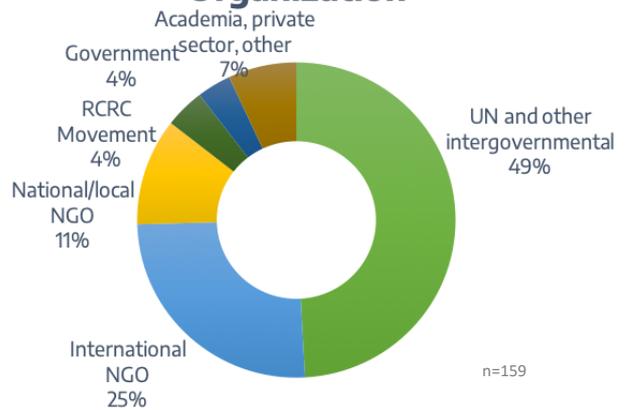
### Top 10 countries based in



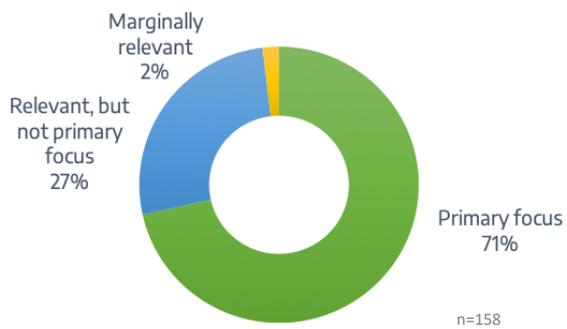
### Geographic scope of work



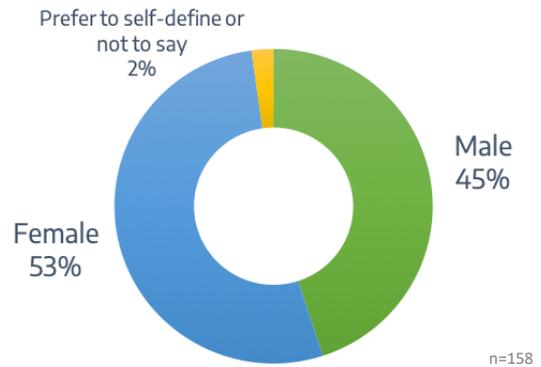
### Organization



### Relevance of humanitarian protection to work



### Gender



## Current state of protection coordination

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
<b>There is insufficient coordination of protection.</b>					
Count	12	31	33	68	15
Row %	7.5%	19.5%	20.8%	42.8%	9.4%
<b>Coordination of protection is ineffective.</b>					
Count	11	45	38	52	12
Row %	7.0%	28.5%	24.1%	32.9%	7.6%
<b>The way coordination of protection is carried out poses protection risks.</b>					
Count	3	40	54	54	8
Row %	1.9%	25.2%	34.0%	34.0%	5.0%
<b>Protection coordination is allocated insufficient resources</b>					
Count	5	24	28	63	39
Row %	3.1%	15.1%	17.6%	39.6%	24.5%
<b>Coordination is suffering due to a lack of trust between humanitarian actors.</b>					
Count	4	27	41	59	28
Row %	2.5%	17.0%	25.8%	37.1%	17.6%

A majority of respondents (52.2%) agree or strongly agree that there is **insufficient coordination of protection**. However, views are split on this question, with a sizable minority (27%) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. On the other hand, fewer (40.5%) agree or strongly agree with **protection coordination being ineffective**, and even fewer (39%) agree that **protection coordination poses protection risks**. Interestingly, there is stronger agreement (64.1%) on there being **insufficient resources** for protection coordination. A few respondents attributed the ineffectiveness of protection coordination due to the vagueness of the protection concept:

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*Protection coordination has become very difficult because protection as a theme has over-extended itself so as to become difficult to define. Is it about protecting people from violent threats, is it about leaving no-one behind, is it about mainstreaming, is it about equality, is it about dignity plus many more. It is, we are told, about all of these things and more.....which has created a complex mosaic of issues which is difficult to contain into a clear priority (or set of priorities).*

- Respondent based in Switzerland (RCRC Movement)

*Too many actors that pretend to be protection actors, when in reality they do not perform protection work*

- Respondent based in Ukraine (UN or other intergovernmental organization)

*I see so many different interests and agendas from actors which make complicated unify all of them towards the same goal and objective in order to achieve it. Moreover, there is so much information and definitions in the protection arena, even academically speaking that*

*sometimes it creates more confusion than understanding. Perhaps, implementing a more simple, pragmatic approach and reducing or eliminating in some was the other less effective or redundant methods could be a valid alternative. But to reach this position, all stakeholders and relevant actors should agree upon this new and UNIQUE approach and follow it up.*  
- Respondent based in the DRC (International NGO)

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A majority (54.7%) find that coordination is **suffering due to a lack of trust between humanitarian actors**. Two respondents highlighted the role of competition in this regard:

*Unfortunately coordination often seems hampered by a mixture of competition for funding, lack of trust between actors and a total focus on incident reporting and reaction rather than solid analysis of trends.*  
- Respondent based in Jordan (Donor)

*The politics related to mandate an competition is causing a huge gap in the protection cluster. Unclear guidance on accountability on the different protection issues such PSEA in refugee contexts is causing a huge gap and deterioration in the performance.*  
- Respondent based in Jordan (UN or other intergovernmental organization)

*It is too fragmented in many contexts - would like to see better protection analysis to inform the whole humanitarian response and collective protection outcomes. Protection coordination works well when there is minimal competition between UN agencies (particularly Unicef, UNHCR, UNFPA and IOM), where IHL and HR & refugee laws are placed at the centre of responses and strong links to national bodies and actors (e.g., human rights councils, human rights networks in country etc).*  
- Respondent based in Denmark (RCRC Movement)

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Respondents were overall presenting a split view of how well different coordination relationships were functioning. Respondents were the most positive about coordination between humanitarian NGOs, with 60.1% thinking it functioned well or very well (but with NGO respondents being somewhat more negative). One respondent suggested that this might be due to how NGOs sometimes worked together on specific cases:

*Protection coordination works well on small scale cases through case management meetings between NGO actors.*  
- Respondent based in Libya (International NGO)

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Respondents were more or less evenly split between negative and positive views regarding coordination between UN agencies and between NGOs and UN agencies.

**In your view, how well is the following types of coordination working in terms of humanitarian protection?**

	Very poorly	Poorly	Well	Very well
<b>Between humanitarian NGOs</b>				
Count	7	50	72	14
Row %	4.9%	35.0%	50.3%	9.8%
<b>Between UN agencies</b>				
Count	9	58	45	25
Row %	6.6%	42.3%	32.8%	18.2%
<b>Between UN agencies and NGOs</b>				
Count	12	55	61	18
Row %	8.2%	37.7%	41.8%	12.3%
<b>Between international and national/local organizations</b>				
Count	24	58	49	11
Row %	16.9%	40.8%	34.5%	7.7%
<b>Between government agencies and other actors</b>				
Count	26	75	33	6
Row %	18.6%	53.6%	23.6%	4.3%
<b>Between global and national/crisis-specific coordination mechanisms</b>				
Count	9	68	39	7
Row %	7.3%	55.3%	31.7%	5.7%
<b>At global level, between the GPC and Areas of Responsibility (AoR)</b>				
Count	6	32	50	8
Row %	6.3%	33.3%	52.1%	8.3%
<b>At field level, between the GPC and Areas of Responsibility (AoR)</b>				
Count	7	47	52	7
Row %	6.2%	41.6%	46.0%	6.2%

Respondents were instead particularly negative about coordination between international and national/local organizations (57.7% negative) and to an even greater extent between government agencies and other actors (72.2% negative).

Regarding coordination internal to the protection clusters, views were fairly evenly split, with more negative views regarding field level coordination compared with global level coordination. The coordination between GPC and AoR also featured prominently in the examples provided by respondents of when protection coordination worked particularly well:

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*In Myanmar, where there is closer alignment between the AoRs and the Protection Cluster in-country and the Protection Cluster has successfully advocated for the Centrality of Protection within the overall humanitarian response across agencies and when negotiating and conducting humanitarian diplomacy with the Government.*  
*- Respondent based in Denmark (RCRC Movement)*

*More than identifying an "area", it is rather a "situation" where protection coordination is working well (or not). It will largely depend on the profile, experience and attitude of the coordinators; on the way the specific protection agencies (AoRs) are investing and*

*"cultivating" a culture of cooperation and joint approach to protection activities and advocacy; on the space given to protection in the overall HCT discussion (by HC and by the Representatives of the respective protection lead agency and AoRs).*

*- Respondent based in Switzerland (UN or other intergovernmental organization)*

*At sub-national level, where there is a protection cluster (including CP/ GBV AoR) that has government co-leads and works well within the sub-national OCHA Inter-Cluster Group and sub-national government led coordination mechanism.*

*- Respondent based in Ethiopia (International NGO)*

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But also where it did not work so well:

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*The link between the AoRs and the Protection Cluster. Some AoRs are well integrated such as Mine Action, but others such as Child Protection and GBV are not often aligned under a collective protection outcome and often wish to see their 'area' prioritised in objectives of the response. An example is where early marriage was defined as a protection priority with the Whole of Syria response, when the overall right to life was being threatened by men, women, girls and boys. Just because there is an AoR in the country it does not mean that it automatically leads to a protection objective in the HRP. HRPs should be defined by HNOs and a protection analysis to define what is a protection priority in the country, and an acknowledgement of operational limitations rather than UN agency 'publicity' because they lead an AoR.*

*- Respondent based in Denmark (RCRC Movement)*

*One can refer to "protection mainstreaming" as an area where there has been an unnatural "partition" of protection concepts (we refer to protection mainstreaming, CP mainstreaming, GBV mainstreaming). This is largely counterproductive and risks to put off the span of attention and the understanding by non-technical audience (other Clusters) to which it is directed.*

*- Respondent based in Switzerland (UN or other intergovernmental organization)*

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Respondents had several suggestions for how to improve the coordination between the GPC and AoR:

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*Basic time management, clear and open lines of communication and assigning action items, owners and delivery dates for those action items and then following up on them.*

*- Respondent based in Nigeria (International NGO)*

- 1. Collective action on issues of common interest (e.g. mainstreaming, advocacy, fund-raising)*
- 2. Strategic analysis and planning at field level*
- 3. Simplifying and streamlining coordination structures at field level, particularly at deep-field level (no need for separate meetings when few actors working on multiple protection sectors); could simply have a separate meeting to follow the joint meeting to discuss case management issue that cannot be discussed "publicly"*

*- Respondent working for an International NGO*

*The GPC (UNHCR...because lets face it, most of the GPC Secretariat consider themselves UNHCR far ahead of their cluster responsibilities) could treat the AoRs as equals. It seems that the GPC considers the AoRs as little siblings that are accountable to the big brother which is the protection cluster.*

*- Respondent based in Switzerland (RCRC Movement)*

*1. Planification of publication of standards and tools could be more harmonized and complementary : for example any publication in GBV or CP (tools, training packs etc..) should be able to be integrated in a global protection system available. For example a. Monitoring / b. Complaint mechanisms / c. Evaluation and response Emergency / d. Mainstreaming : training Packages general prot/gbv/ cp could be proposed, preparation to crisis like ebola, cholera, malaria, natural disasters etc.. 2. Clarify the role and responsibilities of sectors/ clusters and sub sectors/ clusters and their interactions (IASC guidance is not detailed enough)*

*- Respondent based in Burundi (International NGO)*

*Invest in the link between the work of the GPC and the AOR – make the link clearer, easier to understand, presented in simple language and demonstrate how it all fits into a common goal.*

