From participation to leadership

A resource pack on
community-based protection

Contributors

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Cover photos, from left to right: 1. Oxfam is training local leaders in Teknaf to manage social issues faced by the community. The Oxfam Protection team took their knowledge of protection challenges, and worked with refugees and host community members to create pictographic training materials that capture complex terms like "coercion," "empowerment" and "trafficking." © Salahuddin Ahmed. 2. Protection staff providing community members with protection service maps in a community centre in Tripoli, Lebanon. © UTOPIA. 3. A female member of a community protection committee in Batangafo animates an awareness raising session on stigma resulting from rape. ©Aurélie Godet/Oxfam. 4. Hygiene kits are handed out as part of the protection route to walking migrants who were stranded in Bucaramanga, Colombia, during the lockdown of intranational borders in the fight against the spread of COVID-19. © Oxfam[1]

Contents

List of abbreviations

AWYAD	African Women and Youth Action for Development
CAR	the Central African Republic
CBP	Community-based protection
CEDIER	Centre de Développement Intégral de l'Enfant Rural
CPS	Community protection structure
CoC	Code of conduct
DRC	the Democratic Republic of Congo
FGD	Focus group discussion
FMF	Fundación Mujer y Futuro
GADHOP	Groupe d'Associations de Défense des Droits de l'Homme et de la Paix
KAALO	KAALO Aid and Development
LGBTQIA+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual
SOPROP	Solidarité pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix
ToR	Terms of reference

Introduction

Community-based protection in Oxfam

In the late 1990s, humanitarian actors were reflecting on the challenges of supporting the protection of civilians in many crises – especially in the face of crimes against humanity and genocide in Rwanda and Bosnia. It was apparent that protection could not be restricted to only those organizations with a formal mandate, such as UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross, but that all humanitarian actors needed to contribute[2]. This included the recognition that each humanitarian actor could bring their own perspectives, skills and experience to a collaborative and complementary effort. For organizations like Oxfam, this meant an opportunity to bring a long history of working with communities in crisis. This could complement the more formal roles of organizations mandated to strengthen state systems or work directly with parties to a conflict.

Oxfam's work on protection has always been strongly rooted in community-based action. Oxfam's first 'protection programmes' worked with displaced people and refugees in East Asia building on their existing and potential capacity, and helping community groups to engage with the authorities. This work was always combined with advocacy carried out with partners and allies persuading, mobilizing and influencing duty bearers to fulfil their protection responsibilities. This strategic combination of community-based work, and national and often global advocacy is the hallmark of Oxfam's approach to protection.

In a pioneering protection programme in West Timor in 2003, Oxfam staff and partners worked in dangerous and challenging conditions to help refugees organize themselves, understand their rights and make informed decisions about their future. This was combined with successful advocacy for the Government of Indonesia to change its policy on the involuntary relocation of refugees. This community-based approach was later used in conflict zones in the Philippines and Colombia, where groups were formed to organize 'self-protection' activities in the face of violence against civilians.

Other new programmes adapted their approaches to their contexts in Liberia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In eastern DRC in 2006, Oxfam and partner organizations started to take this community-based approach to scale, at one point supporting 96 protection committees made up of volunteers and outreach workers helping thousands of people living through one of the world's most brutal conflicts. Increasingly Oxfam worked with partner organizations, combining the skills and strengths of each.

Oxfam's community-based protection (CBP) programme in eastern DRC became the organization's flagship for testing out new ideas and approaches, and for developing a dynamic pool of dedicated staff who went on to work in many other countries. It was a learning programme that invested in evaluations, which enabled Oxfam, partners and others to see how protection work in extreme situations could lay the foundations for developmental approaches to governance and active citizenship, and contribute to longer-term goals on gender equality and women's rights. This approach is now used across protection work by Oxfam and partners in the Central African Republic (CAR), Lebanon, Yemen, Bangladesh, Somalia/Somaliland and many other countries.

In 2016–18, Oxfam invested in evaluations of its CBP work in eastern DRC[3] and CAR[4]. These provided a strong evidence base for the benefits of using a community-based approach to protection, and highlighted the immediate impact that community protection actors can have – whether by negotiating the safety of community members in the face of direct threats or working for longer-term changes. These and other evaluations demonstrate the immense, but often unrecognized, value of CBP – and how international actors can support it by working in solidarity with communities in crisis with a strong network of national partners.

In the last decade, CBP has been adopted as an approach by many humanitarian organizations. Perspectives on what constitutes 'community-based' vary, and at worst involve a

superficial extraction of information by international actors. The most successful and effective CBP work has community members at the centre, and is not afraid to shift power and control to those communities, while supporting and recognizing the expertise of national partners. Oxfam is committed to supporting local humanitarian leaders, and continues to work alongside and in partnership with many national and local organizations, such as those that have co-created this resource pack, and strives to continually grow and improve.

Objectives

The objectives of this resource pack are:

- To provide tools for different steps in the community-based protection (CBP) programming cycle.

- To provide guidance on the implementation of CBP.

- To share experiences directly from protection volunteers and members of community protection structures (CPSs), as well as staff from Oxfam and its partner organizations of the different ways CBP is done around the world.

Target audience

This resource pack is intended to be used by staff from humanitarian organizations – local, national and international – working with or planning to work with communities in protection. It is also aimed at community-based organizations, CPSs and community volunteers working on protection. It is primarily intended for those working directly with communities, but will also be useful to managers and technical advisors.

The secondary audiences are allies, researchers, donors, engaged campaigners, development and humanitarian professionals, academics and students interested in community-based approaches and CBP.

Development

This resource pack is the result of discussions with staff from humanitarian organizations and community volunteers involved in CBP. These discussions helped define the themes covered and the types of tools and other resources included, as well as its format. The process of co-creation began in April 2020 and concluded in August 2021.

The early stage of the project involved a total of 48 semi-structured interviews with humanitarian staff in Afghanistan (1), Bangladesh (7), Central African Republic (3), Colombia (5), the Democratic Republic of Congo (4), Iraq (6), Lebanon (6), Myanmar (1), The Occupied Palestinian Territory (1), Somalia/Somaliland (4), South Sudan (3), Syria (1), Uganda (1), Venezuela (2), Yemen (1) and Oxfam's Global Humanitarian Team (2). While most interviews were carried out with a single interviewee, in some cases two or more participated.

These interviews helped identify specific tools, case studies and/or recommendations, which were later submitted for inclusion. Discussions with the collating team helped clarify any questions, leading to the final versions provided here.

The early stage also involved 17 focus group discussions (FGDs) with community volunteers in Bangladesh (2), Central African Republic (4), Iraq (1), Lebanon (7), Somalia/Somaliland (1), South Sudan (1) and Yemen (1). Both men and women participated in these discussions, in single-sex or mixed groups, according to preference and cultural appropriateness. Whenever possible, the groups included community volunteers from a range of age groups, ethnicities, legal status and abilities.

How to use this resource pack

This resource pack includes different types of resources:

15 templates: templates and suggested processes for different tasks within CBP that can be adapted to different contexts.

10 examples: tools used in practice by CPSs and staff from organizations contributing to this resource pack.

32 case studies: experiences shared by humanitarian staff, often on a specific aspect of CBP.

Recommendations: suggestions from humanitarian staff based on their experience and expertise.
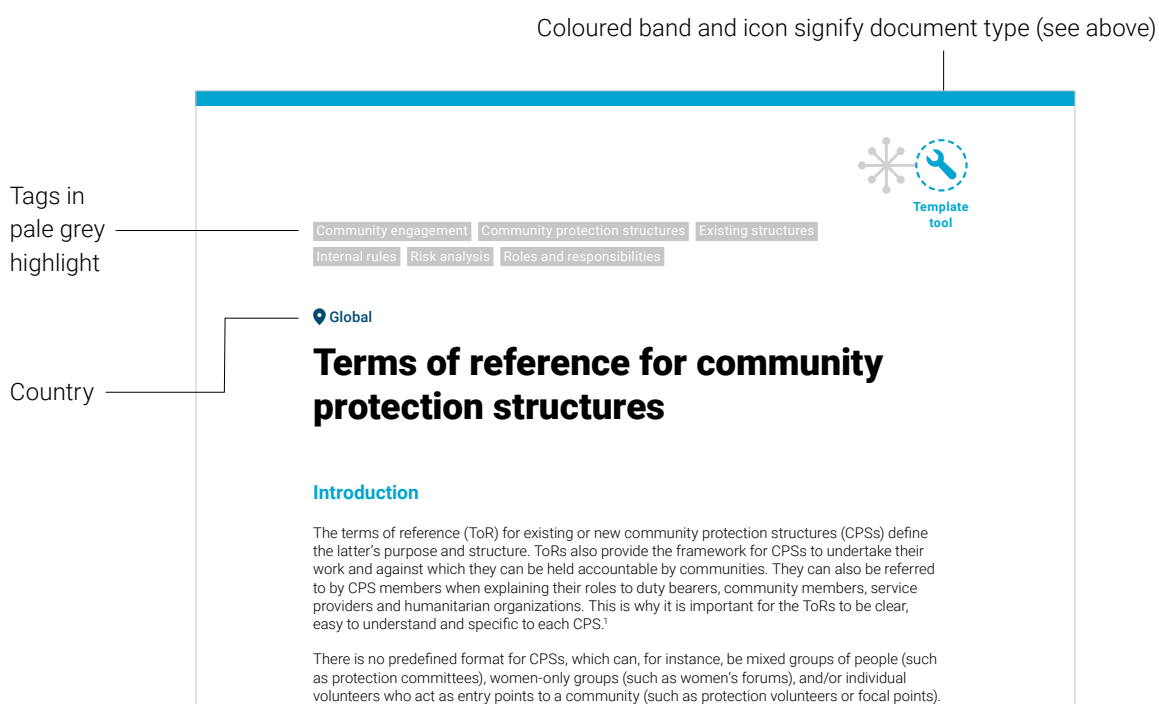
Narrative: an overview of how the different resources fit into the programme cycle, laying out the main points of each step, and providing links to all of the resources in the pack.

The complete resource pack can be accessed at: https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/series/resource-pack-on-community-based-protection/

Each section of the narrative starts with a box summarizing the resources referred to and links in the body of the text help the reader find individual resources more easily: yellow links take the readers to templates, examples, case studies and recommendations while blue links take them to sub-sections in the narrative .

