

GUIDANCE PACKAGE FOR UNHCR'S ENGAGEMENT IN SITUATIONS OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

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UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

This Guidance Package was compiled by the Division of International Protection with the support of and final clearance by the concerned Divisions at Headquarters, which are the content owners. To obtain further details, please refer to the contact indicated at the end of each guidance note. The Guidance Package goes into effect September 2019, with the issuance of the Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement. It will be updated on a periodic basis, and further guidance will be added as needed in due course.

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Yemen. UNHCR discusses with an internally displaced woman at Al Mazraq Camp, Haradh district.

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Colombia. An internally displaced woman feeds her chickens in a small corral outside of her home. The eggs which are hatched daily help feed her family and provide a small income through their sale.

1. CHECKLIST FOR UNHCR REPRESENTATIVES ENGAGING IN SITUATIONS OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

This checklist is intended to guide UNHCR Representatives in their efforts to fulfil institutional commitments in situations of internal displacement. It is an integral part of the Policy on UNHCR's Engagement in Situations of Internal Displacement.

Underpinning this checklist is the commitment by UNHCR, as the global lead agency for protection,

to drive a protection-sensitive response to internal displacement through:

- information and analysis of emerging protection gaps, risks and needs, including in support of the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator and UN/ Humanitarian Country Team;
- strategic leadership of UNHCR-led clusters;
- an effective operational response;
- guidance and technical advice in relation to protection, shelter and site/camp management in support of national response capacity and national laws and policies on internal displacement that align with international standards; and
- effective advocacy, including on the centrality of protection and solutions.

Within this overarching commitment, UNHCR Representatives need to pursue the following actions at country level on all aspects of UNHCR's engagement.

1.1. PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

- 1.1.1.** In countries prone to conflict or disaster-induced displacement, **undertake sound risk analysis** and other preparedness measures according to the level of risk, including through inter-agency processes, to drive organizational preparedness and emergency declarations, in accordance with UNHCR's revised [Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response](#).¹
- 1.1.2.** **Participate in inter-agency preparedness measures**,² engaging in UN system-wide and government-led or supported prevention, risk analysis/monitoring and early warning mechanisms, and contributing to the strengthening of local and national capacity to prevent and mitigate displacement risks in accordance with international principles and standards.
- 1.1.3.** **Create opportunities for partners to exchange information, mobilize resources and coordinate** preparedness activities for protection, shelter and camp/site coordination and management, stepping in to lead preparedness activities for these sectors under the overall leadership of the Resident/ Humanitarian Coordinator and seeking Bureaux and Headquarters (henceforth HQ) technical expertise as necessary.

Tip: Establishing CCCM sectorial coordination early on does not necessarily lead to the creation of collective sites, but can ensure timely assessment of all accommodation alternatives, map the capacities of the partners and prepare the ground for efficient management of displacement regardless of the context.

- 1.1.4.** **Contribute protection expertise and seek to embed protection** across preparedness efforts in all sectors or clusters, particularly those led by UNHCR globally.
- 1.1.5.** **Establish and capitalize on protection monitoring and community engagement** mechanisms as a means to identify, prevent and mitigate conflict and violence, and their consequences, including forced displacement.

- 1.1.6.** **Analyze information** gathered by UNHCR and other actors, sharing this analysis to inform operational and inter-agency preparedness efforts, particularly in relation to protection priorities.

- 1.1.7.** **Contribute to data and information management within inter-agency preparedness processes**, bringing expertise in relation to protection, shelter and camp/site management and coordination.

- 1.1.8.** Use regular communication and UNHCR standard tools such as HALEP,³ to **share pertinent information internally** with the concerned Regional Bureau, potential countries of asylum and HQ entities, including the UNHCR-led global clusters, on UNHCR and inter-agency:

- risk analysis and monitoring;
- country-level preparedness efforts and strategies for addressing internal displacement;
- cluster activation;
- messaging and communications efforts and strategies; and
- fundraising efforts and strategies

Proactively use information and analysis to draw attention to a deteriorating humanitarian situation or shifts in government policies towards IDPs (e.g. encampment, restrictions on freedom of movement, forced returns).

- 1.1.9.** In coordination with other agencies, **assess the utility and feasibility of cash assistance as a response modality** in accordance with [UNHCR's Policy on Cash-Based Interventions](#),⁴ through existing government systems and/or arrangements for financial services during the preparedness phase.

- 1.1.10.** In close consultations with the Regional Bureau and HQ entities, in particular UNHCR-led global clusters and the Division of Emergency Security and Supply (DESS), **anticipate, mobilize and manage staffing capacity**, for emergency preparedness, anticipated cluster coordination and operational response.