*- Respondent based in Switzerland (UN or other intergovernmental organization)*

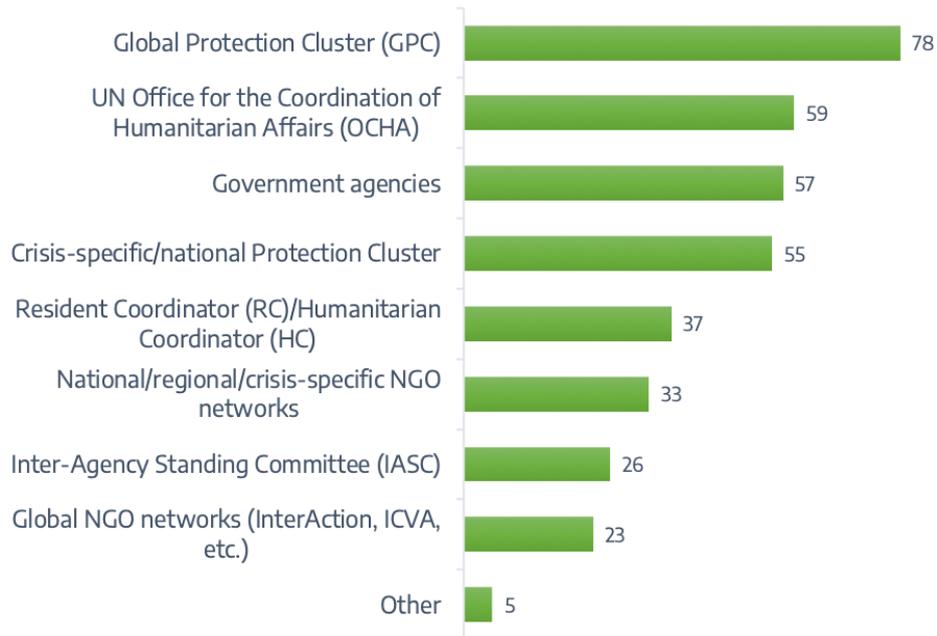
**Based on your experience of how they currently function, how would you rate the following bodies in terms of importance for the success of coordination of humanitarian protection in the context(s) you are working on?**

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribution	Score
UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)	1		703
Resident Coordinator (RC)/Humanitarian Coordinator (HC)	2		670
Crisis-specific/national Protection Cluster	3		646
Global Protection Cluster (GPC)	4		629
National/regional/crisis-specific NGO networks	5		588
Government agencies	6		572
Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)	7		524
Global NGO networks (InterAction, ICVA, etc.)	8		398



When asked about which specific agency was the most important for protection coordination in the contexts respondents were working on, results were similar between different organization types and regions. OCHA and the RC/HC were more or less tied as the most important actor, with protection clusters and the GPC falling somewhat behind them. This should be contrasted respondents placing the GPC well ahead of the other actors when asked which actor *should* have a leading role in protection coordination.

### Which actor should lead protection coordination?



One respondent commented on the role of the GPC:

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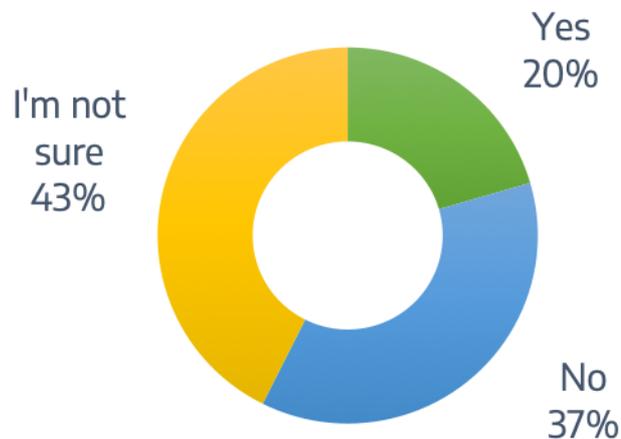
*The "invisibility" of the GPC is worrying - this compared with the visibility of some of the other global clusters (like WASH or Food Security).*  
*- Respondent based in Cameroon (UN or other intergovernmental organization)*

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## Improving protection coordination and the role of the GPC

Respondents to the survey were finally presented with the current mission statement of the GPC and were asked whether the role of the GPC should change in light of climate change.

### Should the GPC's role change?



20% of respondents thought that it should change, but 43% were unsure. The proportion suggesting a change of GPC's role was considerably lower than in the pre-event survey on the nexus and climate preparedness (where 33% and 39%, respectively, suggested it should change).

Suggestions for how to strengthen protection coordination and the role of the GPC came in five main categories: **capacity building, coordination measures, local engagement and localization, recruitment of key personnel, and simplification of protection coordination.**

The largest category of suggestions related to strengthening the GPC's **local engagement** with local actors and government agencies.

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*Establish a more honest and effective relationship working with local structures while empowering them as they are the ones that are aware of issues first at community level.*  
- Respondent based in Haiti (Other)

*The role of the coordinator should be more openly defined. Not just 'coordinates and provides inter-agency policy advice and guidance' but a role that includes the idea of convening different actors, bringing together ideas, people, resources in new combinations and helping the field to make use of these new opportunities.*  
- Respondent based in Montenegro (UN or other intergovernmental organization)

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Several respondents were calling for the GPC to help **simplify protection coordination structures and tools:**

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*Simplify! Simplify tools, language, processes, communication channels etc*  
- Respondent based in Switzerland (UN or other intergovernmental organization)

*Contribute to advocate for a simplification of the current HPC-related products, to leave more space to the protection cluster / AoRs coordinators for protection-related analysis, support to raise the quality level of activities, advocacy (with HC/ HCT/ Government) and for cultivating local partnerships and build local capacity, as opposed to be forced to "desk top" protection.*

*- Respondent based in Switzerland (UN or other intergovernmental organization)*

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Respondents who were concerned about the **recruitment of key personnel** wanted in particular to see coordinators with field coordination experience.

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*It should be staffed by persons with extensive field experience and not HQ bureaucrats*

*- Respondent based in Ukraine (UN or other intergovernmental organization)*

*Hire relevant experts with actual field coordination experience*

*- Respondent based in Canada (International NGO)*

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**Capacity building** was raised as a priority area for improvement throughout the respondents' suggestions, including for better coordination skills in coordinators and the overall capacity of member organizations.

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*Capacity-building for every person involved in protection coordination for them to be able to design appropriate measures.*

*- Respondent based in the Philippines (UN or other intergovernmental organization)*

*Also needs to pro-actively train and mentor Protection Cluster Coordinators, to help build their capacity to conduct their work. Such trainings could be held regionally by the GPC or changing the GPC Cluster Coordinators retreat.*

*- Respondent based in Denmark (RCRC Movement)*

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In terms of strengthened **coordination measures**, respondents envisaged strengthened roles for the GPC in several dimensions, including between the global and field level, between the protection cluster and other clusters, and by clarifying roles and mandates.

Other topics raised in the suggestions included **improved analysis capacity, strengthened communication, ensuring independence of the cluster from the lead agency, providing information services, and expanding the explicit mission beyond IDPs.**

All suggestions have been categorized and are presented in *Appendix 1.1.*

## Webinar summary



**26 November 2019**  
**15:00-16:30** (Geneva time)

PHAP Global Protection Cluster

# Coordination and Collaboration with the Global Protection Cluster

Photo: UN Women/Ryan Brown

### Overview

Coordination and collaboration are critical for humanitarian protection – just as it is for an effective overall humanitarian response. Recent crises have highlighted that there remains a need to reinforce protection programming with clear leadership and further articulation of roles and responsibilities. Research has shown that effective coordination during disaster response has been lacking to the extent that it has become the expected norm. How can the GPC ensure it leads on coordination and overcomes identified problems in its work over the next five years?

On Tuesday, 26 November, PHAP organized a webinar in partnership with the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) on coordination and collaboration for humanitarian protection. We discussed current weaknesses in protection coordination and what role the GPC may have in ensuring protection programming is well-coordinated – avoiding gaps and duplication – and that responding to the needs of marginalized communities does not fall between different actors. Issues discussed included how global protection coordination fits in with local realities, contextualization of protection coordination, and supporting local coordination mechanisms; the impact of regionalization on protection roles and responsibilities; and how to ensure a bottom-up approach to protection coordination. The event dealt with a number of questions, including:

- What are the main problems and weaknesses with protection coordination mechanisms and structures? (E.g.: *Are there coordination gaps that are a good fit for the GPC at global level? Are there particular needs in coordinating protection analysis? Does GPC do enough to coordinate complicated issues like ensure civilian character of IDP camps.?*)
- Do protection coordination structures fit in with local realities, contexts and are they fit to push for localization? (E.g.: *How can protection clusters better integrate local communities and governments into response and recovery plans? What steps must GPC take to ensure a bottom up approach to protection coordination in the field?*)
- What impact does nexus reforms have on the coordination role of the GPC? (E.g.: *How can we ensure protection coordination is fit for purpose? What are the limits of protection coordination in new structures?*)

## Speakers



**Daniel Aldrich**, Professor of Political Science and Director of the Security and Resilience Studies Program at Northeastern University



**Charles Deutscher**, Policy Adviser, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)



**Panos Moutzsis**, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis



**Claudia Nicoletti**, Protection Cluster Coordinator, Erbil, Iraq



**Rebecca Skovbye**, Protection Specialist



**Kathrine Starup**, Head of Protection Unit, Danish Refugee Council (DRC)

## Co-hosts



**Angharad Laing**, Executive Director, PHAP



**Paul White**, ProCap Advisor to the Global Protection Cluster

## Key takeaways

The following are the key takeaways from the dynamic discussions between panelists, co-hosts, and participants during the webinar.

The full webinar transcript is available in *Appendix 2*. Recordings are also available at <https://phap.org/26nov2019>.

- Leadership is needed for protection coordination in general, and especially in prioritizing protection issues and defining clear common protection outcomes so that the full range of actors and expertise available can be fully utilized. Clearly defining such outcomes also allows for simplifying coordination mechanisms between humanitarian protection actors.
- The GPC has an important role to play for data management, analysis, and strategy.
- All actors need to better understand what the nexus means in practice for them. When transitioning from an urgent response to a more stable situation, it is critical to strengthen coordination with development actors and other stakeholders and the GPC should provide guidance to help structure relationships on the ground. The GPC should also consider promoting nexus reforms in wider humanitarian reform discussions in general and for protection in particular. However, there are existing actors nationally that can help bridge the humanitarian-development-peace divides.
- We should actively counteract a division between protection and assistance, which is often counterproductive in itself, and also results in excluding actors without an explicit protection mandate. Similarly, the GPC should support a less rigid approach to response in mixed situations with IDPs and other groups of affected people.
- There is insufficient engagement and learning between national protection clusters. The GPC should expand its work to regularly engage and bring together national clusters.
- Regionalization is an opportunity for improved coordination, but the GPC could help clarify the roles and mechanisms at the global, regional, and local levels.
- The roles and responsibilities of cluster coordinators and co-coordinators require clarification, and the GPC should consider drafting a global template MoU for the relationship between the two.
- More training is needed for coordinators and co-coordinators on soft skills related to coordination, but this can be standardized and delivered globally by the GPC.
- There is need for further global guidance on several operational issues for protection, including needs assessment, strategic planning involving government agencies, and interfaces between coordination mechanisms, especially in transition periods. Importantly, any such guidance needed to be practically oriented in a way that it can be contextualized for different responses.

# Appendix 1: Free-text survey responses

## 1.1 Suggestions for the GPC to strengthen protection coordination

### Accountability

Strengthen accountability, e.g. of HC/RC and HCT (and in effect all sectors/clusters) to the IASC protection policy and centrality of protection commitment.

- *Based in Norway (International NGO)*

### Advocacy

By creating an international and national advocacy group to involve the world and national authorities in protecting their populations. We must generally see the case of community living in rural areas and improve their living conditions.

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (International NGO)*

### Analysis

Solid risk analysis as the basis for both protection programming and mainstreaming

- *Based in Jordan (Other)*

Bring forward the value of qualitative analysis in the realm of protection and avoid any tendency by the humanitarian system to implicitly discard protection analysis when not able to be expressed through "hard data".