The individual resources – i.e. the templates, examples, case studies and recommendations – begin with a number of icons and tags to help the reader navigate the resources (see **Figure 1**).

Figure 1: Example of a template tool

Coloured band and icon signify document type (see above)

Template tool

Tags in pale grey highlight

Community engagement Community protection structures Existing structures
Internal rules Risk analysis Roles and responsibilities

Country

◉ Global

Terms of reference for community protection structures

Introduction

The terms of reference (ToR) for existing or new community protection structures (CPSs) define the latter's purpose and structure. ToRs also provide the framework for CPSs to undertake their work and against which they can be held accountable by communities. They can also be referred to by CPS members when explaining their roles to duty bearers, community members, service providers and humanitarian organizations. This is why it is important for the ToRs to be clear, easy to understand and specific to each CPS.[1]

There is no predefined format for CPSs, which can, for instance, be mixed groups of people (such as protection committees), women-only groups (such as women's forums), and/or individual volunteers who act as entry points to a community (such as protection volunteers or focal points).

Section 1: Understandings

Every year, hundreds of thousands of people find themselves in situations of conflict and crisis, and have to take measures to protect themselves and their communities from violence, abuse and exploitation. When they are desperately fleeing their homes to seek safety, trying to find shelter from artillery or avoid armed groups, it is rarely those with formal responsibility to ensure their protection who are there to help them. Whether it is helping carry a child to safety, negotiating at a checkpoint to allow a group of civilians to pass, organizing the sharing of food and other resources when supplies have been cut off, or helping female neighbours hide from gangs of armed men, it is most often family, friends, neighbours, community leaders and local organizations playing such important roles in their immediate protection. Nonetheless, the role of communities affected by conflict and crises in their own protection has often been overlooked or underappreciated by the humanitarian system.

Historically, those working in humanitarian protection have focused on engaging primary duty bearers, such as states and armed groups, and holding them accountable for their responsibilities under international law. However, the 1990s witnessed a significant shift in policy and practice, marked by greater attention being paid to communities' own agency and capacities to protect themselves. This shift consolidated protection work around two main targets: duty bearers (authorities) and rights holders (communities).

Although duty bearers retain the primary responsibility for protection, rights holders have begun to be seen as protection agents as well. Community based Protection (CBP) emerged in this context.

This shift was followed by several efforts, notably at international level, to define protection and CBP. This section explores understandings of protection based on the views and voices of communities and organizations that have contributed to this resource pack .

What and whom protection is about

Template tools	●	Protection Guidance for CPSs
Example tools	●	Terms of Reference for Community Protection Volunteers (Somalia/ Somaliland)
Case studies	●	Identifying and supporting self-protection mechanisms (Somalia/ Somaliland)
	●	Supporting community initiatives to ensure their own protection (Yemen)

It is important that everyone working on a project, community members, members of community protection structures (CPS) and staff from supporting humanitarian organizations, have the same understanding of what an *what* and *whom* protection work seeks to protect from *what threats* and *which perpetrators*. The Protection Guidance for Community Protection Structures (CPSs) is a reference document explaining key protection concepts in simple language. It is intended for community members, especially members of CPSs, and staff of supporting humanitarian organizations. It can also be used to guide trainings. As the protection guidance outlines, protection is about protecting people's rights, safety and dignity. This is reflected in other resources, for example, Oxfam's team in Somalia/Somaliland emphasizes the importance of achieving rights with safety and dignity.

This understanding of protection expands on its most common definition,[5] which has been criticized for its primary focus on the legal entitlements of people affected by humanitarian crises.[6] A definition of protection grounded not only in rights, but also safety and dignity, allows for an understanding of different bodies of law as a protection tool. This means that protection actors, while encouraged to refer to legal frameworks for protection,[7] do not have to limit themselves to such frameworks. For example, this includes the possibility of advocating for protection standards higher than those established by applicable international law.

Protection is about protecting all individuals without discrimination. This understanding is in line with the key principles of community-based protection (CBP).

The protection guidance also clarifies the threats that people are to be protected from, namely:

- **Violence**, including killing; torture; sexual violence; and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment.

- **Coercion**, such as forced displacement; forced return; prevention of return; forced recruitment; forced labour; sexual exploitation; and forcing to commit acts of violence.

- **Deliberate deprivation**, including the destruction of homes, crops, wells, clinics and schools; denial of access to land and markets; denial of humanitarian access; deliberate discrimination in access to property, land, jobs and services; and illegal 'taxation' or tolls, which may limit freedom of movement.

CBP, due to its participatory nature, may allow for a different, more relevant prioritization of threats compared to work done exclusively by external humanitarian actors.[8] For example, in Yemen, community members prioritized, and developed a response to, protection risks linked to drug use. In Somalia/Somaliland, community protection volunteers have contributed to COVID-19 responses through awareness raising.

Protection also involves targeting the sources of a threat (i.e., its perpetrators) and those with influence over them, as seen in the advocacy sub-section. As the protection guidance explains, sources of threats can include duty bearers themselves. These include military and civilian authorities, who may be official or de facto, state or non-state. Nonetheless, as Oxfam's team in Somalia/Somaliland has observed, community members may also be sources of threats, either intentionally (as can be the case, for instance, with domestic violence and intercommunal conflict) or unintentionally (for example, by adopting harmful survival strategies, such as child marriage). Community members may also condone practices behind protection risks that pre-exist humanitarian crises, but may be exacerbated by them, such as discrimination.

The protection risk equation

Template tools	● Protection Guidance for CPSs ● Community Protection Action Plans ● Community-based Protection Analysis
Case studies	● Advocacy actions in the village of Mashuba (DRC)

The risk equation was proposed as a framework for humanitarian protection in the mid-2000s.[9] The protection risk equation was initially based on the relationship between threat, vulnerability and time; it described a protection risk as directly proportional to the threat that causes it, the vulnerability of those affected by it, and the time the latter are exposed to it.[10] This means that, the greater the threat, the vulnerability and/or the time of exposure, the greater the risk.

The risk equation was later adapted to include 'capacity', sometimes omitting time[11] – as featured in the protection guidance for CPSs. Therefore, a protection risk is also inversely proportional to the capacity of both duty bearers and rights holders to address it. In other words, the greater their capacity, the lesser the risk.

Figure 2: Protection risk equation

$$\downarrow \textbf{Risk} = \frac{\downarrow \textbf{Threat} + \downarrow \textbf{Vulnerability} \ (\text{x Time})}{\uparrow \textbf{Capacity}}$$

For instance, in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), women were **vulnerable** to the **risk** of being assaulted by armed men (threat) while going to the market once a week (**time**). However, this risk was mitigated thanks to their **capacity** to mobilize authorities to ensure their safety. In this case, authorities agreed to escort the women on market days, which decreased their **vulnerability**.[12]

The risk equation is the basis of protection work, which can seek to:

- reduce threats;
- reduce vulnerabilities;
- reduce the duration of exposure to a threat; and/or
- increase/improve capacities.

As the guidance on community protection action plans clarifies, threats, vulnerabilities and capacities are the main components of a protection analysis. As seen in the sub-section on community planning, these concepts guide the practical understanding of the threats affecting communities, the impact of such threats on individuals or groups, and communities' capacities to prevent, avoid, mitigate or end such threats.

The concepts of threat, vulnerability and capacity can also help to explain the historical shift in protection policy and practice. Initially, protection was focused on holding primary duty bearers accountable – it was largely limited to efforts aimed at reducing threats. Communities affected by crises were seen mainly as victims, rather than agents of their own protection. As such, any efforts to engage communities for protection purposes were mostly aimed at reducing their vulnerabilities.

The inclusion of 'capacity' in the risk equation marks a shift towards a more people-centred approach, as it acknowledges the capacities of not only duty bearers,[13] but also communities.[14] This focuses on strengthening communities' self-protection capacities – a key principle of community-based protection.
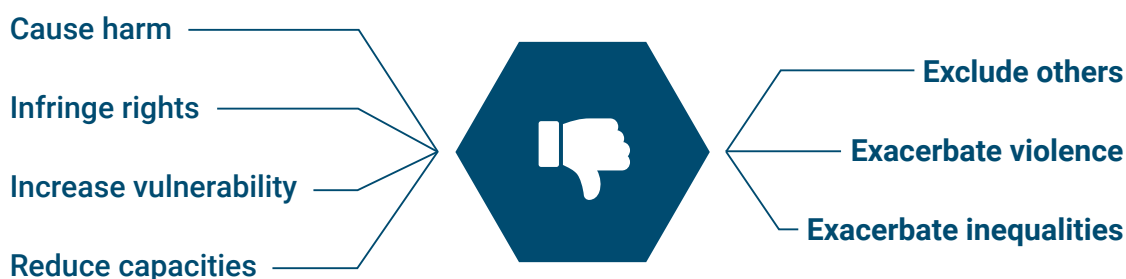
Self-protection strategies and capacities

Template tools	• Guidance on Community Self-Protection • Community-based Protection Analysis
Case studies	• Advocacy actions in the village of Mashuba (DRC) • Identifying and supporting self-protection mechanisms (Somalia/ Somaliland) • How the community taught us protection work: Lessons from Gaza (OPT) • Working with communities to reduce risk exposure at night (Bangladesh) • Community lighting project (Lebanon)

The guidance on community self-protection strategies and capacities is intended for both community members and humanitarian workers, and can also be used to guide training or working sessions to analyse self-protection capacities in a community. It includes a template for identifying community self-protection strategies according to three overlapping categories, based on their intended:

- **effects on threats** i.e. to prevent, avoid, mitigate and/or end threats;[15]

- **type of engagement with key people**, i.e. non-engagement, non-violent engagement or violent engagement;[16] and

- **impact on the community**, i.e. positive or negative.