¹ UNHCR, Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response, available at: <https://emergency.unhcr.org/entry/171151/policy-on-emergency-preparedness-and-response>. DESS monitors implementation of this policy, and together with Regional Bureaux and Headquarters Divisions, supports its implementation and compliance.

² IASC, Emergency Response Preparedness approach, available at: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/coordination/preparedness/erp-approach>

³ See UNHCR's High Alert List for Emergency Preparedness (HALEP), available at: [https://collaborate.unhcr.org/teams/dess_preparedness/SitePages/The%20High%20Alert%20List%20for%20Emergency%20Preparedness%20\(HALEP\).aspx](https://collaborate.unhcr.org/teams/dess_preparedness/SitePages/The%20High%20Alert%20List%20for%20Emergency%20Preparedness%20(HALEP).aspx)

⁴ UNHCR, Policy on Cash-Based Interventions, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/581363414/policy-on-cash-based-interventions.html> and UNHCR, Strategy for the Institutionalization of Cash-Based Interventions 2016-2020, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/584131cd7>

1.1.11. Proactively avail of training and development opportunities/skills to ensure basic institutional knowledge, preparedness and response amongst UNHCR staff.

1.1.12. Define and assign country-level responsibilities for preparedness, under the overall accountability of the UNHCR Representative, and communicate agreed responsibilities inside the Country Operation and with the concerned Regional Bureau and HQ entities.



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Democratic Republic of Congo. An internally displaced woman escaped her village located in Ituri together with her grandchildren.

1.2. DELIVERING A PROTECTION AND SOLUTIONS RESPONSE

1.2.1. Take up leadership and coordination functions in line with UNHCR's global responsibilities, ensuring dedicated coordinators for all UNHCR-led clusters.

Tip: Whenever possible, lead or co-lead UNHCR led-clusters with government authorities⁵ and/or national organizations in support of existing local capacity, in line with the localization objective of the World Humanitarian Summit.

1.2.2. Ensure information management capacity in support of UNHCR's country-level cluster coordination and operational response.

1.2.3. Ensure Representative-level participation in the UN/Humanitarian Country Team, drawing on regular consultations with and visibility for UNHCR-led clusters alongside UNHCR's operational response.

1.2.4. Demonstrate protection leadership by providing expertise, analysis and advice on protection priorities to inform the humanitarian response planning and strategic decision-making.⁶

Tip: Protection analysis should be a standing agenda item for the UN/Humanitarian Country Team (to be introduced by the Representative and/or Protection Cluster Coordinator). The Protection Cluster led by UNHCR should prepare one to two pages summaries with concise analysis and advice on protection priorities, which are regularly updated and shared with the RC/HC and/or UN/HCT. It is key for UNHCR to convey that protection is not limited to a single cluster or a range of activities. It is a vision and strategic objective to be pursued jointly by all humanitarian actors, for which UNHCR has a special advisory role and responsibility.

1.2.5. For all clusters led by UNHCR at the country level, ensure the development and implementation of comprehensive cluster strategies.

⁵ Further guidance from the Global Protection Cluster on co-leading with government authorities is under preparation.

⁶ For more detailed guidance on protection leadership, see the Internal Note for UNHCR Representatives "Protection Leadership in Complex Emergencies" <http://swigea56.hcrnet.ch/refworld/docid/56af06cf4.html>;

the Statement of the IASC Principals on the Centrality of Protection, available at:

https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/the_centrality_of_protection_in_humanitarian_action_english.pdf;

the Provisional Guidance on Humanitarian Country Team Protection Strategies, available at:

http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/assets/files/news_and_publications/hct-protection-strategies-provisional-guidance-final-september-2016.pdf ; Peer to Peer Webinars on Protection Leadership, available at:

<http://www.deliveraidbetter.org/webinars/protection/>; for contextual examples, see <http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/CoP-Review-2018-screen-1.pdf>

1.2.6. Ensure UNHCR's leadership for protection, shelter and CCCM is joined up and strategic in placing protection at the center of both our own and the inter-agency response.

Tip: For a more joined up and strategic approach to our tri-cluster leadership, each cluster coordinator should:

- report to the Representative;
- co-locate in the same work space;
- consult widely when developing strategies and work plans; and
- collaborate and coordinate on assessments and analysis for protection-led strategic planning through [the Humanitarian Programme Cycle](#).⁷

It is also key that the cluster coordinators and their teams work closely with the UNHCR protection, shelter and CCCM/ field colleagues, whose role is to implement UNHCR's programme, so that their respective strategies, actions, initiatives and messaging are mutually reinforcing.