- *Based in Switzerland (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Improve quality of risk analyses and HCT Protection Strategies

- *Based in Jordan (Other)*

### Capacity building

To increase training of staff

- *Based in Somalia (Private sector)*

Training for all GPC member organizations

- *Based in Liberia (National/local NGO)*

Capacity-building for every person involved in protection coordination for them to be able to design appropriate measures.

- *Based in Philippines (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Train all coordinators on essentials of coordination

- *Based in Nigeria (National/local NGO)*

Capacity building

- *Based in Uganda (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Capacity building for coordination mechanisms

- *Based in Pakistan (International NGO)*

Management skills

- *Based in Nigeria (International NGO)*

Also needs to pro-actively train and mentor Protection Cluster Coordinators, to help build their capacity to conduct their work. Such trainings could be held regionally by the GPC or changing the GPC Cluster Coordinators retreat.

- *Based in Denmark (Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement)*

Capacity building

- *Based in Somalia (International NGO)*

Capacity building of protection actors, government, NGOs and others.

- *Based in Afghanistan (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

More interaction with the field to identify and address capacity building needs in a timely manner.

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Invest more in capacity building and experience sharing.

- *Based in Nigeria (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Improve knowledge on coordination for on the ground partners to create buy-in

- *Based in Libya (International NGO)*

## Clarification of roles

Shared responsibilities with a clear understanding of who is leading what.

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

## Communication

Common goal sharing and timely communication

- *Based in India (National/local NGO)*

More communication

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (National/local NGO)*

More effective communication mechanisms

- *Based in Yemen (International NGO)*

Improve communication among different actors

- *Based in Syria (International NGO)*

Timely and improved communication at all stages and with and for vulnerable groups

- *Based in Fiji (National/local NGO)*

## Community participation

Inclusion of concerned persons and their ideas and energy into responses. Emphasize the inclusion of beneficiaries and identify models to do so.

- *Based in Montenegro (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

## Coordination measures

Bridging the gap between the global and field level, ensuring global policies are developed for and with the perspective of field coordination bodies

- *Based in Mali (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

More funding allocation to protection coordination.

- *Based in Nigeria (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Coordination should be done by operational agencies

- *Based in Ukraine (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

To ensure all the organizations and the government agencies work in close coordination to address humanitarian crisis.

- *Based in Ethiopia (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Reinforcement of the coordination mechanism capacity (focus on dedicated coordinators/co-facilitators/IM staff) and improvement of lead agencies' operational capacity to fulfil commitments for protection and for protection and solutions-oriented contributions to Inter-Agency IDP responses

- *Based in Chad (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

General comprehension on how protection coordination should work.

- *Based in Panama (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Effective and supportive collaboration with military personnel as well as affected community engagement focal persons

- *Based in Nigeria (Government (civilian))*

Coordonner les activités de protection

- *Based in Burkina Faso (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Ref. centrality of protection, there needs to be stronger protection coordination across the response/clusters, ie. GPC's role as primarily supporting protection clusters may need to be considered.

- *Based in Norway (International NGO)*

Transversal coordination between clusters

- *Based in Central African Republic (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Clarify the mandates and collaboration 1. Between UNHCR and OCHA about : a) urban refugees, b) returnees (JRRP plan) 2. Between UNHCR and IOM 3. Between UNFPA and UN WOMEN on PSEA

- *Based in Burundi (International NGO)*

Help country level Protection Cluster coordinators work with other clusters in country e.g., health to advocate for the multi-faceted needs of individuals and families (PoCs) such as in victim assistance for ERW survivors.

- *Based in Denmark (Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement)*

### Disband

Should be disbanded, not sure what it actually does to support clusters. May be more useful to have some senior level persons with relevant experience who are deployable and come to the field. As it stands most people in the GPC have not actually coordinated a field protection cluster and not lived the realities that entails.

- *Based in Canada (International NGO)*

### Field presence

Become more visible in the field. Establish a roving team to support field operations.

- *Based in Jordan (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Government role

Strengthen all government protection coordination networks so as to feed into the global network of protection coordination.

- *Based in Liberia (Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement)*

Government agencies

- *Based in Uganda (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Close collaboration with the government and key stakeholders including beneficiaries. Involving other sectors in the coordination in a bid to improve protection mainstreaming.

- *Based in Uganda (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Empower governments to assume their protection responsibilities in close coordination with other actors.

- *Based in Kenya (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Establishment of protection cluster with clear TOR under the leadership of government.

- *Based in Nepal (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Be sure government of a country care for protection first. There we can start something. In a place where by government are not ready to support, even if issue reach prose intion level, some will still against it

- *Based in Nigeria (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Give more training to the relevant government agencies as well as the identified primary stakeholders.

- *Based in Philippines (Government (civilian))*

Strengthen its engagement with governments of affected countries (through capacity development and institution-building).

- *Based in Kenya (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Greater cohesion

More cohesion at global level across AoRs and more joint support to the field.

- *Based in Switzerland (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Building common vision and engaging into a constructive dialogue

- *Based in Ukraine (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Greater focus on protection

Take it seriously and invest in it. Protection coordinators tend to be on short term contracts over-worked and alone. It's sidelined in all agencies

- *Based in Canada (International NGO)*

Focus on UNHCR's core protection mandate and put its protection obligation first before other commitments!

- *Based in Hungary (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Guidance

Clear guidance on best practice about ways of working (ToR, MoUs, etc), strategic data collection and analysis (severity mapping/ranking; PiN, People to Target, 5W, FTS), strategic planning (cluster strategy, HNO, HRP), etc.)

- *Based in X (International NGO)*

Provide more guidance to residents /humanitarian coordinators and OCHA directly

- *Based in Burundi (International NGO)*

### Independence from lead agency

Appoint a co-lead so it is not within the sole remit of UNHCR -- they are a terrible lead in non-refugee settings.

- *Based in Portugal (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

The cluster should be more independent from the leading agencies and have more financial resources to have more power when it come to take decisions on program and implementation

- *Based in Libya (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Information services

Mapping of protection actors/services

- *Based in Jordan (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

A shared accessible platform for info

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Free flow of information

- *Based in Nigeria (Government (civilian))*

To understand the services provided by the other NGO's and to explain clearly the services provided my NGO

- *Based in Turkey (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Make a fast system of information sharing

- *Based in Rwanda (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Build a knowledge database for real time information sharing

- *Based in Switzerland (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

## Local engagement and localization

Involving the local NGOs

- *Based in Nigeria (National/ local NGO)*

Ensuring all the concerned parties are fully involved in protection matters

- *Based in Ethiopia (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Operationalising national and regional protection dialogues

- *Based in Uganda (International NGO)*

Ensure funding to local NGO/ CSO partners.

- *Based in Ethiopia (International NGO)*

Building the capacity of local NGOs especially in case management and referral

- *Based in Yemen (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Establish a more honest and effective relationship working with local structures while empowering them as they are the ones that are aware of issues first at community level.

- *Based in Haiti (Other)*

The role of the coordinator should be more openly defined. Not just 'coordinates and provides inter-agency policy advice and guidance' but a role that includes the idea of convening different actors, bringing together ideas, people, resources in new combinations and helping the field to make use of these new opportunities.

- *Based in Montenegro (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Collaborating strongly with the local partners

- *Based in Nigeria (National/ local NGO)*

Localization should be more important in coming years so GPC role should change

- *Based in Pakistan (International NGO)*

Work with many partners and help new NGOs to learn and move.

- *Based in Yemen (National/ local NGO)*

Improve the inclusion of all partners

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (Government (civilian))*

More way to reflect and intake the actions taken in the field protection operations. It sounds that GPC is a primary GVA focus group.

- *Based in Colombia (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

To keep working closely with key local actors (government, NGOs...)

- *Based in Central African Republic (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Engage more with representatives of local actors.

- *Based in Netherlands (International NGO)*

It should also focus on the local ground level.

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Set up national representatives to support national level activities

- *Based in Uganda (International NGO)*

I think getting more national/local NGOs and governments involved in the governances and decision making in the coordination mechanism will be very important particularly in the triple nexus scenarios

- *Based in Kenya (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

More local engagement

- *Based in Cote d'Ivoire (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

## Mainstreaming

Centrality and mainstreaming of protection must be a priority for the resident/humanitarian coordinator and for OCHA

- *Based in Burundi (International NGO)*

By mainstreaming protection in all other sectors, by having protection as a mindset, as a basic in every activity

- *Based in Lebanon (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Support of resident coordinator and ocha to effective centrality and mainstreaming of protection (effective implementation of the protection strategy)

- *Based in Burundi (International NGO)*

## Member engagement

More regular engagement with both field coordinators/co-coordinators and with operational actors beyond the annual conference - ensure greater participation at the annual conference (and other similar events) by NGO co-coordinators (support fund raising for their participation) etc.....

- *Based in X (International NGO)*

## Monitoring and reporting

Those undertaking protection coordination on the ground at sub-national level should have some idea of how successful the GPC has been in providing the policy advice and guidance.

How is this measured, and how is information on this shared with sub-national bodies/partners?

- *Based in Ethiopia (International NGO)*

### Nexus

Develop stronger links with development actors in countries where humanitarian action is coming to an end get governments, national and local protection actors more involved in the coordination mechanism

- *Based in Kenya (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Preparedness

Being more serious on preparedness (entry point for coordination)

- *Based in Cote d'Ivoire (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Protection analysis

Better protection analysis that leads to collective outcomes, which meets the complex and multi-faceted needs that individuals and families present with. This is in contrast to the approach of looking at individuals and families in terms of single issues (e.g., Child protection, vs GBV etc). Collective outcomes also require strong collaboration with other clusters such as health, CCCM, education and nutrition.

- *Based in Denmark (Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement)*

### Refugees/IDPs

No difference between IDPs and refugees

- *Based in Myanmar (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

The reference solely to IDPs should be extended to "affected populations"

- *Based in Switzerland (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

I would recommend to the improvement of protection responses in non-refugee situations and also specifically standards and policy setting relating to internally displaced persons.

- *Based in Ethiopia (National/local NGO)*

The Global Protection Cluster should consider not only refugees who comply the criterion of the refugee convention but also those that are fleeing the political, socio-economic unrest.

- *Based in Comoros (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Recruitment of key personnel

Assign tasks and deadlines to committed individuals and ensure staff know why they are doing the work. Employ joint planning and monitoring

- *Based in Liberia (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Better recruitment with appropriate profile for cluster coordinators (not focus on people with only UNHCR careers, mostly in refugee settings making them ill prepared for cluster coordination in internal displacement settings)

- *Based in X (International NGO)*

Assign qualified and experienced staff as managers

- *Based in Kenya (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

It should be staffed by persons with extensive field experience and not HQ bureaucrats

- *Based in Ukraine (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Get charismatic people in key positions who can get things moving

- *Based in Nigeria (International NGO)*

GPC: needs to make sure good protection sector / cluster coordinators to be available worldwide in any crisis with protection issues. Besides the agency independent cluster coordinator there is need for IM/reporting capacity to be in place and guidance of how good regular and flash-updates can be produced and diffused - like I wrote above, the Protection Cluster in Eastern DRC remains for me a very valid and good example

- *Based in Cameroon (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Hire relevant experts with actual field coordination experience

- *Based in Canada (International NGO)*

## Simplification

Simplify it to the basics: identify the most critical threats to crisis affected communities, and plan activities to protect people from the most critical threats.

- *Based in Switzerland (Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement)*

Simplification of procedures, professional communication approach

- *Based in Belgium (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Have more open discussions and reduce bureaucracy

- *Based in Syria (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Simplification- going back to the basics

- *Based in Switzerland (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Simple more pragmatic and people-oriented (community-based) protection approach.