The guidance includes a specific framework to assess whether a self-protection strategy has a negative impact, according to the seven factors laid out in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Effects of negative self-protection strategies

Cause harm
Infringe rights
Increase vulnerability
Reduce capacities
Exclude others
Exacerbate violence
Exacerbate inequalities

The template also includes examples of self-protection strategies, including some from case studies featured in this resource pack. For instance, 'moving around in groups' can be understood as a **non-engagement prevention** strategy, which is often **positive**. This was precisely the strategy put in place by a group of women in DRC, with the goal of deterring armed groups from assaulting and robbing them; however, the strategy was not successful, as seen in the advocacy sub-section. Moving in groups and similar self-protection strategies – such as sleeping in groups or moving accompanied by a male relative – have also been adopted by women and girls in Somalia/Somaliland and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. In order to avoid potential threats, these women and girls, as well as some in Bangladesh and Lebanon, also avoid going out when it is dark. This is a **negative** self-protection strategy, inasmuch as it limits their freedom of movement.[17] Another example is that of armed retaliation, a negative self-protection strategy aimed at **putting an end** to a threat through violent **engagement**. This is the case for men and boys in Somalia/Somaliland, who often attack people from other clans seen as threats.

Figure 4: Example of a self-protection strategy identification exercise

● Positive strategies ● Negative strategies

	Prevention	Avoidance	Mitigation	Cessation
Non-engagement	● Sleeping or moving around in groups, particularly in dangerous areas or at dangerous times.	● Flight/displacement.[7] ● Hiding from armed actors.[8] ● Keeping girls out of school in order to protect them from sexual abuse.	● Choosing to expose women to the risk of sexual abuse and assault instead of exposing men to the risk of torture or murder.[9]	● Running away from captivity.
Non-violent engagement	● Convincing weapon bearers not to occupy a school.	● Providing information to, or otherwise cooperating with, weapon bearers in order not to be targeted during attacks.	● Providing false information to authorities, such as the number of households in a community, to alleviate the burden of taxes. ● Paying bribes – for example, to avoid being arrested.	● Community members negotiating with weapon bearers the release of children that they had recruited.
Violent engagement	● Forming a group of armed civilians to patrol the community.		● Sending family members to fight with a warring party as a way of 'purchasing' protection for the entire household.[10]	● Beating a husband accused of beating his wife.

The guidance also clarifies the difference between **self-protection** and **survival** strategies. Survival strategies include the wide range of actions people take to survive hardships; self-protection strategies are survival strategies specifically in response to protection threats, i.e., violence, coercion and/or deliberate deprivation. Thus, survival strategies include self-protection, but also coping mechanisms against other threats such as hunger and poverty.

Figure 5: Self-protection strategies as subset of survival strategies

Even though such coping mechanisms may not amount to self-protection, they become a concern to protection actors when they have a negative impact on individuals. This is the case, for instance, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, where survival strategies include child marriage and unenrolling children from school. Thus, the framework for assessing the negative impact of self-protection strategies may also be helpful for identifying harmful survival strategies more broadly.
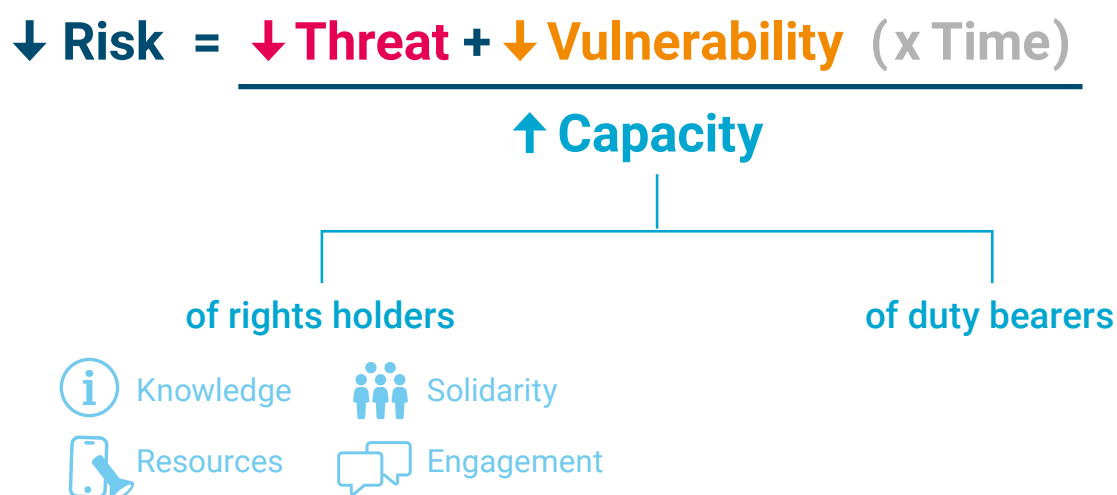
The guidance also offers a framework that helps assess communities' self-protection capacities – that is, the factors that contribute to a community's ability to implement their self-protection strategies.

Self-protection capacity framework and pillars

The 'capacity' variable of the risk equation can be determined according to four 'pillars':

- The **Knowledge** pillar refers to what communities know. This encompasses information and awareness as well as skills (that is, knowing how to do something) that can contribute to communities' protection from violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation. Examples include information on incoming threats, knowledge of successful self-protection strategies, and negotiation skills.

- The **Resources** pillar refers to the material resources that communities can count on to ensure their own protection, such as mobile phones or solar-powered lights.

- The **Solidarity** pillar concerns the support community members provide to one another, and is closely linked to social cohesion.

- The **Engagement** pillar relates to a community's ability to engage key actors outside the community, such as duty bearers, perpetrators, service providers and humanitarian organizations.

Figure 6: Protection risk equation including the self-protection capacity framework

$$\downarrow \text{Risk} = \frac{\downarrow \text{Threat} + \downarrow \text{Vulnerability} \ (\text{x Time})}{\uparrow \text{Capacity}}$$

of rights holders · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · of duty bearers

Knowledge   Solidarity

Resources   Engagement

The objective of the self-protection capacity framework is to help communities and humanitarian organizations to outline potential capacities as part of a self-protection analysis, not to guide categorization exercises. Therefore, drawing clear distinctions between pillars is not important. For example, having certain negotiation skills (Knowledge) is also helpful to engaging duty bearers (Engagement). Likewise, when a family shares their resources with another, they are practising solidarity, while also boosting the other family's resources. Finally, certain resources, such as mobile phones, can contribute to information sharing, a solidarity practice that contributes to strengthening the Knowledge pillar. Mobilizing a community leader may depend on both solidarity (because they are part of the community) and engagement (because they are a duty bearer) capacities at the same time.

The self-protection framework serves as guidance on the different types of support that humanitarian actors can provide to support community self-protection. This is reflected in several tools and case studies featured in this resource pack. For example, by supporting communities' ability to come together and act on their own protection concerns, the establishment of community protection structures strengthens the **Solidarity** pillar, as seen in Section 4. Social cohesion

and mediation activities have a similar effect, by helping address tensions between community members, as seen in the social cohesion sub-section. Advocacy efforts, and activities aimed at ensuring access to services, strengthen communities' engagement of duty bearers and service providers. Sensitization activities strengthen communities' knowledge – for instance, of the harmful consequences of certain practices. Several examples involving self-protection outside community protection structures entailed material support to communities' resources. Section 5 includes examples on how support strengthens both knowledge and resources.

The self-protection capacity framework and its pillars are referenced throughout this resource pack, clarifying how each tool, case study and recommendation relates to community self-protection.

Community-informed vs community-based
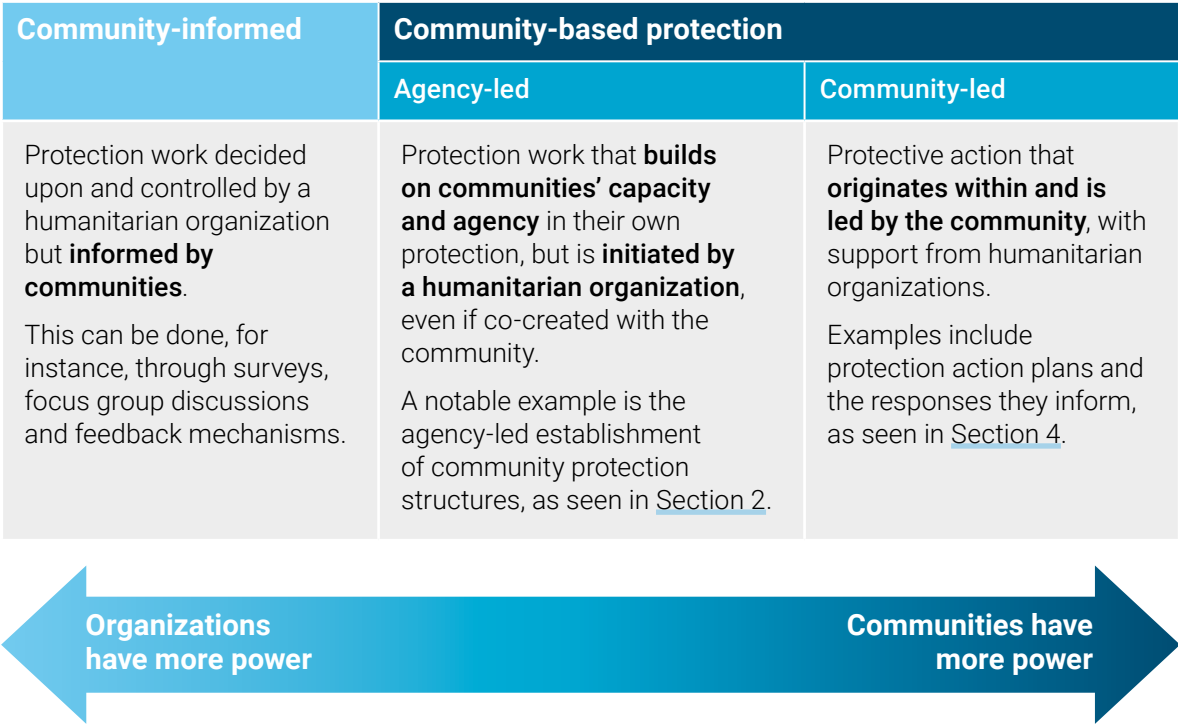
🔧 Template tools	● Guidance on Community Self-Protection ● Selection of CPS Members

In 2014, in light of increasing interest in CBP, a survey of humanitarian practitioners survey revealed three different understandings of – or approaches to – CBP:

- community-informed;
- community-based but agency-led; and
- community-led.[18]

The main difference between these approaches is the amount of power that communities have over protection responses: as recipients, participants or leaders, as illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Spectrum of community-informed and community-based protection

Community-informed	Community-based protection	
	Agency-led	Community-led
Protection work decided upon and controlled by a humanitarian organization but **informed by communities**. This can be done, for instance, through surveys, focus group discussions and feedback mechanisms.	Protection work that **builds on communities' capacity and agency** in their own protection, but is **initiated by a humanitarian organization**, even if co-created with the community. A notable example is the agency-led establishment of community protection structures, as seen in Section 2.	Protective action that **originates within and is led by the community**, with support from humanitarian organizations. Examples include protection action plans and the responses they inform, as seen in Section 4.