1.2.7. Promote protection mainstreaming,⁸ working with all clusters, and especially those led by UNHCR, to design and deliver an inter-agency response that is shaped by protection considerations, in line with UNHCR's policy on age, gender and diversity (AGD).⁹

Tip: Offer to provide protection mainstreaming orientation, training, feedback and/or tips and to implement and showcase joint protection mainstreaming initiatives involving two or more clusters.

1.2.8. Initiate and take a key role in multi-stakeholder joint assessments, profiling and analyses, i.e. Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA), the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), and Common Country Analysis (CCA), as per Grand Bargain¹⁰ commitments and existing guidance.¹¹

1.2.9. Ensure accurate, up-to-date, comprehensive and quality data and information, including as per tri-cluster commitments, in support of evidence-informed advocacy, programming, monitoring, and assistance and service delivery.

1.2.10. Prioritize one or more of the following approaches to population data management, depending on the operational context and the role and capacity of other actors: i) estimation; ii) enrolment; and iii) profiling and surveys; and complement any population data management exercise with protection monitoring data.

1.2.11. Through a community-based protection approach and on a 'no regrets' basis,¹² prioritize interventions to prevent, respond of and mitigate the most urgent and immediate protection risks and needs, including protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) and child protection.

Tip: Aim to take a lead or co-lead role in coordinating inter-agency efforts on:

- PSEA initiatives and activities
- Communication with communities (CWC)
- Accountability to Affected People (AAP)

1.2.12. Seize opportunities to advocate, galvanize, contribute to and reinforce government-led efforts to address the immediate, medium and longer-term needs of IDPs – whether they are integrating locally, returning to places of origin or settling in another part of the country, as well as the wider displacement-affected community.

Tip: UNHCR's engagement on solutions should be based on a sound political, contextual and institutional analysis. Enabling government policies and sufficient implementation capability by authorities are critical determinants for successful outcomes, while their absence carry a risk of limited impact or even negative outcomes in the mid- and long term.

⁷ For more information on the Humanitarian Programme Cycle, see <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/programme-cycle/space>

⁸ Protection mainstreaming is the process of incorporating protection principles and promoting meaningful access, safety and dignity in humanitarian aid. Protection mainstreaming efforts by UNHCR should include an analysis of the impact of displacement on internally displaced persons, including in relation to differences in age, gender, disability and other diversity elements, and recommended actions for all humanitarian actors to pursue to promote safe and dignified access to assistance, protection, and solutions for all internally displaced persons. For more detailed guidance on protection mainstreaming, see <http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/themes/protection-mainstreaming/>

⁹ For more information on UNHCR's policy on age, gender and diversity, see

<https://www.unhcr.org/protection/women/5aa13c0c7/policy-age-gender-diversity-accountability-2018.html>

¹⁰ For more information on the Grand Bargain, see <https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/3861>

¹¹ This includes notably the UNHCR Needs Assessment Handbook (2017), <http://needsassessment.unhcr.org/>

¹² As per the 'no regrets' principle, established in UNHCR's Policy on Emergency Preparedness and Response, UNHCR shall not under any circumstances permit that persons of concern face avoidable harm or endure undue suffering.

1.2.13. Use protection and conflict analysis for a “do no harm” approach to solutions.

1.2.14. Pursue actions and approaches that contribute to conditions conducive for safe, dignified and comprehensive solutions for IDPs, as well as (where relevant) for refugees returning from countries of asylum, such as community engagement, re-establishment of community governance structures, law and policy, identity and civil documentation, shelter and settlement interventions, secure land tenure, livelihoods, peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution.

1.2.15. In partnership with all relevant stakeholders, seek to secure the participation and inclusion of IDPs throughout the displacement continuum in existing national systems and services, such as protection, housing, education, water, sanitation and health, access to livelihoods, economic integration, social services and social safety nets, and contribute to inter-agency efforts to strengthen national systems and services for the sectors that we lead globally.

Tip: Shelter and settlement interventions address physical protection needs, increase dignity, reduce morbidity and provide a non-controversial and highly-valued entry point to engage with the community, the authorities and partners. It is important, whenever possible, to prioritize shelter interventions that are led by the community and rely on local materials and local building practices.

1.2.16. In line with the 2030 Agenda and the principle of “leaving no-one behind”, **promote the participation of IDPs in local and national social and economic development** through, for example, an enabling legal and policy framework and inclusion in national, sub-regional and local development plans.

1.2.17. Build effective approaches to **resilience and solutions that assist IDPs**, wider displacement-affected communities and government authorities to manage and overcome the consequences and effects of displacement.



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