- *Based in Congo, Democratic Republic of the (International NGO)*

Simplify! Simplify tools, language, processes, communication channels etc

- *Based in Switzerland (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

Contribute to advocate for a simplification of the current HPC-related products, to leave more space to the protection cluster / AoRs coordinators for protection-related analysis, support to raise the quality level of activities, advocacy (with HC/ HCT/ Government) and for cultivating local partnerships and build local capacity, as opposed to be forced to "desk top" protection.

- *Based in Switzerland (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

### Standard setting

Better field support based on commonly agreed standards (largely non-existent today)...which requires greater efforts on.... LEARNING, LEARNING, LEARNING: develop clear coordination standards, ways of working, benchmarks, metrics, indicators, etc through dramatically enhanced efforts on collecting and identifying best practices and lessons learned – this will then allow for effective capacity building.

- *Based in X (International NGO)*

### Wider protection

As long as UNHCR remains the global lead, there is a danger protection remains in many cases limited to "refugees and displaced people" while protection goes far beyond, it is about human rights being respected or not for the whole of the population living in a country or crises affected area

- *Based in Cameroon (UN and other intergovernmental organization)*

## Appendix 2: Webinar transcript

### Coordination and Collaboration with the GPC: The next 5 years November 26, 2019

**NOTE: This transcript may contain inaccuracies. For a complete recording of the webinar, please visit <https://phap.org/26nov2019>**

**Angharad Laing:** Okay, everyone. I think it's time to get started. Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening to all of you. My name is Angharad Laing. I'm the Executive Director of PHAP. That's short for the International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian Assistance and Protection.

Very happy to be serving as your host today for this webinar *Coordination and Collaboration with the Global Protection Cluster: The Next Five Years*. This is organized by PHAP in partnership with the Global Protection Cluster, the GPC.

On that note I'd like to introduce my co facilitator today, Paul White, who is connecting from Bangkok. Hello, Paul.

**Paul White:** Good evening. And greetings, colleagues, from Bangkok on the small part of the Asia-Pacific Regional NGO Partnerships Week here. Welcome to everyone.

**Angharad:** Excellent. Okay. So before starting the session, I will briefly explain a few technical aspects of the platform so that we can all get the most out of our experience today. First and very importantly, how to submit questions.

If you have any questions for the speakers at any time throughout the session, please submit them using the 'Ask a Question' box in the lower-right hand corner of your screen. And note that if you'd like to ask your question anonymously, you should mention this when you submit your question. Otherwise, we will use your first name when we bring up your question on the air.

Next, throughout the session, you'll be seeing snap polls. These are to gauge your own views and experiences on the issues being discussed. You should now see two test polls displayed on the screen as an example. Just click on a response or, for free text polls as on the right-hand side, click in the textbox, enter the response and click 'Submit'.

Important to note that for all of these polls, all of your answers are automatically anonymous.

Finally, if you encounter any technical problems with the platform, especially with the speed of the connection, if you hear the audio going in and out or you have your screen freezing with the video, you may want to switch over to a lower bandwidth option.

We've set up a couple of backup streaming options for you. These do use less bandwidth but they do not allow for the same degree of interactivity with the chat and the Q&A. But they will allow you to follow along with the audio and the visuals if you choose. To connect to those, just follow the links that you see now on your screen.

And if you find later in the event that you would like to jump over to those live-streaming options, just mention that in the chat and my colleague Markus will be happy to share those links again so that you can jump over to the backup live-stream.

With that, we will turn to the substance of today's events. Before introducing our panelists, I'd like to briefly outline what we're hoping to cover in this webinar. We'll first talk about coordination in humanitarian response in general and the role of trust for coordination.

We'll then be discussing what are the main challenges and weaknesses with current protection coordination mechanisms and structures.

And then with these challenges in mind, we'll be looking at ways in which protection coordination can be improved and, in particular, the role of the GPC for protection coordination as we move forward.

I'm really pleased to say we had a lot of registrations for this event. So we have a lot of you participating in the Adobe Connect platform here. We also have a lot of people on live-stream. We had more than 600 registrations. And more than 200 people completed the event survey, which has been incredibly helpful both for the preparation of the event we're embarking on now, also very helpful to feed into the report of this event and, ultimately, into the strategic review currently being undertaken by the GPC.

So thank you so much to all of you who took the time to complete that survey. Those of you who haven't will have one more chance, but I'll mention that at the end of the event today.

Now, I'd like to turn again to Paul and ask, Paul, what do you hope to get out of this webinar today? Over to you.

**Paul:** Thanks again. So these are concepts of collaboration, coordination, cooperation, connection linkages - the nexus is the new one - working together, interagency coordination. It's sometimes also collaboration, integration. Some of these things are done formally and informally.

So all these concepts mean different things to different people and they occur at the practitioner level, the operational level, the strategic level. And it's some of these concepts and issues that many of you have raised with me in the months that we've been working on this Strategic Framework for the GPC.

So I hope today we can unpack some of these issues and that they'll feed in then to our Strategic Framework and also the work plans of the GPC over the next five years.

I'm very much looking forward to the consultations as we draw an end, we come to an end of our consulting on this Strategic Framework. So many thanks to you all for joining us today.

**Angharad:** Great. Thanks, Paul. And, to echo that, I would really like to encourage everyone on the line today to engage actively in the discussion in the chat and to submit questions or comments, observations throughout the event. We'll be asking our panellists if they're willing to answer any questions if we don't have time to discuss live during the event. We'll ask them to address those in writing after the event as well.

So we hope to keep the discussion going even after our short hour-and-a-half is over today. And that will feed both into the email follow-up that you'll receive as well as into the report of the events.

Now, I'd like to introduce our guest panellists. Today, we're joined by six speakers all bringing their perspectives from different experiences onto these questions related to protection coordination.

On the line we have Panos Moumtzis, Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Syria Crisis. He's connecting today from Amman. Welcome, Panos. Great to have you with us.

**Panos Moumtzis:** Thank you. Delighted to be with you. Thank you very much.

**Angharad:** We also have on the line Rebecca Skovbye, Protection Specialist connecting today from Rome. Welcome, Rebecca.

**Rebecca Skovbye:** Thank you and thank you for having me and hello to everyone.

**Angharad:** Also on the line and, in fact, connecting today from our office in Geneva, great to have with us Charles Deutscher who is Policy Adviser with the International Committee of the Red Cross, the ICRC. Welcome, Charles.

**Charles Deutscher:** Thanks very much. I'm really looking forward to hearing everyone's reflections.

**Angharad:** And we have on the line connecting from Erbil, Iraq, Claudia Nicoletti who is Protection Cluster Coordinator in Erbil. Welcome, Claudia.

**Claudia Nicoletti:** Thank you very much and looking forward to the discussion.

**Angharad:** And then connecting from Copenhagen today we have Kathrine Starup, Head of the Protection Unit with the Danish Refugee Council. Welcome to you, Kathrine.

**Kathrine Starup:** Thank you very much.

**Angharad:** We'll also be hearing from Daniel Aldrich. Daniel Aldrich is Professor of Political Science and Director of the Security and Resilience Studies Program at Northeastern University in the United States. As he is currently travelling, he was not able to join the event live but he very kindly pre-recorded a few brief points that we will be feeding into the discussion.

Good. To help set the stage for these discussions, I would like to, first, turn once again to my co-facilitator Paul to ask what is the current coordination role of the protection cluster? Over to you, Paul.

**Paul:** Thanks again. Well, at global level the GPC coordinates the development of policy standards and operational tools relating to protection in humanitarian action and also the delivery of practical guidance on how to establish and manage protection coordination mechanisms.

And then at country level, protection cluster supports the delivery of specific protection activities as well as assessments and analysis, cluster strategy. Mainstreaming of protection is also a big part of our protection cluster's work and also coordinating and contributing to advocacy.

But at the same time, the clusters need to contribute to the decision-making of the Humanitarian Coordinator and the Humanitarian Country Team.

So there are big jobs involved there and Claudia will tell us a bit later about the practicalities of some of the operational side of it from Iraq.

**Angharad:** Great. Thank you. So sticking with you, Paul, you've already carried out face-to-face consultations, quite a lot of them over the last months. How has the issue of coordination come up during those consultations?

**Paul:** Well, it's come up in many ways and with a broad range of issues and views. But we chose collaboration and coordination because they've come up so regularly over the last nine months and many people wanted to discuss them a bit more.

We included Daniel Aldrich, too, because he's done some great research on coordination. I think his research can help us understand some of the problems we face and that the GPC may be able to help resolve over the next five years.

One sentence in his research paper that struck me as a really sad situation was that it says that failures in coordination and communication during disaster response have been so common that they're expected. And I think this applies to us in Protection.

Certainly, in several places I've worked in the last few years, there have been too many arguments, too much friction around our protection structures as the disaster strikes. So I think at the start of a crisis and during a disaster is not the time to be responding to these differences.

I'm hoping that our webinar today will identify how the lack of definition and the clarity around protection coordination can be fixed. I'm hoping some of our panellists can identify what we might do to fix some of our problems and also identify where academic research, that can be quite independent of agencies or particular approaches, might help us as practitioners make better decisions.

This lack of coordination creates confusion and we're hoping that some of that confusion can be allayed by the discussions with our panellists today.

**Angharad:** That's great. Thank you, Paul. I'm just noticing the polls saying that, although I know there have been a lot of consultations, it looks like almost all of the participants on today's webinar have not yet been part of those consultations. So, again, a really good opportunity for all of you on the line to feed in to this discussion.

So we organized a webinar together with the GPC about a month back looking at how nexus reforms affect protection. How would you say that discussion relates forward to today's event?

**Paul:** Well, I think nexus and coordination are very much related. We actually had a recommendation from that earlier webinar to create coordination platforms where humanitarian, development and peace policymakers and practitioners come together to plan and collaborate because, currently, many people see that these are parallel and segregated platforms.

So do we need more coordination or less? It would be great if panellists can comment on this as well how they might see the development of coordination in the nexus.

**Angharad:** Thank you very much, Paul.

I'm going to turn to our panel now, first to Claudia. And to kick off this part of the discussion, we're going to take a look at some of the results from the survey that so many of you participated in just over the past week in advance of this webinar.

When we asked participants about the importance of different entities for protection coordination, the GPC and national protection clusters were more or less tied, as you can see, with OCHA. When we asked then in a separate question about which actors should have a leading role, the GPC came out strongly in the lead.

And I would like to ask you first, Claudia, as the Protection Cluster Coordinator in Iraq, in practice, what does that look like? What is the coordinating role of the protection cluster in the context where you're working?

**Claudia:** Thank you very much for this question. So I'll try to be as brief as possible and straight to the point.

Just perhaps to give an idea of what's the level of the protection coordination mechanism in Iraq, it's a very large operation, as I'm sure you all know. And the coordination mechanism can be somewhat complex and challenging to manage.

So we have four sub-clusters. We have Child Protection, GBV, Mine Action, HLP and the respective governor level protection working group. We have ten governor level protection working groups under what we define as general protection component. We coordinate almost 100 partners, strategic advisory group, legal partners, technical working groups, etcetera, etcetera.

So such a large coordination structure, as you can imagine, there is always a coordination gap, which they are very much due to staff turnover due to capacity issues, and this can certainly have an impact on the timeliness and effectiveness of the response.

If I may, maybe a bit later, I have a couple of suggestions that could be useful on how to tackle some of those challenges also based on the discussion with other colleagues and panellists.

On top of this, of course, the protection cluster in Iraq has been serving as an advisory role on protection issues to the humanitarian country team and its members. Even though it's quite special because the Iraq context, the clusters or ICCG or single cluster do not attend HCT meetings but only on other phases when critical or specific issues are presented and discussed.

We do contribute constantly in terms of raising critical protection incidences and issues through advocacy notes or guidance on specific protection solutions, let's say, for people with perceived affiliation to extremist groups, etcetera, etcetera. However, it's quite a peculiar role, the one that we have vis-à-vis the HCT and the members.