◄ Organizations have more power   **Communities have more power ►**

As seen in the introduction to CBP and the protection risk equation, community self-protection (or community-led protection) consists of efforts implemented by community members to ensure their own protection from violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation. The distinguishing feature of community self-protection is that communities have the most power over protection responses, and thus the leading role in them.

Community self-protection may include initiatives spontaneously implemented by individuals or groups, and/or may encompass efforts led by CPSs. This means that certain initiatives, such as the establishment of CPSs, may start as agency-led protection but transform into community-led protection.

This offers different courses of action for humanitarian organizations. Humanitarian organizations should seek to identify spontaneous self-protection strategies that they could support, and work with communities to identify complementary actions based on their mandates, strengths and capacities. However, such strategies may be difficult to identify, as they may occur in contexts marked by security and access constraints, or they may simply not exist. In the latter cases, humanitarian organizations may start agency-led protection initiatives that might later transition to being community-led.

Most of the examples in this resource pack correspond to protection work led by CPSs. Even if the structures themselves were once initiated by supporting humanitarian organizations, they analyse protection risks and design and implement responses on their own. The section on self-protection outside CPSs features several case studies of direct support – either by humanitarian organizations or CPSs – to self-protection strategies initiated by individuals or groups outside CPSs.

CBP principles

	Template tools	● Guidance on Community Self-Protection ● Selection of CPS Members ● Preparing to Exit Communities
	Case studies	● Identifying and supporting self-protection mechanisms (Somalia/ Somaliland) ● How the community taught us protection work: Lessons from Gaza (OPT) ● Rana, a survivor of domestic violence and sexual abuse (Yemen)

This sub-section outlines the principles that staff from contributing organizations and community volunteers believe should guide CBP. They not only help clarify what CBP is about, but also help differentiate it from other protection efforts.

Community agency

As the self-protection guidance clarifies, 'community-based protection refers to a set of activities that humanitarian organizations and other actors can carry out to promote and support communities' agency and self-protection'. This is reflected in examples in the sub-section on self-protection outside community-based protection structures (CPSs), for instance in Somalia/Somaliland and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Communities' agency is also reflected in the way they are involved in establishing their CPSs, for example, through community assemblies in the selection process of members. Finally, the work of CPSs themselves testifies to community agency, as seen in the community planning, advocacy, sensitization, access to services and social cohesion sub-sections.

Self-protection capacities

CBP recognizes communities' own capacities to ensure their protection from violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation. Supporting such self-protection capacities is the ultimate goal of CBP.

'The ultimate goal of community-based protection is self-protection – i.e., that communities are able to implement measures to ensure their own protection.' (Suha Allouche Hafda, Utopia for Social Justice's Protection Manager, Lebanon)

As seen with the protection risk equation, this requires including communities' capacities as a variable in the assessment of protection risks.

'What we often fail to see and act upon is what people have rather than lack: the inherent strengths of resilience and creative coping. There are many things that make them sustain their lives, and maybe even thrive on their own. They are able to face and survive the unsustainability of aid work and the irregular support provided to them. This is the cornerstone of 'community-based protection'. (Fidaa Al-Araj, Oxfam's Gender Justice and Protection Officer in the Occupied Palestinian Territory)

Therefore, strengthening communities' self-protection capacities is a core aspect of CBP work. This includes various forms of support to CPSs (and sometimes community members who are not part of CPSs), such as trainings, coaching, and material support. However, in a broader sense, all CBP activities can be seen as strengthening the Knowledge, Resources, Solidarity or Engagement pillars of communities' self-protection capacities. Examples of CBP strengthening communities' self-protection capacities are featured in Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Complementarity to authority-centred protection

Even though communities may be seen as protection agents with their own self-protection strategies, the primary responsibility for their protection still rests with authorities – hence the label 'duty bearers'.

CBP, while aimed at strengthening communities' own self-protection strategies, must not be a substitute for duty bearers' primary protection responsibilities. This can be ensured, for instance, by maintaining a balance between support to Knowledge, Resources and Solidarity pillars of self-protection, and support to the Engagement pillar.

Whenever possible, CPSs should assess the most appropriate way to engage and influence duty bearers, considering the risks to their own safety and that of others. It may be too risky to directly engage primary duty bearers, such as armed actors or government officials, but it may be possible to engage third parties who can influence the duty bearers on the community's behalf. For example, some communities work with religious leaders who have channels of communications with non-state armed actors. Several examples of such efforts are described in the advocacy sub-section. Furthermore, both CPSs and supporting humanitarian organizations should clarify to duty bearers that their CBP work does not replace authorities' protection responsibilities, which can contribute to ensuring authorities' acceptance of protection work, as illustrated by a case study from Yemen.

Inclusion and participation

CBP programming must acknowledge that communities are not homogenous, and seek to ensure diverse community members are able to meaningfully engage in its various processes.

Thus CBP must be representative of communities' diversity, with specific attention to gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnicity and religion, among other characteristics. This is because different individuals and groups within a community may act differently in response to protection concerns, and have different capacities. Also, threats to which only part of the community is vulnerable to – for instance women and girls – may otherwise be overlooked by those who are not vulnerable to them.

As seen in Section 7, inclusion and participation are ensured in several ways. For instance, the establishment of CPSs and the definition of their roles and responsibilities involve participatory processes that actively seek the meaningful participation of women and youth, as seen in Section 4.

> *'For me, community-based protection is [about] people who were chosen by their community peers to protect the wellbeing of members in their localities.' (Female member of CPS in Bria, Central African Republic)*

As seen in the introduction to protection, the work of CPSs must ensure everyone's protection. To that end, protection responses must include measures to address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different groups within the community.

Community ownership

The participation and inclusion of diverse individuals and groups from a community in CBP programming contributes to overall ownership by the community. Ensuring meaningful participation of a wide range of community members in the establishment of CPSs contributes to such structures being – and being seen as – the result of collective community action, and thus truly owned by community members.

Such ownership is, in turn, essential to ensuring the sustainability of CBP after projects end and/or supporting humanitarian organizations exit a context.

Transformational impact

Power is a key concept in CBP programming. Power distinguishes community-based (including community-led) protection from community-informed protection, as it ensures communities have control over protection responses. Therefore, CBP must also transform power dynamics that exclude and marginalize certain individuals and groups.

This also requires changing power dynamics within the humanitarian sector, by challenging historical approaches that have neglected communities' agency and capacities, and promoting collaboration between community members and humanitarian organizations in which communities take the lead in protection responses.

CBP's transformational impact is essential to ensuring all the other principles are upheld, since power dynamics can have a harmful effect on community agency, self-protection capacities, CBP's complementarity with authority-centred protection, inclusion, participation and community ownership.

Several examples in this resource pack testify to CBP's potential to transform power dynamics and inequalities.

Section 2: Process

The process of establishing and running CBP programmes will vary widely between contexts and communities, as it will depend on the specific protection threats to be addressed and the self-protection capacities to be supported. Nonetheless, the process is likely to include the following steps:

- analyse and plan;
- mobilize;
- respond;
- support;
- empower; and
- monitor and evaluate.

The rest of this resource pack is structured along these steps. Thus, this section serves as a summary, providing links to the more detailed sections where appropriate.

Analyse and plan

Template tools	- Collecting Demographic Data - Community-based Protection Analysis - Protection Service Mapping - CBP Theory of Change

The relationship between a community and national international organizations needs to be grounded on a common understanding of the community's reality. As such, regardless of whether a community approaches a humanitarian organization to seek support or the organization takes the first step, humanitarian organizations need to understand the context and analyse the protection situation in the areas in which they work. The protection analysis template tool and community profiling template tools in this resource pack provide useful guidance for conducting such an exercise.

Community profiling involves many of the same tools used by CPSs in their own community planning work. For instance, in addition to an analysis of demographic data, community profiling usually requires a *context analysis*, a **conflict analysis**, a gender analysis, a stakeholder mapping and power analysis, a service mapping, a protection analysis and a safe programming risk analysis. However, community profiling by humanitarian organizations should create an overview of protection concerns in an area and map the characteristics of the communities most affected – rather than identify specific protection threats and inform responses.

Establishing CBP programmes also requires devising a theory of change. This should clarify what impact the programme seeks to achieve, what changes are required to achieve it, and what pathways can be pursued.

The analysis and planning stages of CBP programming may also take place mid-programme (e.g., after a milestone or evaluation), when they can inform changes in activities and/or the revitalization of CPSs.

Mobilize
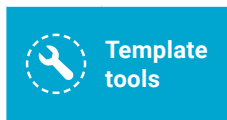
Template tools	• Terms of Reference for CPSs • Selection of CPS Members • Internal Rules for CPSs

Once target communities are identified, CBP programming often involves working with existing CPSs or establishing new ones. Through such efforts, humanitarian organizations help strengthen the Solidarity pillar of communities' self-protection capacities by mobilizing[19] community members to act collectively to reduce their protection risks.

Even though the creation of CPSs may be proposed by supporting organizations, their establishment should be led by community members themselves. This entails a participatory process for the selection of volunteers, in which community members determine selection criteria and elect their representatives accordingly. The community should agree with the elected volunteers on their roles and responsibilities, which informs the terms of reference (ToR) for each CPS. Volunteers' expected behaviour as representatives should also be agreed with the community, informing the internal rules for CPS members.

When working with existing community structures, humanitarian staff should identify the roles and capacities of such structures, building on information obtained during the earlier analysis phase.

Despite the centrality of CPSs to CBP programming, they are not a requirement for CBP. Communities may develop self-protection strategies at individual or household levels, or even in groups that do not become institutionalized as a 'community structure' per se. Thus, CBP programming may also involve supporting these forms of self-protection outside CPSs.

