

Session 5 Discussion Notes
PROTECTION IN PRACTICE – THE REALITY ON THE GROUND

Question: What do the realities on the ground, in many parts of the world, tell us about the state of protection? Is protection “possible”?

TABLE A

- On clusters – refine our recommendations regarding protection clusters so it is not just a simple blanket endorsement but goes on to define aspects of good cluster behavior
- Agree detailed protection matrix describing array of issues and possible steps to resolve (including an “other” category to allow for contextualization)
- Improved coordination among humanitarians could begin with sharing of protection assessments with joint assessment and action
- Dream still is to delink HC from RC position, or at least advocate for renewed training and capacity building for HC’s (job description and qualifications)
- Focus on prevention of protection issues that will arise during return and as a result of return

TABLE B

Some obstacles to protection:

- Lack of resources often get in the way of providing the protection – there are things that can be done but lack of some basic financial and human resources prevent this, e.g. training of counselors in DRC
- Problems of insecurity

Key issues to address:

- Need to maximize role of the Church – make most of long-term presence locally, use position to influence government...relationship with governments is usually key to ensuring protection, how can we influence this?
- Relationship with local partners also key to whether or not we can provide protection – need to strengthen coordination with Caritas partners and between Caritas and non-Caritas partners

TABLE C

1. Protection is possible, but we must be realistic—we are limited in extent to which protection can be achieved. We can’t let the perfect be the enemy of the good.
2. Monitoring programs: Standardized data collection tools (that can be used for protection advocacy, budgeting, analysis). Situational obstacles prevent rigorous data collection methods in many cases. However, some collection, enough to draw conclusions and trigger responses, can be enough. Data that drives response is paramount. Best practice model needs to be developed and evaluated.
3. Is the cluster approach the right approach? It can be useful. Having the right people in leadership positions is important. Extraordinary capacity to coordinate and inspire; capable to move people to uniform approach; capacity for facilitating/allowing groups to flourish and work in concert; having a well-informed leadership with background in protection is ideal.

4. On protection mainstreaming, are Australian minimum standards the right approach? Is this a watered-down approach?

TABLE D

- No element of surprise in Lebanon and Pakistan of impending crises - international community needs other mechanisms besides emergency preparedness to plan.
- But political concerns of parties committing the crises will always play a role, eg military/govt. wanting
- Protection – how to define? Includes food aid? Should protection be mainstreamed into all humanitarian work, or does it exist already (at least to some degree) but we don't call it that? Protection stream of CAPs is often underfunded, compared to more 'traditional' elements of humanitarian response such as food aid.
- Protection as advocacy and data collection? Standards for this?
- Any positive examples of good protection response, to pull out good practices? Tsunami response in India. Mozambican refugee repatriation and hosting of refugees.
- How does culture affect protection responses? Esp. w/sexual based gender violence in countries with endemic and pervasive gender inequalities.

TABLE E

- Cluster seems in general a good framework because of enhanced communication= some type of protection
- There are ways of working around an inefficient HC.
- Good HCs are overstretched because they move from
- Where actual legal framework and civil society active benefit of UN system was connection to civil society and donor community.
- Some places active civil society but no interest in migrant issues, there the church has had significant impact by asking for direct access from Government—Church well situated in many situations where other protection actors are not viable, although some places church leaders need education on social teaching.