Another point that I would like to add vis-à-vis also the discussion of the guidance coming from the GPC in coordinating protection is the fact that coordination in some operations, as well as in Iraq, works in every process. I mean, if we look at the HNO-HRP process, this year we do have new formats, new templates and it's been quite challenging, I think, for everyone to get acquainted with that.

And sometimes the decision is that they do not come, let's say, from the bottom but they are somehow discussed at the global level and then there are perhaps not enough consultations with clusters in the different countries. So in some of those processes, the cluster coordinators are required to engage in discussion at the national level in-country in discussion that should have been agreed or streamlined at the global levels first and then adapted to the national level.

And these might have also implication when it comes to being proactive and implement a different element of the same process in different countries and, eventually, that could lead to confusion by external stakeholders.

So there are impacts, there are consequences that, even if we do rely quite heavily on the guidance coming from the GPC as the main coordination body when it comes to protection, might have some repercussion in a country like Iraq, at least in my experience in the past two years.

**Angharad:** Great. Thanks so much, Claudia. We have a follow-up question for you that's just come in from Philomena who's working in Sierra Leone with the World Health Organization. Philomena says, "I'd like to hear about how the different sub-clusters within the protection cluster can best coordinate, particularly GBV."

You mentioned the different sub-clusters. In your context, I wonder if you could help with some reflections on that question. Back to you, Claudia.

**Claudia:** Indeed, it's a very interesting question. Some of the challenges actually arise from this overall structure of the cluster. Of course, each sub-cluster has its own coordinators and co-coordinators and partners.

In terms of one of the main challenges that we've been experiencing here is the fact that the issue of accountability, because we all sit and we are all on an equal footing and there is not a level of accountability vis-à-vis sub-cluster and what we define as the general protection of the NPC coordinators.

Let's say, to put in a simple way, when things go well, everyone is happy. When things go bad, it's a bit challenging to let other stakeholders understand that this level of accountability is not there. Therefore, we work together and we cooperate together but without pointing fingers or being accountable for whatever might not be going towards the right direction.

So we do have to overcome those challenges. Of course we do as coordinators meeting once a month. We do have the Strategic Advisory Group group meeting where all the sub-cluster coordinators sit. We try to work together, or at least consult, as much as possible whenever we have to produce public documents or HNO or HRP documents.

Of course there is the fact that, and that goes perhaps to another discussion, there is this distinction in terms of general protection, child protection, GBV and so on and so forth, but at the end of the day, we are all part of the national protection cluster.

So the umbrella is one and it's the national protection cluster, although there are those specificity and also obstacles, challenges and opportunities that come when we have different sub-sector or sub-cluster elements to take into consideration.

**Angharad:** Great. Thanks so much for that. So we'll be coming back to you with more Q&A, but for now, we're going to move to the recording that was submitted by Daniel.

So Daniel Aldrich has been doing extensive research on coordination in emergencies, including on some of the operations where many of our participants in the event today have been active in their work. So at the Pakistan Earthquake in 2005, Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar 2008, the Chile Tsunami, 2010, Haiti Earthquake, Pakistan Floods. And he's still active and has been working on some research in Somalia as well.

To help launch the discussion on protection coordination, we asked him to share some of the findings from his research looking at what are some of the tensions and challenges in coordination in humanitarian emergencies and what makes for a successful coordination in such settings.

First, we're going to hear particularly about some of the tensions and challenges that arose from this very innovative research. So cue recording.

**Daniel Aldrich:** This is Daniel Aldrich. Thanks so much for including me, Markus, Paul and colleagues, in your conference. I apologize I can't be there in person to be a part of it.

I want to try to answer two questions that Markus and Paul raised in earlier email back and forth. One was about what are some of the findings from this newest paper that we just put out on the tensions and challenges and coordination during humanitarian emergencies in crisis.

Of course, there's always the usual caveat. This is based on a relatively medium dataset of around 18 disasters around the world. And of course it's based on my own interpretation.

But having said that, I think there were some patterns that showed up in these 18 disasters which drew from developing and developed countries' recent and more historical disasters and also disasters of different types, both natural hazards and man-made ones.

What I found was that really three types of factors led to more friction. That is to say top-down and bottom-up approaches not being coordinated. Those were lower levels of development. If the shock, if the crisis took place in a country like Bangladesh, for example, like Mozambique as opposed to, let's say, England or Japan, it was more likely we'd have friction. That's one thing.

The next was somewhat surprising, was that lower economic costs from the crisis also tended to lead to more friction. Meaning if it wasn't a massive disaster, it seemed more challenging to coordinate across areas.

And the third finding was actually pretty obvious, I think, which is that when you had, before the disaster, relatively challenges with logistical infrastructure and planning, those would also end up with mismatches and chaos during the response itself.

I mean that tells us a few different things, I think, upfront. One is that we should be more concerned about smaller-scale shocks than larger ones. In larger ones, we're more likely to have a coordinated response precisely because it may be on the front burner of both local decision-makers and also national or international ones unlike, let's say, smaller level of disasters.

Areas that are more regional or micro-local in their impact it may be, in such cases, we're going to have a harder time coordinating the various responses across levels of response. That's one idea.

The next is we all should be very more careful, perhaps, in responding to disasters abroad, especially in developing nations. And again, this seems to be pretty consistent across the dataset. Different types of shocks were simply not handled as well in foreign countries that were still developing.

Of course, all kinds of reasons for that perhaps because less-developed countries simply have maybe less-developed rule of law, they have fewer persons in place, there's less money for training, bureaucracies and response tools, technologies are not as high, and so forth and so on. But, again, that's another thing to think about as well.

And, again, more broadly, communities that we already know that had shocks and disasters beforehand that were poorly responded to, that is to say where there's infrastructure problems, roads, for example, railroads and so forth. Those areas that are less developed to begin with, those are more likely areas that we'll see. Whether it's going to be, for example, in Chile or elsewhere where we can have a more challenging disaster response.

**Angharad:** Okay. So we're going to go back to Daniel's recording for that second question in a little while. But now we'd like to move on to some of our other panellists.

First, though, one look again at the results from the pre-event survey. We asked participants as well whether they thought that protection coordination was suffering due to a lack of trust. And a solid majority of respondents, nearly 60%, agreed or strongly agreed with that notion.

With that in mind, I'd like to turn to Charles, who is Policy Adviser with the ICRC, to ask. Charles, so that 33rd International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is coming up very soon in December. I know a lot of last-minute preparations are underway now. And trust is one of the central topics for the conference this year.

Is there a lack of trust in the humanitarian sector? And how does this affect coordination broadly speaking, with the understanding that the ICRC is not involved in the cluster directly. But broadly speaking, do you see that link between a lack of trust and negative impact on coordination more broadly? Over to you.

**Charles:** Angharad, thanks very much. It is indeed on the agenda of the conference. You know, trust, as they say, comes on foot and leaves on horseback.

Protection is at the heart of what we do at the GPC and at the ICRC, and trust, in turn, is at the heart of protection. But it's kind of this trust that is sort of a nebulous concept that most people probably don't examine in detail as it relates concretely to protection work.

But everyone kind of knows it when they feel it, especially in the field either when they are trusted or when they need to trust someone else. Think of a detention visit or a family reunification, for example. And clearly, as the results from your respondents suggest, there are instances where trust is sorely lacking in the humanitarian sector. Think of Ebola and the kind of wider fallout from the sexual misconduct cases of last year.

But, equally, there are cases where trust is present in humanitarian action and where it works swimmingly. An example from Friday in the ICRC, in Helmand we were involved in the exchange of prisoners between the Afghan authorities and the Taliban.

So I guess in this sense trust speaks to the best but also to the worst of what we do as humanitarian actors and as protection practitioners. That's really why trust is on the agenda of the conference because of the battering that the sectors has taken in public eye in recent years but also because of the states' sort of constant pressure on the humanitarian space in which we work in the regimes set up by IHL.

So how does this all relate to coordination? Well, I can't comment on technical aspects like Claudia can, but let me perhaps offer just broader reflections on trust which may nourish your more technical ones.

The first is the link between trust and field security and, I guess, even the broader principle of Do No Harm. For the ICRC, field security is based on the notion of acceptance by all stakeholders. You can't be accepted without some degree of trust.

So how do we go about building trust better with all stakeholders, communities, authorities, arms carriers and colleagues? This is kind of a question that we're grappling with on a sort of acceptance tolerance projection spectrum. And I would commend to you a study called the *Roots of Restraint* which gives some great sights on building trust with arms carriers.

But I think it's an important consideration for coordination since it's often in situations where security is the tightest that sometimes sensitive protection work is the most difficult to do. Think

of the kind of access issues in Rakhine and Myanmar and even the situation of people allegedly affiliated with IS in Claudia's context in Iraq.

And I think an aspect related to that for protection work is the relationship of trust with the communities in which and with which we work, particularly if we're expatriate staff, I think we often work on the basis that communities should approach us with a presumption of trust. Yet, perhaps, in reverse, we don't reciprocate and sometimes view communities with suspicion or even mistrust.

Now, there may, of course, be good reasons for this but, from my experience, I think it's got at least as much to do with fear of the unknown, even ignorance, than anything else.

And again, considering the ICRC's kind of recent security reflections on how to overcome this in better briefings, handovers and analysis on critical aspects of culture, religion, politics, history, economy, etcetera, longer missions rather than fly-in, fly-out, except for really technical work and more capacity-building for local staff towards management positions and sustainability.

And if you're interested in that kind of an angle, Marc DuBois literally, just about an hour ago, published a blog with a similar angle called *The Other Side of Trust*.

Secondly and finally, just quickly, I think in addition to our external relationships, we could also reflect on trust in our internal relationships within our own organizations and within the GPC, because I guess these, too, can impact the day to day of coordination.

I'm sure the GPC is much better but I think it's a telling fact that our finding that came out of the ICRC's 2014 Staff Survey, and that was the biggest cause of stress. It was not bombs and bullets but it was management.

So I think improvements, no doubt, have been made since then, but we'd do well, I think, to continue to remind ourselves to approach colleagues with the same good faith with which we would have them approach us.

And I think, indeed, a part of the trust discussions at the conference may turn to trust within the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

But let me stop there and hand it back to you. Thanks.

**Angharad:** Great. Thank you, Charles, and very interesting points, I think. Food for thought and to feed into the rest of the discussion, so thank you for that.

I'd like to turn now to Panos. So Panos, as the Regional Coordinator for the Syria Crisis and, before that, the director of the Senior Transformative Agenda Implementation Team STAFF, you've been very well-placed to see how coordination for protection has functioned in practice both in the complex Syria response and elsewhere.

As we're starting this event, we're looking at the challenges and the weaknesses of coordination in practice. In your experience, what have humanitarians particularly been struggling with in these contexts in terms of protection coordination? Over to you, Panos.

**Panos:** Thank you. Thanks, Angharad, and really a very good question.

When I look at the protection cluster's work and operation, basically three levels that need to happen and to also make sure that the protection has really been taken on board.

One is obviously the protection cluster sector's strategy analysis, vulnerability work and that's the foundation really of the work itself.

The second one is obviously the mainstreaming to make sure that every other sector has taken into consideration the vulnerability and that the protection analysis guides a lot of the practical operation response, whether it is the camp coordination, the site planner or the health or education and so on.

And the part that brings me in a lot, both in my current capacity and in my last job as Director of the STAIT, is really the leadership protection. To see how the protection clusters work goes hand in hand with the very important role to also be played by the leadership in-country, the humanitarian coordinator, the humanitarian country team. That's where these three levels really need to flow.

The Global Protection Cluster a few years back, and I think this is more learnings from the Sri Lanka crisis, we developed the centrality of protection, the role of leadership protection. The fact that protection, it has to be dealt both at the practical, operational working level but also at the top level because it is the senior leadership that meets with the ministers, prime ministers, ambassadors, others at the top level.