Respond
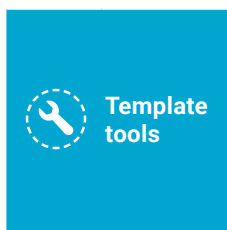
Template tools	• Community-based Protection Analysis • Community Protection Action Plans • Protection Service Mapping • Community-led Advocacy • Early Warning Mechanisms • Community-led Sensitization

A significant part of CBP programming depends on the actions taken by communities themselves, especially – but not only – through the work of CPSs. They carry out community planning activities to identify protection risks and design protection responses; advocacy efforts to hold primary duty bearers accountable for their protection responsibilities; sensitization activities to raise awareness of protection threats and self-protection strategies; efforts to ensure communities' access to services and strengthen social cohesion. Humanitarian organizations may also support self-protection outside CPSs.

Support

Template tools	● Supporting CPSs

Once CPSs are created, or existing community structures identified, CBP programming may entail supporting their capacities for self-protection.

A very common support is training, which can be thematic (covering concepts) or technical (covering skills). Both types contribute directly to the Knowledge pillar of self-protection capacities, which in turn can contribute indirectly to other pillars. The technical capacities of CPS members may also be supported through continuous monitoring and coaching, and CPSs may also receive material support necessary to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

CBP programmes also commonly include various forms of support from humanitarian organizations to local organizations as an indirect form of strengthening community self-protection capacities.

Empower

CBP programming empowers communities' not only by strengthening their self-protection capacities to respond to protection risks, but also through inclusive and participatory approaches throughout the process, including during mobilization, and support.

Monitor and Evaluate

CBP programming also involves continuous monitoring of the quality of activities implemented and of their intended and unintended impact on communities' protection situation and community dynamics. This includes not only mobilization and support activities carried out by supporting humanitarian organizations, but also of the work of CPSs and other self-protection strategies being supported, as applicable. Monitoring efforts may be followed by programme evaluations, notably around milestones and end stages.

## Sustainability and exit

Template tools	● Preparing to Exit Communities

The various forms of support, and the very strengthening of self-protection capacity, contribute to ensuring the sustainability of protection work by CPSs and other community members. This can be complemented from the beginning by an exit plan that outlines a strategy for humanitarian organizations to phase out their involvement in CBP, and thus shifting from agency-led community-based to community-led protection.

Managing programme risks

At every step of the process, a safe programming risk analysis should be undertaken or reviewed, considering the risks that the CBP programme might expose communities, CPS members and supporting organizations to. These risks include retaliation, sexual exploitation or abuse, and strengthening the power of abusive leaders. Mitigation and contingency measures should be identified, properly resourced and implemented.

Figure 8: The community-based programming cycle

Monitoring

Empowerment

Exit

Analyse and plan

Evaluate

Mobilize

Respond

Support

Managing programme risks
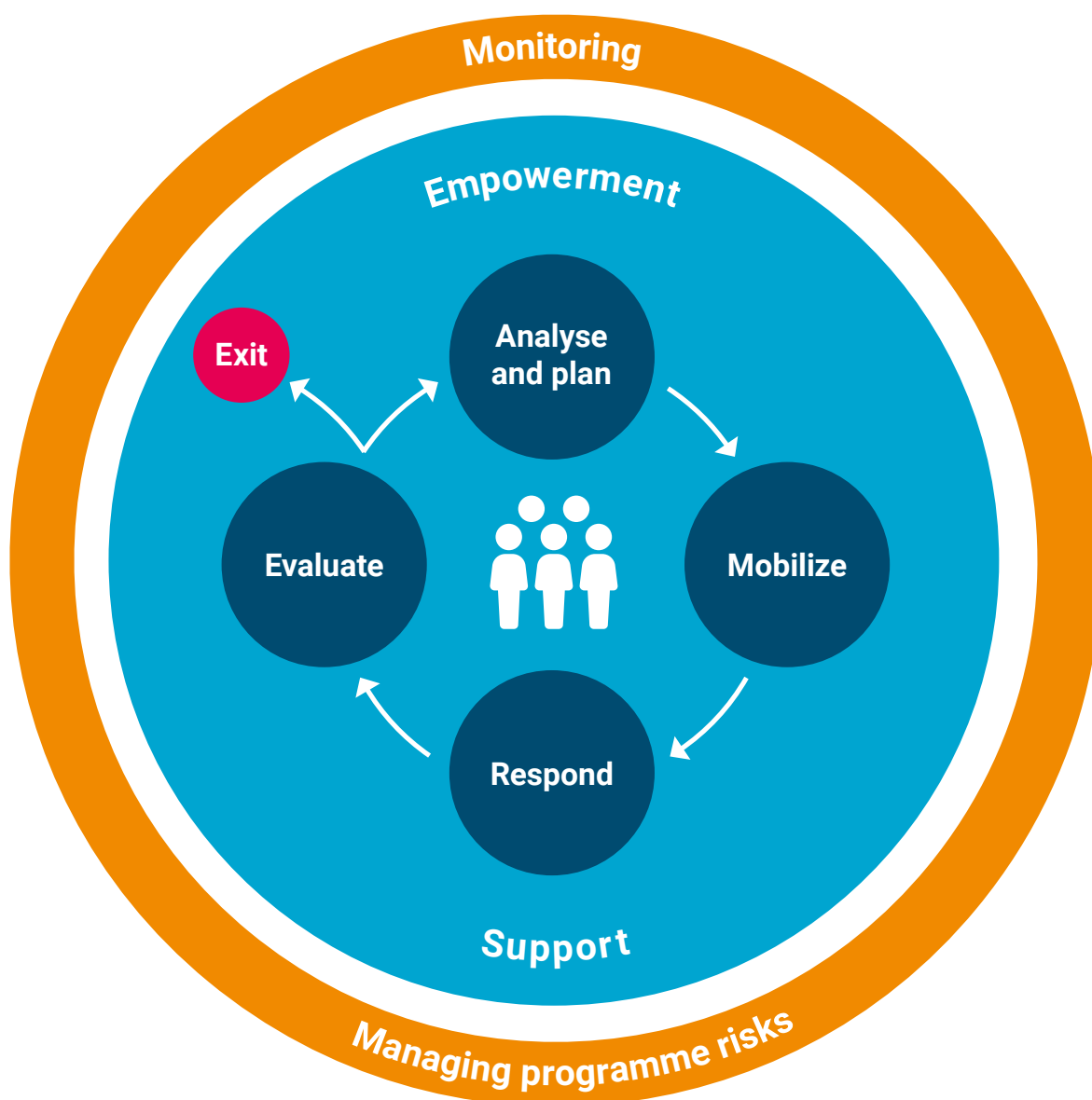
Section 3: Analyse and plan

The **process** of establishing community-based protection programmes begins with analysis and planning. This involves identifying target communities and understanding the protection risks they face, as well as agreeing – with those communities – on the changes that must be achieved to reduce such risks. This section briefly discusses these two main components of analysis and planning: community profiling and theories of change.

Community profiling

Template tools
- Collecting Demographic Data
- Community-based Protection Analysis
- Protection Service Mapping

Establishing a community profile in order to identify communities to work with involves different analyses which include

- Context analysis (including a conflict analysis) providing a general overview of the situation;

- Demographic data (such as the number of community members disaggregated by gender, age, ability/disability, ethnicity, religious identity, displacement status and other relevant criteria) giving an understanding of the different groups within a community;

- Gender analysis, helping to understand gender roles and power dynamics linked to gender in the community;

- Stakeholder mapping and power analysis, identifying different actors that interact with and within the community around protection, whom they interact with, their level of engagement, their power, interests and relationships;

- Service mapping, listing service providers to which the community has access;

- Protection analysis, exploring the protection risks affecting the community, including threats, vulnerabilities to those threats, and the community's capacities to protect themselves from them.

Community profiling helps identify key factors that may help or hinder a community-based protection programme, such as existing power dynamics within and beyond the community, existing protection structures, potential entry points for the programme, the level of protection concerns, and potential programme risks.

CPSs may carry out similar analyses in their work, in order to inform community protection plans – as seen in the community planning sub-section. However, unlike the work of CPSs, community profiling aims to inform an overview of protection concerns and community context to allow for the identification and prioritization of target communities for humanitarian organizations. This differs from the analyses done by CPSs, which aims primarily to identify the protection risks their work should focus on.

The selection of target communities is commonly based on prioritization according to the level of protection risks affecting communities in selected areas of intervention, physical accessibility to the area, entry points for the programme and potential programme risks.

At this stage, a safe programming risk analysis should also be conducted to identify the risks that a CBP programme may create or exacerbate in the chosen communities, and specific measures to mitigate them.

Theories of change

Template tools	● CBP Theory of Change
Example tools	● Theory of Change and Structure of CPSs (DRC) ● Theory of Change for Oxfam's CBP approach (CAR)

The creation of CBP programmes requires a vision. This is often laid out in a theory of change, a document that clarifies the impact that a programme seeks to achieve. Theories of change build on the analyses in the community profiling, which dissect the overall problem that the programme seeks to address.

As the template tool on theories of change shows, theories of change should be developed through a participatory process, with humanitarian organizations and community members working together. This can be done through workshops, working groups or other discussion sessions of various sizes, bringing all participants together or dividing them into sub-groups.

These discussions give the national and international humanitarian organizations and community members an opportunity to look together at the community profile and agree together on the changes they want to achieve and how to achieve them. This requires both setting a vision for the impact of the programme, and identifying sub-changes – smaller objectives – that contribute to achieving it.

Theories of change for CBP programmes will vary from one context to another; however, they are often developed along three main axes, two of which relate to communities' non-violent engagement:

● Duty bearers' protection responsibilities to be ensured, or advocated for;
● Ensuring access to services; and
● Non-engagement self-protection strategies.

Theories of change may of course be structured differently. For instance, for a CBP programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the theory of change, while also encompassing engagement of primary duty bearers and access to services, has a third component focused on prevention of and response to protection risks within communities. In the Central African Republic (CAR), the programme's theory of change has only two axes: access to services and 'local action', the latter encompassing not only engagement of duty bearers, but also sensitization activities.