One needs to have both the advocacy, including behind closed doors, not always just public, but the leadership engagement and then the operational side.

So where I think we're not quite there yet is, one, is to ensure that this dialogue takes place quite effortlessly. And I was happy to hear Claudia. I think Iraq is a very good example from years back where that critical protection note is being developed by the protection sectors to be able to come to the humanitarian coordinator and say this month, for example, protection of civilians in Northwest Syria, Idlib where bombing is taking place is an issue we wanted to pick it up and raise it at multiple levels. But also to give back that feedback to the protection sector and back and forth.

So, two issues. One is it is slow to activate the leadership, to mobilize the leadership on advocacy or mobilization. It's not always working. I did 22 missions with STAIT and, I hate to say, in all of the countries we've been, it was an issue.

And the second one is really on the protection sector itself to come up and say, "Here is the most critical issue at this point."

I remember coming here to Syria and I was so much looking forward to the protection sectors and can I see, you know, what would you like me to bring forward from the leadership point of view. And I got a list of 13 protection priorities.

And I said, "You know what? I mean all of them are very valid, all of them are quite acute but, really, what is the most critical protection issue that you would like me to take up at this point? One or two or three?"

And I think that took quite a while. We have it now. I'm very proud of the response from the team we have in the place.

In a very complex situation, again, state/non-state actors and government/non-government controlled areas are very complicated operations. But to be able, as the protection sector, to come

up with a cluster and give a reply not from the mandate point of view, not, you know, saying, “Oh, children” or “GBV” or, you know.

Really, to look more from a people point of view, from an affected people point of view and to come up and say, “That's the issue”.

And for me, the range of success is really how can we make-- we practically make a difference in people's lives?

To give an example, last year we picked up the issue of civil documentation and, of course, protection of civilians in a conflict or hostilities. These were the two issues I worked all year round and it was finding ways to make sure that every Syrian, no matter where they were, we were able to find solutions.

Advocacy took place at the leadership level while the protection sector did its work to support and implement it and to make it happen, including the role of leadership on resource mobilization. You know, money should not be the reason of why we're not doing some of these activities.

So adding my voice, together with my other colleagues, on the resources was also crucial with donors and capitals. Angharad, over to you.

**Angharad:** Great. Thanks, Panos. I have a question that's come in from Dina in Switzerland. We could save this for later but, actually, I think it fits well following your reflections now. Dina is asking, “How does the GPC connect with or fit in with the broader humanitarian architecture and what is its added value?”

Big question, but if you have any reflections that would be much appreciated. Back over to you, Panos.

**Panos:** Thank you, and thanks to Dina for the question.

My answer is very simple. We, as humanitarian actors, whether it's United Nations or NGOs, we are not a courier or delivery of assistance company. We're not DHL, we're not-- we are really driven by human rights. So protection has to be the central thinking of everybody, all of us, in terms of the implementation, the programming, the analysis, the needs assessment. If we don't have protection in our work, we know it doesn't work.

I remember going to the Philippines on the highlight of the typhoon Haiyan to do a review with state. And we were told there, you know, we took out, for example, gender-based questions because gender is not an issue in a natural disaster. And it only took an hour's focus group with a group of affected women to find out what had really happened.

So protection has to be central both in the architecture but, more importantly, on the programmatic response in all aspects of what we do, whether we design a camp, we look at how to take people-- freedom of movement from A to B, any movement return that has to be protection-guided. I can go on and on for every sector and aspects of the response.

Without protection, I would say we lose the credibility, we lose the value, we lose the reason that of why we do the job we all do when we get up in the morning. Over to you, Angharad.

**Angharad:** Thanks again, Panos. I'll turn now to Kathrine Starup.

As Head of the Protection Unit of the Danish Refugee Council, you have been engaged in protection cluster coordination efforts in humanitarian response to conflict situations in many parts of the world. I wonder, from your perspective, from an NGO that often works very closely with the protection cluster, what are the challenges and weaknesses in terms of coordination that you would highlight from your experience? Over to you, Kathrine.

**Kathrine:** Thank you very much. And, yes, indeed, I mean not only at the global level in terms of engaging with the GPC but also very regular contact with my country and regional protection coordinators as well as the co-coordinators or colleagues, the NGO colleagues that we are at roles that we're playing in quite a number of operations these days.

So I have sort of five challenges, weaknesses I want to pull out. Broad strokes, of course, but I have also received very valuable inputs specifically for this webinar from West Africa, North Africa and East Africa.

So the first one is around the various functioning of the field protection clusters. They are quite, I mean, broad strokes in terms of a low accountability, that Claudia also mentioned, ensuring that buy-in and that commitment it all ties together. So if the protection cluster is not functioning well, if there's a low commitment and low accountability, I mean that all bites itself.

And then clarity, at times, in terms of roles and responsibilities and the very purpose in terms of inefficiency of the protection cluster and what role it needs to play.

So I mean unpacking that, the elements around the dialogue, ensuring a good and clear dialogue and engagement in the protection cluster as such but also the national protection cluster vis-à-vis the GPC and across protection clusters also. So when that does not function then the GPC, sorry, the protection cluster as such is not functioning very well.

There are challenges around the soft skills, extremely important soft skills of coordination both for the coordinator and the colleague but also with the members as such. And yeah, there is a capacity gap as such in terms of that important soft skill of coordinating and being the convener. So that's the first one.

The second one is around data analysis and strategy. So here, again, we see weaknesses around the structure, the lack of structure collaborative approaches to data management, the lack of data sharing and analysis sharing, harmonized to and capacity more generally around data management.

That leads to the next challenge which is once you have collected your data to make sense of it, the whole analysis around it. And, again, I mean about lack of sharing of analysis and building capacity, building that needed consensus on what is the situation, what are the protection risks, what are the strategic priorities within protection. If that is not in place then it suffers.

Lastly is around strategy, of course, that you move from data to analysis to strategy. Here, again, we see challenges and weaknesses around the lack of time, lack of resources to produce that analysis that is needed to produce your protective strategies.

And what Panos also mentioned, I think, is that whole engagement of the field protection cluster vis-à-vis the HC, the HCT and so on, and engaging in the humanitarian program side and feeding into HNOs and so forth. And again, here we see challenges around the lack of authority also that comes with the lack of time and the lack of resources usually, but also, again, in terms of the clarity and the role of the protection cluster, in terms of protection strategy and what role it plays, not only within the cluster but vis-à-vis the rest of the coordination structure, so to speak.

We have also seen what Claudia I think mentioned about. One thing is the national protection cluster but then what about the sub-clusters. And again, here we see a lack of time and challenges around having a coherent approach, having the one-cluster approach, so to speak.

Three more, and I'll be very quick. But one is around localization. This is indeed a challenge and I think that much can be done here. I want to zoom in specifically on the lack of a clear approach to government involvement in protecting clusters. We've seen this in Somalia and so forth. And the politicization that the cusp within a conflict situation, if the government indeed is a part of the cluster, the government and the state at the same time being party to the conflict.

They're also more practical but yet very important elements around localization and how we have more opportunities, missed opportunity to facilitate localization. Simple things around language, what language is being used and spoken in the cluster meetings and in the documents and so forth. And the capacity of national local access to be able to intervene and be part of the protection cluster in-country.

Then on solutions and nexus, again, here, the challenges around comes from the lack of clarity in itself with the protection cluster and how it manoeuvres within the humanitarian coordination structures. That becomes even more of a challenge when we consider engaging with development and peacebuilding actors and those coordination structures.

So indeed, a need to build much more capacity in that regard and have more guidance and clarity on that.

And then I want to finish on the regionalization. There are some great opportunities these days with the UNHCR. Now, we talk about protection cluster. UNHCR's regionalization process that is ongoing right now. But again, here we are looking forward to those opportunities but also recognizing very clearly that there will be a need for very clear terms of reference for any regional coordination structures and how they-- what is the interplay or the interface between the countries, regional, global cluster or coordination structures and making sure that the necessary resources will follow.

Because there will be great opportunities but we will not be able to tap into these opportunities unless we have clarity on what this sort of regional middle-level, what role it will play and how it will feed into the country, regional, global structure in terms of coordination.

I think I'll leave it there. Thank you very much.

**Angharad:** Okay. Thank you, Kathrine. We have a follow-up question for you. You mentioned of course many different kinds of actors and Isabella, who's connecting from the Democratic Republic of the Congo is noting that, in her experience, different actors are using different terms, humanitarian protection, individual protection, protection of civilians in the peacekeeping context.

She's wondering if you wouldn't mind briefly elaborating on the link between these two and perhaps clarifying briefly these concepts, so humanitarian protection, individual protection of persons at risk, and the protection of civilians. If you wouldn't mind, Kathrine. Back to you.

**Kathrine:** Sure. And thank you for that question because that is, indeed, one of the-- I mean, around language and concepts and terminology, what language we use. And thereby our ability to work together and to collaborate and to coordinate.

So protection of civilians is a very specific term linked to the Security Council actually as a fixed agenda item. It also goes with and my ICRC colleagues who would be able to speak much better for this. But that goes with the International Humanitarian Law. So this is what we talk about in armed conflict where International Humanitarian Law applies. We talk about the protection responsibilities and the protection of civilians. So that's one specific one.

Then there's the concepts of humanitarian protection, which I'm actually not very much in favor of. I would leave out the humanitarian because protection is certainly not linked only to humanitarian, the humanitarian sphere, so to speak. Exactly when we talk about the nexus and we talk about solutions that will point much further than the humanitarian programming response but into more development-oriented and peacebuilding responses.

So humanitarian for me is just an add-on to the term of protection.

And then there was, lastly, the individual protection. Yes, again, that's a term. I mean, when we talk about protection, this is for everyone, so whether it's an individual, whether it's a group of people or a community, a certain group of people IDPs, refugees and so on. This is all about protection so you can have a specialized, I mean, a specific response which is an individual response to individuals at risk and then that you would call individual protection.

**Angharad:** Great. Thank you so much. It was very interesting and very helpful as well, so much appreciated there. And we'll be coming back to you. There are a couple of other questions but I'm going to save those for the Q&A at the end.

So now turning to Rebecca, up until recently, you were working as a Protection Advisor with the World Food Programme, an agency that does not have an explicit protection mandate. You've also, in the past, worked with protection coordination in the field and also in the GPC.

Based on your experience, how do you view the engagement of non-mandated actors in the coordination on protection, in particular in terms of challenges that you've observed when it comes to coordination? Over to you, Rebecca.

**Rebecca:** Thank you for the question. I think it's an important aspect when we're looking at a protection response in-country and that we remember that we need to look beyond just the protection sector and look at what other actors bring to the table as well.

Panos was mentioning the importance to keep protection central for the programmatic response and this is exactly, I think, wherein it's absolutely fundamental that we make sure that we find ways of engaging actors that are not normally engaged in protection and that might find it more challenging to understand what role they play.

I think over recent years, and particularly with the centrality of protection statement and the IASC protection policy, I think there's been an increased and there's even some enthusiasm around engaging non-mandated agencies more in the protection dialogue. I think we are beginning to see more interest also in collaborating across sectors, also at the global level, between clusters than we have seen in the past. I think these are very positive developments that we can absolutely build on.

Now that said, I think we're still in a situation where there is a fairly limited understanding maybe across the board, actually, both among assistance actors but also among protection actors of what non-protection actors actually can bring to the table. That is also manifested in the lack of engagement or consistent engagement of assistance actors in the protection dialogue and in coordination.

Working for WFP I've often found myself the only, or one among two representatives of non-mandated agencies at various meetings on protection. I think that is symptomatic of the lack of consistent engagement both in terms of protection actors reaching out but also of non-mandated agencies understanding that these are extra fora in which they should be sitting at the table and be contributing.

I think this sometimes leads to focus on what is being done wrong when the conversation is finally established and opens up. The focus and emphasis is really what is happening that shouldn't be happening in terms of providing assistance, rather than really looking at how each of all the different actors can contribute to protection outcomes and then capitalizing on that.

And not just protection actors but, obviously, also non-mandated agencies. Everyone has a role to play and everyone has their mandates. But in doing so, not in doing something different than what they would normally do but simply by implementing their mandates. They can contribute to protection. And not just in terms of mainstreaming or avoiding to act to harm that people are exposed to but actually have positive impacts on the protection of affected people. And I think we need to harness that and better understand it to increase the impacts we can have.

I think one of the other things that often happens is, and it's come up already a couple of times, this issue of language. Kathrine was mentioning it. We're not always sure what language to use and we don't always use the same language.

And particularly when engaging with non-mandated agencies it seems sometimes the dialogue gets a little bit lost in translation, as it were. It can be quite difficult for a logistics officer who's focused on getting his 15 metric tons of goods delivered to have a conversation with protection actors who are concerned about are we using the right definition and how are we explaining protection and breaking it down. And then protection actors coming at that from different angles.

So I think we have to do better in terms of ensuring that the language is consistent, it's simple, it's easy, it's straightforward.

Then a last point, I think, is on the coordination structures themselves. Obviously, protection is a hugely complex area and there are therefore naturally areas of responsibility and particular focus areas. That is often replicated in the coordination structures or reflected in the coordination structures that are present on the ground. And, certainly, that's also the case at the global level with the various AoRs together with the GPC.

The problem with this becomes when non-mandated agencies have to engage even if those agencies might be very large. Again, I'll be using WFP as the example. A very large organization and yet, on protection, the capacity is very limited. There is a focal point and, if you're lucky, a dedicated advisor, but only one person. And having to engage with multiple fora can be very, very difficult.

In addition to that, it is then also important that when it gets prioritized to engage in these fora is that there is an added value. That it's seen as a place to go for advice, for support and for collaboration. So that climate and that atmosphere has to be there as well. Thank you.

**Angharad:** Thank you very much. So we are going to have some time to come back, so I'm going to come back to you in the Q&A.

But now I'm going to turn to Claudia to ask, so you came in in the beginning but, now, having heard from Panos, from Kathrine, from Rebecca, I wonder how does what you've heard from

them compared to your experiences in Iraq? How would you characterize the challenges for protection coordination in the context that you were describing to us previously? Back to you Claudia.

**Claudia:** Thank you very much and thanks to the colleagues before me because they raised all the points that I would have raised myself. Maybe, I mean the discussion that Kathrine and the issue that Kathrine was raising, they're very much on the point, as well as Rebecca and Panos and the elements that they raised as well.

One element that I would add is more from a practical point of view in the context is that Iraq it's not an emergency context anymore. So in a large operation like this one with complex protection coordination structure, as highlighted before, changing strategic directions, so from emergency responses in 2017, 2018 to a post-conflict solution orientation like this year, next year as we articulate heavily the aspects of durable solution, exit strategy and so on and so forth, requires a common vision, which does not necessarily materializes on the ground.

So this common vision also means that all of the protection coordination mechanism, indeed, the wider ICCG community and OCHA itself needs to be brought along in the same direction.

So when we talk about extreme or like sensitive protection issues vis-à-vis people we perceived initially as peaceful coexistence programming and so on and so forth, what is missing and what we've been facing in Iraq is that a bit of lack of guidance on how we should move these arguments forward.

Of course that is not a one size that fits all but it would be helpful to have some operational guidance materials and/or companion of good practices on how to operationalise the transition from an emergency response to solution, both from the protection sector and also from the wider inter-cluster response.

So we have been, for instance, reaching out to other clusters, other colleagues in Syria, in the neighbouring countries. All these exchanges have been very, very useful but it's basically left to the field protection clusters to listen to other webinars, research good practices in other country operations or speak to the protection cluster coordinator in the GPC community and practice and so on and so forth.

So in Iraq's case, for instance the cluster, we have been-- with we did tackle one topic at the time. However, we have faced quite a lot of issues in letting also other people come together and as the buy-in that is required to move conversation forward.

The aspect that is very much we introduced is this the challenge is the transition to solution also requires coordination with development actors, which can itself be a major challenge. Because, as we move forward and we articulate, as I said, durable solutions to make this strategy and the so-called nexus a reality in Iraq is that humanitarians and government partners are oceans apart.

When it comes, for instance, to needs assessment, if we do kind of multi-cluster needs assessment or sector-specific data, we do not utilize the variety of information that is there. Or we do have separate strategic planning vis-à-vis government planning for sustainable development cooperation framework in Iraq.

Or we do have not tangible interfaces that are between different coordination mechanisms. So there are issues that perhaps require a little more guidance and that would be one of the recommendations, for instance, for the GPC colleagues.

Of course they need to be contextualized but they would be useful in really materializing aspects that we are all faced with and that most of the time, or in some occasion, we don't know how to properly address. Over.

**Angharad:** Great. Thank you, Claudia. I have a follow-up question for you. This is from Yulia. And it refers back actually to an issue that you mentioned earlier in the webinar regarding accountability concerns.

Yulia is asking how do you see protection mainstreaming address accountability concerns? Can the adoption of a protection mainstreaming approach actually play a significant role in improving and strengthening accountability measures? Back to you.

**Claudia:** This is a very good question. Thanks for it. Of course, we can and, of course, it does, because also when we discussed the aspect of protection mainstreaming that was also raised by Panos, there is a bit of these-- it's not an assumption but like the fact that the protection cluster is the only actor responsible to mainstream protection, which I do not necessarily agree. I mean it's a common responsibility that goes with vis-à-vis accountability by all the actors operating in-country. Of course the protection cluster can lead the discussion and has to be part of it, but it's a joint responsibility.

And of course, when there is a strong protection mainstreaming component across the board, that condition of accountability. For instance, to give you an example similar and related to this, the child protection sub-cluster in Iraq, since early this year, has basically made it mandatory for partners if they want to be part of the sub-cluster and therefore did also consider for resource allocation costs for proposal, so on and so forth.

So the impact, let's say, given more point and prioritize, they need to have policy which contains elements, of course, of child protection, protection mainstreaming and so on and so forth.

So they're all that is there besides being a mandatory element to be part of the sub-cluster is that there is an enhanced accountability of the partners vis-à-vis beneficiaries and vice versa. So it's a kind of check and balance system that we have to implement and will likely implement that can highlight and can enhance accountability of all actors operating in that particular sector.

**Angharad:** Thank you very much, Claudia. I'm going to-- Yes, sorry. I see a note from Rebecca who would like to come in. Excellent. You're on, Rebecca. Over to you.

**Rebecca:** Thank you. Just to make maybe two observations on this, I think we are already seeing difficulties in terms of mainstreaming protection across other sectors. There are huge challenges with getting this done. I was talking about some of them before.

So I wouldn't rely on that approach in terms of strengthening accountability measures. I think if they can make it go hand in hand and be mutually complementary but I wouldn't rely on it.

The other thing I just wanted to flag is that the protection cluster carries a huge role in terms of supporting protection mainstreaming. But I think it's important also to remember that mainstreaming protection is not actually the role of the protection actors per se. The ones that are supposed to mainstream protection are the assistance actors. And I think that's very important in terms of, again, bringing them on board and making sure that they get into the picture.

Now, they also have a role in making sure that they're accountable to people, so, yes, in that sense I do see that they are complementary but it's just a word of caution in terms of not over relying on that process to enhance accountability. Thank you.

**Angharad:** Thanks a lot, Rebecca.

I'd like to turn back to Kathrine. We have a couple of questions that have come in, one in the chat and one in the Q&A. I'm going to put them together because they are related.

So, first, in the chat. We had a question from Andrea in Oslo asking what are you seeing as good practices in ensuring local leadership and protection coordination? Where is the future heading in ensuring local ownership in protection clusters? And then we had a related question from Florence asking to please expand on the challenges perceived of local actors being responsible for protection programming.

So if I could turn back to you, Kathrine, to address both of those questions. Over to you.

**Kathrine:** Thank you very much. A few points on the whole localization. As I mentioned earlier, I think there's two elements to this. Localization would very much depend in terms of who are we talking about. So the first challenge I mentioned before was indeed a need, and here I see a role for GPC in terms of moving forward. So this is the recommendation.

In terms of getting clarity on the role of government and authorities in the country's protection clusters. So that's one part of the localization. If we talk about localization in terms of local organizations civil society organizations. I think there are some emerging good practices out there.

Also practices taking into account what we already mentioned around language and facilitating the access to these protection clusters by making these-- I mean, addressing these practical barriers. We've also seen good experiences of the international organizations or more national regional organizations, building capacity and supporting local organizations in engaging in clusters, protection clusters.

So that's for sure a good practice and something that should be pursued. So I think I mean it's for all of us to look out for the opportunities for how we can build that capacity and we can build that sustainability and ownership at a local level in the protection coordination structure.

There were also some good experiences around the community-based protection and using the community-base protection programming, as such, and those local actors that we work with in that instance also as a way of generating mobilizing interest for participating and facilitating participation in the local and national protection coordination structures.

**Angharad:** Great. Thanks so much, Kathrine. I'd like to now turn to Panos coming back to the mainstreaming question. Over to you, Panos.

**Panos:** Thanks, Angharad. I think on the Syria Crisis, what we did is we basically we picked up one issue where it was it a sense that it was really not as well-mainstreamed and could have been and that was the gender based violence, GBV AoR. We had a review that basically included the external ProCap experts who came together with the protection sector and we sat, they sat with each sector to basically see what, where was it and why was it not working and what needed to be done more.

And the feedback I got was quite interesting. It wasn't a lack of willingness. It was really more the practical question. What is it that - I don't know - the food security sector could do to mainstream

GBV. And there were a lot of things that could be done, you know, distribution lines, particularly in camp settings and so on, that was quite refreshing.

Now, the other point I want to bring is, again, from a leadership point of view and this is based on the humanitarian country team's terms of reference. We took for issues that we said these four issues are non-negotiables and we will all adhere to implement them at the highest level in the Syria operation. And this was the leadership of protection, the GBV accountability to affected people and PSEA.

So it was taking them all. They're all protection issues, really, and accountability to affected people is really one of the major, enables them very much linked to do a quality of protection and said how can we do it programmatically each sector at different levels to make them advance. So that was also important to, again, tackle this issues both from a leadership perspective and an operational, pragmatic perspectives to make them effective in our implementation. Over to you.

**Angharad:** Okay. Great. Thank you, Panos. Now, I'm going to turn back to Paul.

So Paul, we've heard from all of our panellists now on the challenges and weaknesses facing protection coordination. Could I ask you to tell us in summary what really stood out to you as the main points coming out of the discussion now?

**Paul:** Sure. Thanks, Angharad. I think this issue of leadership that Panos just mentioned of course is vital. We need protection leadership in our operations and that needs strong support from our clusters and our global protection cluster as well.

This issue of accountability worries me that it's come up quite often. It seems there are still weaknesses there we must identify and work on. The issue of identifying priorities for protection has come up a couple of times as well. That shouldn't be so difficult. We should be able to somehow identify what are the major issues that we can try and deal with.

The issue of one cluster approach has been mentioned a couple of times as well. This is a major challenge for us. There are many moving parts when we talk about nexus regionalization, localization. Lack of capacity is one issue that's been mentioned there that we might need to work on from the GPC side to try and develop that.

Keeping protection central has also come up a couple of times. And that other point that Daniel raised I thought was interesting and, perhaps, very important that these small-scale disasters perhaps we're not paying enough attention in those situations. We need to focus a bit more carefully there.

I won't repeat some of the good points that Claudia has made also on operationalizing and moving from urgency to stability situations but that also were vitally important. But that's a very quick summary of some of the key issues that I've seen arising without trying to repeat what others have said. Thanks, Angharad.

**Angharad:** And thank you, Paul. So now we'll turn to one last bit of input that we took from the survey. We'll put that up on the screen if we can.