Section 4: Mobilize

CBP recognizes and strengthens communities' self-protection capacities. As seen in the protection risk equation, these capacities rely, among other factors, on the ability of a community to work together – the solidarity pillar of communities' self-protection capacities. CPSs function as a catalyst for collective action, in which community members are mobilized[20] to bring their capacities together and devise their own self-protection strategies.

Supporting humanitarian organizations should engage communities in CBP programmes at the earliest stages in order to meaningfully build on their self-protection capacities.

Mobilization during the COVID-19 pandemic

The outbreak of the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 – and the various movement restrictions and physical distancing measures put in place to counter it – posed a challenge to the continuous engagement of community members and CPSs. A case study from Iraq shows how Oxfam adapted its way of engaging protection committees, shifting to remote modalities based on WhatsApp groups. The new approach not only allowed continuous engagement of CPSs, but also contributed to strengthening the relationship among volunteers and between them and Oxfam.

Similarly, a case study from Bangladesh demonstrates the challenges of keeping in touch with communities and gathering information where access is limited. In this case, Oxfam's protection team had to adapt their approaches from face-to-face modalities – such as focus group discussions, key informant interviews and household surveys – to remote modalities, relying on a network of community actors, including CPSs, religious and community leaders, and other community members. This case study further testifies to the value of CBP to humanitarian analysis: this network, built through CBP work, was essential to keeping the links between the community and the Oxfam team during a time of difficult access.

This section presents several resources outlining how these structures are established through inclusive, participatory processes that seek to ensure that communities have as much control as possible over decisions and the implementation of activities.

Establishment of community protection structures

🔧	**Template tools**	● Selection of CPS Members
🔧	**Example tools**	● Terms of Reference for CPSs (DRC) ● Women's groups in refugee communities (Lebanon) ● Terms of Reference For CPSs (CAR) ● Terms of Reference for CBP networks (Yemen) ● Terms of reference for protection focal points (Lebanon)
💬	**Case studies**	● Creating safe spaces for women's groups (Somalia/Somaliland)

As the guidance on selecting CPS members (CPSs) emphasizes, specific efforts are needed to ensure the meaningful participation and ownership of the wider community. This can be done in different ways depending on the context, the way a community organizes itself and the timeframe.

In some contexts, for instance, when larger meetings are not possible because of security or public health concerns, supporting humanitarian organizations may meet different community groups in separate, subsequent meetings and then consolidate results and decisions. In other contexts, large participatory workshops can be organized, involving up to 200 community members representing the different groups of a community – including the most vulnerable and those from peripheral areas – brought together with the support of local leaders and authorities. These workshops are an opportunity for supporting humanitarian organizations, local or otherwise, to present the project to communities, traditional leaders, women's groups and authorities and to get communities interested in increasing their self-protection capacities. At this stage, communities have an opportunity to co-create plans and start, or increase positive dialogue between the community and local authorities. As such they are a form of support to communities' engagement capacities.

During the workshop, the roles and responsibilities and the composition of CPSs are defined and eligibility criteria for CPS members decided. CPSs are encouraged to reflect the diversity of their communities, notably by including people of different ages, genders and abilities, as well as community members from remote locations. Mixed structures should have an equal proportion of men and women, and in some countries, such as DRC, Lebanon and Somalia/Somaliland, separate women-only structures are created to ensure their meaningful participation in the overall CBP response – as discussed in the sub-section on the roles and responsibilities of CPSs.

Next, participants choose the selection method, for instance by appointment or by vote, and then the actual election or appointment of CPS members takes place.

Even though the guidance on selection CPS members is largely based on the process of establishing CPSs in the Democratic Republic of Congo through 'General Assemblies', CPSs in other countries have also been established through similar participatory processes in CAR, Lebanon, Somalia/Somaliland and Yemen.

Roles and responsibilities of community protection structures

🔧	**Template tools**	● Terms of Reference for CPSs

	Example tools	● Theory of Change and Structure of CPSs (DRC) ● Terms of Reference for Community Protection Volunteers (Somalia/Somaliland) ● Terms of Reference for Protection Focal Points (Lebanon) ● Terms of Reference For CPSs (CAR) ● Terms of Reference for CBP networks (Yemen)

The roles and responsibilities of new (or adapted) CPSs must be agreed upon with the wider community, for instance, through participatory workshops such as those discussed in the sub-section on the establishment of CPSs. This gives community members greater ownership of the CBP activities that will follow, and boosts the sense of accountability for CPS members towards their communities.

While the process of defining them will vary from one context to another, the roles and responsibilities of CPSs usually involve:

● Analysis and planning: CPSs carry out analysis of the protection risks affecting their communities and devise community protection action plans.

● Advocacy: CPSs engage duty bearers in order to present the protection challenges faced by the community, and advocate for solutions.

● Sensitization: CPSs sensitize community members (and sometimes duty bearers) on protection risks and ways to reduce them, as well as information on people's rights.

● Access to services: CPSs make sure community members are aware of the services available to them and how to access them through sensitization and referrals.

In addition, some structures may also engage in:

● Social cohesion: CPSs may carry out activities aimed at strengthening social cohesion within their communities, or between different communities.

● Self-protection outside CPSs: CPSs may also contribute to self-protection strategies initiated spontaneously by community members not part of a CPS.

These areas of work – discussed in detail in Section 6 – are outlined in the tool on CPSs' terms of reference (ToRs) and reflected in a number of the example CPS ToRs included in this resource pack (examples include DRC, Somalia/Somaliland, Lebanon, and CAR). These ToRs testify to the diversity of CPSs across the world, and how their roles and responsibilities are divided.

Some protection structures may have an additional 'social cohesion' function, by which they strengthen ties between different groups, for example host and displaced communities, thus contributing to the Solidarity pillar. These responsibilities are clearly stated, for example, in the ToR for CPSs in Yemen.

There is a risk that long-established community structures are used by humanitarian organizations to support the work of these organizations rather than the structures addressing the protection needs of communities. Thus, humanitarian organizations involved in CBP must ensure that the work of CPSs remains centred on preventive and/or responsive measures to deal with priority protection concerns identified by communities, and do not become a way of outsourcing to community members what should be the role of such organizations. For instance, CPSs may be asked to carry out awareness-raising sessions on subjects that may be linked more to a project objective than a community protection plan. In such cases, humanitarian organizations should employ dedicated staff – such as community outreach officers, community mobilizers or protection officers – to carry out such activities.

Finally, CPSs may also contribute to self-protection efforts by individuals or groups outside the structure. Although this is not a function detailed in the ToRs featured here, the sub-section on self-protection outside CPSs discusses the different ways in which CPSs can support such efforts, and presents examples from Lebanon and Somalia/Somaliland.

Internal rules

🔧 **Template tools**	● Internal Rules for CPSs

Participatory approaches should be used to determine not only the roles of CPSs, but also their internal functioning and expected behaviour. As the CPS internal rules guidance clarifies, this is done in a session during which CPS members agree on a set of internal rules to guide their work, such as punctuality, confidentiality and safeguarding.[21] They also agree on specific measures to ensure the rules are respected, for example, through penalties and sanctions. The guidance also includes a template code of conduct (CoC) that can be adapted depending on the country, context and type of CPS.

Although CPSs should have autonomy to define their own internal rules, supporting humanitarian organizations have a responsibility to ensure that minimal standards are incorporated into their CoCs, notably on safe programming and safeguarding.

This does not go against the CBP principle of ownership, as volunteers have shown a good understanding of their expected behaviour, both as role models for their communities, as well as in terms of their duties towards survivors of abuse. Thus, the role of supporting humanitarian organizations is to simply ensure this is reflected in CoCs through clear and strong language on key issues, such as safeguarding.

'In order to raise awareness on human rights and for our message to have a real impact in the community, as Community Protection Committee members, we have to be role models; through our behaviour, the community will accept us and our message.' (Female CPC member in Bria, Central African Republic)

'Community Protection Committee members must respect the person they are talking to, be able to actively listen, without interrupting them, before explaining which services are available to them. They must not take calls while the survivor is talking to them, and they have to be available if the survivor wants to reveal the violations they faced. They also must explain that the conversation will remain confidential.' (Female CPC member in Bria, Central African Republic)

Working with existing community structures

💬 **Case studies**	● Integration of pre-existing structures in Katobo and Mutarule (DRC) ● Community response strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic (Venezuela) ● Community protection structures supported by Oxfam in humanitarian emergency contexts (Colombia)
✔ **Recommendations**	● Strengthening local humanitarian leadership in La Guajira (Colombia)

CBP involves supporting existing community structures, which may have been identified during the community profiling process. Humanitarian organizations may wish to work with these existing structures – or community members selected to be part of CPSs may be drawn from other community structures, as seen in some of the CPS Terms of Reference seen in the roles and responsibilities sub-section.[22]

For example, existing community structures in Katobo, DRC – such as committees of elders, youth, the Rasta movement, religious denominations and students – were invited to participate in a general assembly by the local organization Centre de Développement Intégral de l'Enfant Rural (CEDIER), with their members subsequently elected to join Community Protection Committees and Women's Forums. In another example, in Mutarule village, DRC, where existing structures established by other organizations were integrated into CBP programmes by a supporting humanitarian organization.

Nonetheless, working with existing structures does not have to be limited to incorporating their members into new CPSs. It can simply involve supporting existing structures as they are. For instance, in Venezuela, *Azul Positivo* supports established community structures, such as Local Supply and Production Committees, community councils and street leaders. This includes working with leaders previously identified by the government, which helps authorities see the organization as an ally, and not a competitor – one of the key principles of CBP. *Azul Positivo* emphasizes that working with existing structures contributes to their acceptance by communities.

Oxfam colleagues from Colombia describe the community structures of the Wayuu people, and emphasize the importance of enhancing the capacities of local humanitarian leadership, such as indigenous, women and youth groups. These documents also testify to the variety of ways in which community members mobilize themselves – well beyond the models of committees, women's groups and focal points.

Supporting community structures, rather than simply including them in CPSs established by supporting humanitarian organizations, can also be a way of ensuring the sustainability of CBP programming.

Section 5: Support

This section examines different ways humanitarian organizations can support CPSs to ensure they can fulfil their roles and responsibilities and contribute to communities' ability to ensure their own protection. As reflected in the guidance on support to CPSs, such support includes:

- joint preparation and implementation;
- coaching and mentoring;
- training sessions;
- convening people and brokering relationships; and
- material support.

These forms of support correspond to the Knowledge, Engagement and Resources pillars of the self-protection capacity framework. They can in turn contribute to CPSs' solidarity and engagement by strengthening their ability to carry out protection activities such as sensitization, mediation and advocacy.

Two forms of technical support are considered in this section – training, and continuous monitoring and coaching – as well as material support. This section then discusses how such support – along with other efforts – contributes to the sustainability of CPSs. Finally, it explores how national or international organizations can support each other.

Note that humanitarian organizations can support community self-protection in ways other than through CPSs, such as giving training and material support to community members directly. These are considered in the sub-section on self-protection outside CPSs.

Training

🔧 **Template tools**	• Supporting CPSs
💬 **Case studies**	• Capacity-building in the context of community protection (DRC) • Service mapping by and for the community (Lebanon) • How the community taught us protection work: Lessons from Gaza (OPT) • Advocacy with authorities (DRC) • Strengthening women's capacity to identify and fight human trafficking (Bangladesh) • Strengthening trust between refugee and host communities (Bangladesh)

The training of community-protection structures (CPSs) is one of the pillars of CBP programming, as evidenced, for example, in the template theory of change, and the actual theories of change from examples in CAR and DRC.

CPSs should receive both thematic and technical trainings. Thematic trainings cover topics that CPSs should understand, such as:

- **concepts**, such as protection;
- **types of risk**, such as gender-based violence;
- **legal frameworks**, such as human rights; and
- **people of concern**, such as children or internally displaced people.

Thematic training can also be delivered to duty bearers, in order to ensure they have the same level of understanding as CPS members on key topics.

Technical trainings cover **skills** that CPS members must have to conduct protection activities, such as:

- **protection monitoring**;
- **referrals**; and
- **advocacy**.

As the Congolese organization Solidarité pour la Promotion Sociale et la Paix (SOPROP) explains, in DRC, initial sessions are conducted by humanitarian staff, who also identify potential trainers among the CPS members and local authorities being trained. They then train these trainers to plan and carry out their own sessions. This strategy supports the sustainability of CPSs and their CBP activities, as it allows CPS members to mutually strengthen their capacities. Capacity-building is not unidirectional; CPSs' also have skills and knowledge that they can share with local, national and international humanitarian organisations.

Section 6 shows how CPSs can conduct training sessions with specific groups of community members. For instance, trainings have contributed to service mapping in Lebanon, support to gender-based violence survivors in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, advocacy work in DRC, and community responses to human trafficking and social cohesion activities in Bangladesh.

> *'Oxfam is the organization that identified religious leaders as key community leaders and treated [us] respectfully, the same as people in the community do. All the capacity-strengthening activities have helped us to make community members aware in a more effective way'. (Male religious leader in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh)*

The value of training is also evidenced in testimonies from CPS members, who have shared how they pass on what they have learned to other community members. Thus, training can help transform not only volunteers' own behaviour, but also that of other community members, who may be the source of certain protection threats, such as child abuse and gender-based violence – as seen in Section 1.

> *'I used to be disorganized; I wouldn't take any advice from anyone. Thanks to the trainings and advice I received as a Community Protection Committee member, my behaviour changed and I am now in charge of the group. The actions carried out by Oxfam transformed me.' (Male member of CPC in Bria, Central African Republic)*

> *'There were many benefits to this protection training. It helped us fight ignorance, raise awareness on gender-based violence, influence our members, inform some women and transform behaviours among men, who are often violent towards women.' (Female member of CPC in Bria, Central African Republic)*

> *'Before Oxfam brought the protection programme to Lokurunyang, we knew nothing about protection and women's rights. We took the law into our hands and fought anyone who caused us harm.' (Member of CPC in Lokurunyang, South Sudan)*

The range and content of topics covered differs according to context, especially the nature of protection risks as well as social and cultural norms, and legal frameworks. This resource pack includes several examples of trainings on specific skills, activities and methods, along with case studies that demonstrate how CPSs have engaged. However, the resource pack does not contain thematic training guides themselves, as it is beyond its scope to offer specific guidance on each protection theme.

Finally, as a case study from SOPROP explains, training requirements vary between CPSs, based on gaps in their capacities, which can be identified during the development of a community protection plan or the implementation of activities. Consultations with authorities and community leaders, and staff appraisals, may also shed light on the training needs of these different groups.

Monitoring and coaching

Template tools	●	Supporting CPSs
Example tools	●	Terms of Reference for Protection Focal Points (Lebanon)
	●	Meetings and Coaching for CPSs (DRC)
	●	Terms of Reference for Community Protection Volunteers (Somalia/ Somaliland)

In addition to training, the capacities of CPSs can also be strengthened through monitoring and coaching. For instance, the terms of reference for CPSs in Lebanon is accompanied by community structure monthly meetings. The meetings they describe are an opportunity for supporting humanitarian organizations to offer peer-to-peer support, and discuss challenges, needs, potential mitigation measures and solutions to protection concerns with CPS members. The document offers specific questions that can guide these discussions. The findings of each monthly meeting can be tracked in a monthly meetings database. The work of CPSs can be monitored through the CPS evaluation tool, which includes specific questions to assess the representativeness (including gender sensitivity, diversity and inclusion), accountability, ownership and sustainability of each CPS, including networks of protection focal points per location.

In the DRC, monitoring and coaching is done by community mobilizers from supporting humanitarian organizations. Their role includes not only facilitating coordination meetings – similarly to those in Lebanon – but also supporting the implementation of activities. However, there is a risk that CPSs perceive these staff purely as trainers. Therefore, the teams in DRC, together with CPS members, have developed a matrix to clarify the role of the community engagement staff with regards to each activity. As projects develop and CPSs solidify their capacities, these staff gradually disengage, taking on more of an observation role.

'A WhatsApp group let [volunteers] know each other better and made us more comfortable to talk to each other about our concerns… At the same time, the group let us continually contact Oxfam's protection team and raise [our] immediate concerns' (Male volunteer in Mosul, Iraq)

Monitoring and coaching are also mentioned in the terms of reference for community protection volunteers in Somaliland.

Material support

Template tools	●	Supporting CPSs
Example tools	●	Theory of Change for Oxfam's CBP approach (CAR)
	●	Theory of Change and Structure of CPSs (DRC)
	●	Terms of Reference for Community Protection Volunteers (Somalia/ Somaliland)

Case studies	● Football matches between CPSs and local authorities (DRC) ● Service mapping by and for the community (Lebanon) ● The early warning system in North Kivu (DRC) ● Responding to protection concerns at the domestic level (Somalia/Somaliland) ● A multi-layered approach to promoting LGBTQ rights (Lebanon) ● Supporting community initiatives to ensure their own protection (Yemen) ● Working with communities to reduce risk exposure at night (Bangladesh) ● Community lighting project (Lebanon) ● Supporting refugees with a market-based approach (Bangladesh)

CPSs receive material support to help them fulfil their roles and responsibilities. As terms of reference from CAR and Lebanon demonstrate, this may include in-kind and/or financial support.

In-kind support includes:

● office materials and furniture;
● visibility materials, e.g. T-shirts, banners and leaflets;
● refreshments for training sessions;
● informational and educational materials for sensitization sessions;
● solar radios and stationery for listening clubs;
● sports equipment for football matches between CPSs and authorities.

Financial support can be used, for example, to cover:

● phone top-ups;
● transportation costs;
● stationery, and communication and transportation allowances for service mapping;
● communication allowances for early warning systems; and
● costs associated with the mediation of a domestic dispute.

In Somalia/Somaliland, the provision of equipment and tools to conduct protection activities is part of efforts to strengthen the capacities of community protection volunteers. In the DRC, guidelines on operating costs stipulate the monthly amount to be given to CPSs and how those funds will be managed. The guidelines also include a template agreement regulating such financial support, to be signed by CPS members.

According to testimonies from volunteers, in-kind support can become the source of tensions amongst CPS members, who may disagree over who should be able to use them and when – as also reported during an evaluation of Oxfam's CBP work in CAR.[23] Materials may also become worn out, and volunteers may struggle to keep them in good condition.

Material support can not only benefit CPSs, but also other important community actors. For instance, in Lebanon, Oxfam and Qorras will provide grants to local organizations providing medical and legal services to LGBTQIA+ individuals.

Community members may also receive in-kind support directly, as part of protection activities, as seen in the sub-section on self-protection outside CPSs. In Yemen, communities were provided with small grants to finance safe spaces and other protection initiatives, addressing issues such as sexual violence, child marriage and child abuse. In Bangladesh and Lebanon, streetlights helped reduce risks to which community members, especially women and girls, were exposed. In another example from Bangladesh, refugees used vouchers to acquire items that reduce their risk exposure and increased their mobility.

These examples demonstrate that material resources play a key role in preventing or mitigating protection threats, supporting mobility and ensuring the availability of safe spaces. This further demonstrates the importance of material resources for communities' self-protection capacities, as seen in the sub-section on the protection risk equation.

It is not recommended to provide CPS members with financial compensation in exchange for their work. It can undermine the legitimacy and credibility of their work in the eyes of the community and duty bearers, create competition with authorities – protection is after all their primary responsibility – and destroy the intrinsic motivation that brings many CPS members to this work in the first place. Moreover, it is not sustainable, as it would stop as soon as external funding stops. This is in line with findings of Oxfam's previous evaluations in CAR[24] and DRC,[25] which showed that multiple CPSs continued their CBP work after projects ended, as they were primarily motivated to work for their communities, not by the prospect of financial renumeration.

One method to make CPSs financially sustainable is supporting small income-generating activities or saving schemes. In some countries, supporting organizations have helped set these up for CPSs in order to pay activity costs. Of course, income generation should not replace protection as a CPS's focus, and should be conditional on a risk analysis (that should include the potential for income generation to create tensions between CPS members).[26] Depending on the means of income generation chosen by CPSs, relevant experts (e.g. livelihoods, agriculture) should be brought in to support their establishment.