So we did ask participants this time around, as we did for the last two webinars, whether the GPC's role should change in the future. And interesting to note that on this question of coordination and collaboration, fewer people thought that significant change was needed compared with similar

polls that we did in the previous two webinars which were looking at the context of the nexus and then the context of climate.

However, it is clear certainly that at significant portions see change needed. And I would say from the discussion so far today, that there are important improvements to be made in order to strengthen coordination and protection.

And I'd like to go now around the panel again to ask all of our guests what would be their recommendations to the GPC looking ahead the next five years in the context of these questions and challenges that have come up related to strengthening coordination for protection?

Over to you, Claudia.

**Claudia:** Thank you very much. I have just one-- going back to the discussion in terms of the transition to solution, required coordination with development actors and another key stakeholders.

So, at the global level, I see that the GPC should work or should be more engaged in working to ensure that the nexus issue take a central stage in a broader humanitarian reform agenda. Engagement as well with government partners and HQ level, Geneva level, there might be discussion that the country at the country level are not as useful or on point as at the HQ level to advance in particular the nexus conversation in coordination with the wider global cluster coordination group level.

Another point would certainly be develop global guidance on the operational issues mentioned earlier. I mean, when I briefly mentioned the aspect of needs assessment, separate strategic planning in between agency or government planning, the interfaces between different coordination mechanisms and so on and so forth, it would certainly be beneficial to have more practical guidance from the GPC on this aspect in order, as I said, contextualizing them to Iraq, for instance, or to any other context, but to have a common approach to this that is a very key issue, especially in context where emergencies are no longer there or they've ceased for the time being. Over.

**Angharad:** Thank you, Claudia, and thanks so much for your contributions today. Very much appreciated your inputs.

Now, turning to Rebecca for your recommendations to the GPC. Over to you.

**Rebecca:** Thank you. So again, coming at this from a perspective of a non-mandated agency, I think it's important that there is a strength and focus on protection outcomes. And then from there looking at how you get to those outcomes utilizing the full range of interventions and expertise that is at hand. And I think the analysis piece that we've already discussed a few times is really fundamental for this.

The second point I would raise is the simplification of internal coordination mechanisms. To have a comprehensive strategy based on the analysis that includes all the various aspects of protection and links in with an overall strategy for the entire humanitarian response on protection. So highlighting what the protection sector does, highlighting what other actors do.

And a last point in terms of bringing in more non-mandated agencies, I think it's very important that we move away from this dichotomy that seems to haunt the discussion from time to time of protection versus assistance. It's either one or the other. At the end of the day, in interventions

across the sectors, it can be fundamental for people's lives and a life saving and, therefore, they must have equal weight and equal importance.

Now, if we want to make sure that whatever interventions are done outside of the protection sector, we must be practical and we must simplify how we approach this. And, first and foremost, avoid policing and rather looking to collaborate towards these common detection outcomes.

**Angharad:** Right. Thank you very much, Rebecca. Very thought-provoking and very helpful contributions. We appreciate your taking the time to join today.

Now, turning to Charles. From your perspective what kind of recommendations do you think you would put to the GPC given where they are now and what you've heard in the conversation over the last hour-and-a-half? Over to you, Charles.

**Charles:** Thanks very much, Angharad. You know, representing an organization that loves coordination but is loath often to be coordinated, it's a difficult position to give any recommendations. But let me offer the following two points by way of reflection.

The first, just to pick up on what Claudia mentioned about the nexus and the related idea of sustainable humanitarian impact. You know, the ICRC's top ten operational countries we've been there for over 36 years, and I think there's every indication that we're going to be there for another 36 years. So I think that's something that we definitely need to get right.

And what makes an action humanitarian is not its duration or its nature but its purpose. I think by contrast, years gone by when conversations with donors and so forth who let out their capitals, now they have representation in-country. So advancing that conversation at country level could be a very useful use of the GPC's time as well, particularly kind of linked to the urbanization of, certainly, parts of humanitarian protection and response.

The second I think touches on a few points that that Kathrine made regarding the collection and use of data to inform action and prioritization. And, again, it's linked to sort of the context analysis point that I made earlier. I think, in a way, I've no doubt that everyone does that anyway.

But really going back to basics and reinforcing the soft skills, the very important skills of cultural understanding, context analysis in order to assist with prioritization and enhance our security and acceptance. I think that, certainly for the ICRC, is the backbone of our sponsors and I know it is for other organizations present too. Over to you.

**Angharad:** All right. Thanks a lot, Charles, and thanks to you for sharing with us today. It's been really useful to have your perspective as well in the discussions, so appreciate your taking the time.

Now, over to Kathrine. Kathrine, reflecting on the discussion again and your experience, what would be the recommendations that you would bring to the GPC for the next coming years?

**Kathrine:** Thank you very much. I'll come back to my five areas of challenges because there are corresponding recommendations for the GPC and its role and for the strategic framework in that regard.

Regionalization is very quickly done. I already talked about I think they're great opportunities for us. Not only UNHCR but many of us are regionalized, so to speak, and have a regional structure. What we can do in terms of coordination I think is a lot but we need to accompany that with resources and we need to accompany that with clarity.

I think there the GPC can play a role in terms of clarifying what is the reporting arm or what is the hierarchy, so to speak, between country coordination, regional and global coordination. So that's that.

On the functioning of the protection clusters, I mean, coming back to my challenges, I would say two things. There is something around the dialogue where I think GPC already does and, moving forward, can play a very important role as the convener in being in regular structured dialogue with the field protection clusters. Bringing them together and also facilitating that the clusters across are now engaging with one another and learning from each other. I think the GPC certainly can play a role there.

I mean, now we've talked a lot about all the challenges, I've been extremely encouraged recently to see several of the field protection clusters coming forward as a team, so the coordinator and the co-coordinator coming together as a team, engaging in various aspects. And that's what we would like to see at that point.

So the other element of it that we need to do something about the clarifying further the roles and responsibilities of the coordinator and the co-coordinator. And I think it is time now. We've spent many years of exchanging MoUs and agreements in individual context. It must be possible, and, again, going to the GPC to build a generic MoU agreement between the co-coordinator and the coordinator and clarifying those roles and responsibilities once and for all.

And last point on the functioning is the coordination soft skills. Again, rather than we train our colleagues individually, we should of course bring the coordinator and the co-coordinator together and have them be trained and capacitated together in their roles.

Data analysis strategy, I think the GPC is well-positioned. And in terms of where we're moving and the priorities we're discussing in the GPC indeed are targeting, you know, building that strong collaborative, coordinated approach to data management analysis and strategy.

So again, in terms of specific guidance and support to the field protection clusters, I think the GPC has a very important role and ability to play that role in terms of data management analysis and strategy.

I want to finish on the solutions and nexus. And here, I think there is individual need for all of us to get a better understanding of what this means. In this case, we, the GPC needs to help out the field protection clusters in terms of mapping where and how do they navigate in the nexus, what is meaningful, which, who are the partners that the protecting clusters need to engage with, and what sort of collaboration would be meaningful and constructive for them.

I just want to mention two elements here as well. The opportunities to engage much more and that also points to localization. But human rights institutions, the Ombudsman, local, national human rights institutions and actors, I think they are the ones, one set of actors that can help us transcend the divide, so to speak, from the humanitarian sphere into the development and peacebuilding sphere. And, in that respect also, help out the protection cluster. So I think that is a set of actors to look out for and to move forward with.

The last point I want to make is around mixed situations. Again, this, at times, very rigid coordination structure where you have the IDP situation and then you have other coordination structures for other groups of people. We've seen this in North Africa, for example. Now, we're moving forward in a good direction.

But I'm really urging, again, the GPC also to be supportive here and facilitate the work of the clusters and the protection coordination structures in a sense they're not being too rigid because, of course, everything is linked. So while you work with one group, what happens to them also impacts on another group. So we need to broaden out our spectrum and support our field protection coordination structures in that regard. Thank you very much.

**Angharad:** Thank you, Kathrine, and really thank you so much for the work, the thought that you clearly put into all of the observations and the recommendations, really packing in a lot of important points to think about, to work on and to take forward. Very much appreciate your inputs.

I'd like to turn now last but not least to Panos. Panos, what recommendations do you have in mind now following our discussion when you think about the GPC for the next five years?

**Panos:** Thank you, Angharad. A lot has been said already. For me, really, the GPC to need first of all, to further strengthen the field support. How to have possibly teams go out. How to really go every year to say we're going to target the Top 10 or 15 operations. And to see--

It's not a lack of policy. Policy-wise there's lots of it. It's how to apply it, how to implement it in very complex situations where I've seen again and again colleagues struggling to say how do we make it happen, both in terms of the strategy, the mainstreaming, but also better engagement with the leadership in this operation to really explain that leadership role, to demystify that taboo word 'protection' and how really to make it practical in operation on the ground.

So the field support is one. The second one is that protection monitoring-- and I am. I feel, to be honest, that lots of the factors have advanced significantly in terms of packaging, preventing, highlighting. I don't know whether it's because of sensitivities or what it is, but I find on the protection monitoring, which is really crucial, it doesn't happen as much as we would like to see and to be able to present what the issues are and how to focus in terms of the gaps and what needs to be done, or what has been done and where we're moving further.

My third recommendation is, to be honest, I would like to see the Global Protection Cluster a lot more central in the coordination, working really hand in hand with OCHA. When the HNO, when the HRP, when all these assessments are taking place protection clusters should not be yet another cluster.

It's not the same like if we talk about any other. It's not like food and health and so on. It's a cross-cutting cluster that will cut across everything and therefore needs to be a lot more in the central part, including to getting the OCHA colleagues to have a better understanding of the issues and how to make sure that these protection concerns are really put central on the assessments, on the response, on the monitoring, on the funding, on everything we do.

I feel that there is a big gap, to be honest, and there is a lot of space to improve that closeness practically operationally at the C-Levels. Thank you.

And, really, well done to PHAP for having another fantastic discussion on a topic that affects all of us in the operations. Over to you.

**Angharad:** Thank you, Panos. Again, very happy you were able to take the time to join us today and to share really important reflections that I know will be taken into account now. So thanks again for that.

And now to turn back again to Paul. I wonder, Paul, if you have any remarks and final remarks from your side, again, reflecting now as well on the recommendations that we've heard coming out of today's discussion? Back to you, Paul.

**Paul:** Well, thanks, colleagues for a fantastically fruitful discussion over the last 90 minutes.

I guess one thing for me that I think is this discussion sometimes have a bottom-up approach. I think that can actually help solve a lot of our problems about localization, about where regionalization sits, about setting priorities. So I think that's something we can give consideration to as we're drafting our strategy also. How do we make our top-down and bottom-up approach link a little better together?

I think that's just my final reflection. But, really, a very great thank you to PHAP and all the colleagues for joining today.

**Angharad:** Right. Thank you, Paul. And great, once again, to be co-hosting with you. So now, wrapping things up, I'd like to thank everyone who was involved today, very much Paul. Also, all of our guest panellists, to all of the participants who were very active today with some great questions. We didn't manage to get to all of them so we will be following up with the questions we didn't get to address on the air.

I'd also like to thank, of course, the team behind the scenes here at PHAP making this possible, as well as colleagues in the GPC for the important brainstorming and collaboration beforehand.

The recording of today's events both in video format and in an audio-only podcast format will be available on the event page in the coming days. And you'll get a notice about that in the follow-up email.

We'll also be posting the complete survey results once those are done. On that note, if you haven't yet had a chance to complete the survey, you do have a final opportunity today. If you complete it before tomorrow, we will be able to include your input as well in the final report.

So if you haven't done so, please do take a moment to complete the survey. The link is there on the screen. So that we can include your inputs as well in the event report.

With that, once again, thank you to everyone for a very interesting discussion and we look forward to a next opportunity to see all of you online. With that, I'm Angharad Laing signing off from Geneva. Thank you.