Sustainability

🔧 Template tools	● Preparing to Exit Communities
✔ Recommendations	● The sustainability of community-based protection projects and structures (Somalia/Somaliland) ● CEDIER's recommendations concerning the partnership (DRC)

Efforts to ensure the sustainability of CBP programming should start at inception. For instance, an 'exit plan' should be drawn up at an early stage. This is a document developed jointly by CPSs, local authorities and supporting humanitarian organizations. The exit plan identifies concrete steps to ensure the continuity of CPS activities after the supporting organization's project ends. It uses guiding questions on the functioning of the CPS in the long term, especially with regards to the management of resources, knowledge and skills, and relationships with authorities, as well as potential tensions within the community.

A 2017 evaluation of Oxfam's CBP work in CAR revealed that the individual motivation of volunteers was a key element in ensuring the sustainability of programmes.[27] Such motivation is largely based on their desire to improve the lives of members of their own communities. This is precisely the kind of ownership on which CBP programmes should build.

The same evaluation highlights the positive impact of capacity-strengthening activities. Trained volunteers reported that they were unlikely to disengage, especially after seeing the impact of their work. Factors that did lead to disengagement were at the level of individuals: some were not motivated enough, some lacked time because of full-time employment, and some had disagreements with other CPS members (for example, over the management of resources). Most concerningly, one volunteer was forced to discontinue their work due to threats from weapon bearers, because of the work of the CPS. Such threats were also reported by other volunteers (even though these did not disengage), which suggests a need for greater attention to, and better management of the risks that volunteers may be exposed to after supporting humanitarian organizations exit a context.

Volunteers in other places have said that training has contributed to their independence and self-confidence, both of which are essential to ensure CPS activities continue after projects end. Volunteers' appreciation of training certificates suggests that training and skill development can also serve as a form of recognition for their work, which in turn can contribute to the sense of ownership that sustainability requires.

Capacity strengthening and links to local authorities are also part of recommendations for sustainable CBP projects made by Candlelight in Somaliland.[28] The organization also shared some of its efforts to ensure sustainability, such as hiring project staff from the community to facilitate knowledge retention, and handing over CPSs to other agencies. Candlelight also reports that working with existing community structures 'facilitates community ownership, enhances sustainability and reduces duplication of efforts'.

Local organization CEDIER from DRC emphasizes that capacity strengthening may require more than training and workshops, but also apprenticeships or professionalizing internships, including peer-to-peer (and mutual) learning schemes between organizations.

Supporting local organizations

✓ **Recommendations**	• Partnership recommendations by KAALO (Somalia)
	• Accountability and self-reliance/sustainability (DRC)
	• Building partnerships in community emergencies (Colombia)
	• CEDIER's recommendations concerning the partnership (DRC)
	• Recommendations from GADHOP concerning partnerships (DRC)

CBP is about supporting the protection capacities of not only communities, but also national and local organizations. In many countries, CBP programming builds on collaborations between international, and national and/or local humanitarian actors. Several resources in this pack include the views of local and national NGOs on the strengths and weaknesses of such collaborations, along with recommendations for improvement.

For example, CEDIER from DRC emphasizes that partnerships should be built on honest dialogue that recognizes the strengths and weaknesses of each partner, and then works to address weaknesses. The organization sees partnerships not only as means of achieving something that will benefit communities affected by crises, but also as an opportunity to learn from each other, and has received training from Oxfam as well as delivered training to Oxfam staff.

According to CEDIER, accountability is about amplifying not only communities' voices, but also their power to hold national and international organizations to account – giving the power to influence these organizations' decisions at all levels. In this context, accountability (towards communities) is a necessary mechanism that counters the power of donors (or funding partners) over CEDIER, as the organization is ultimately accountable to communities, rather than donors.

The Congolese organization Groupe d'Associations de Défense des Droits de l'Homme et de la Paix (GADHOP) underlines the benefits of continuous accompaniment for CPSs even after a project ends, and recommends that international organizations and donors obtain more information on local protection organizations that can continue programmes started by international actors.

In its recommendations on partnerships, CEDIER suggests that funding partners consider supporting staff exchanges to support mutual learning. Further to this, KAALO Aid and Development (KAALO) from Somalia also recommended joint publications, capacity strengthening on fundraising, facilitating access to prospective donors, and creating platforms for learning and sharing experiences.

Colombian organization Fundación Mujer y Futuro (FMF) argues that strong partnerships depend on a good understanding of the context – including power dynamics and self-protection capacities – and encouraged providing support to local leaders, especially women. FMF also recommended that humanitarian organizations take into account the pre-existing work of local partners.

Finally, they contend that accountability depends on recognizing one's responsibility 'as an active subject in [their] own protection'. Evidently, this should not overshadow the primary responsibility of duty bearers; however, it emphasizes the importance of community agency as an element of accountability.

Section 6: Respond

This section discusses the potential of CPSs as self-protection actors through community planning, advocacy, sensitization, facilitating access to services, and contributing to social cohesion. It also examines self-protection efforts initiated by individuals or groups outside community protection structures.

Community planning

Template tools	● Community-based Protection Analysis ● Community Protection Action Plans ● Early Warning Mechanisms
Case studies	● How the community taught us protection work: Lessons from Gaza (OPT) ● The early warning system in North Kivu (DRC)

Analysis and planning are at the core of CPSs' actions. Thus, much of their work involves monitoring the protection situation and analysing trends, and designing action plans based on this information. Thus, knowledge is important in enabling and strengthening the self-protection capacities of communities.

One of the principles of community-based protection (CBP) is the recognition that communities are the experts on their own protection needs. Protection monitoring – and other forms of documenting and analysing protection concerns – must seek to harness this expertise and reflect community members' own concerns and priorities.

Protection analysis and action plans

CPSs work with their communities to develop action plans for responding to protection risks. Such action plans include community protection action plans and contingency plans, which concern actual and current risks, and potential and future risks, respectively.

As the guidance on community protection action plans clarifies, the development of an action plan involves:

1. the prioritization of protection risks, based on a protection analysis;

2. the identification of response actions;

3. a stakeholder mapping and power analysis;

4. an analysis of the risks involved in the planned response;

5. the practical planning of the envisioned activities, including timeframes and necessary resources; and

6. a presentation of the plan to community members and, when appropriate, local authorities.

This resource pack features two main tools to help strengthen CPSs' capacities to carry out these steps: guidance on action plans and guidance on protection risk analysis. The latter offers guiding questions to help identify and analyse threats, vulnerabilities and capacities. The former includes step-by-step suggestions, practical tips and an action plan template that CPSs and supporting organizations can adapt.

A case study from the Occupied Palestinian Territory shows the value of information gathering. A safety mapping exercise conducted in Gaza helped shape a mixed protection–livelihoods project. The protection risks revealed by community members during the exercise challenged the team's assumptions, and led them to change the targeting, type and location of planned income-generating activities to better support survivors of gender-based violence.

Protection monitoring

Another key aspect of CPSs' work is protection monitoring – that is, the continuous gathering of information on protection risks and the identification of trends. Protection monitoring is essential in that it continuously informs the work of CPSs and, whenever needed, the update of action plans.

Early warning systems

Contingency plans include information on warning signs – factors that suggest a certain protection risk may materialize soon, or actual warnings of protection threats such as the movement of armed actors towards a particular village or community. Early warning enables a community to take action to protect themselves and implement their contingency plans.

To support efforts to mitigate such potential risks, CPSs may share relevant information with supporting humanitarian organizations through early warning systems. While protection monitoring gathers data on the protection situation to inform responses, early warning mechanisms facilitate the sharing of information on new and/or imminent risks that may have an immediate impact on communities' rights, safety and dignity, as well as on the running of programmes. The guidance on warning systems clarifies what these systems are, how they differ from protection monitoring, what type of information should be collected, and how to establish such systems.

A case study by SOPROP in the Democratic Republic of Congo explains how an early warning system was established in Masisi territory, taking into account the potential risks of such a system.

Advocacy

🔧 **Template tools**	● Community-led Advocacy

💬 Case studies	- Rana, a survivor of domestic violence and sexual abuse (Yemen) - Advocacy with authorities (DRC) - From local to global advocacy (Lebanon) - Local advocacy for the protection of female sellers (DRC) - Creating safe spaces for women's groups (Somalia/Somaliland) - Creating forums for discussion of protection concerns (Somalia/Somaliland) - Advocacy with authorities (DRC) - Football matches between CPSs and local authorities (DRC) - Interactive and legislative theatre as a means of awareness-raising and advocacy (DRC) - How to deal with constant transfers of local authorities (DRC) - Community response strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic (Venezuela)
✔ Recommendations	- Dialogue with traditional indigenous authorities of the Wayúu people (Colombia) - Strengthening local humanitarian leadership in La Guajira (Colombia)

Advocacy is the main way in which CPSs engage duty bearers. It is part of the roles and responsibilities of CPSs in a number of countries, and engaging primary duty bearers is commonly included in CPS' theories of change. Engaging primary duty bearers is a core component of communities' self-protection, as part of the Engagement pillar, as a non-violent engagement strategy.

Although communities may develop their own self-protection strategies outside CPSs, the primary responsibility for their protection rests with states and/or actors holding control over a territory. Holding duty bearers accountable to their protection responsibilities is important because sometimes communities' self-protection strategies may be inefficient or too burdensome. For instance, in Uvira, eastern DRC, women decided to go to the market in groups, hoping that their large number would dissuade potential perpetrators from attacking them. However, this strategy did not deter attackers. Women's forums then shared the problem with local military actors, who ensure their protection by deploying troops to the market and others to accompany the women on market days. This shows how holding duty bearers accountable is often not only a right, but also a necessity.

Engaging primary duty bearers is also essential to ensuring that CBP does not substitute for the former's responsibilities. This contributes to ensuring authorities' acceptance of the protection work done by community protection structures and humanitarian organizations, as illustrated by a case study from Yemen.

Finally, as recommendations from Colombia emphasize, local authorities include community traditional authorities that can be seen not only as duty bearers but also as partners in humanitarian responses. Therefore, engaging primary duty bearers can also be in line with commitments to strengthen local humanitarian leadership.

Preliminary concepts

The guidance on community-led protection advocacy offers step-by-step advice on developing an advocacy strategy – from the identification of protection risks and advocacy objectives, to the engagement of interlocutors and follow-up. It outlines three overlapping types of interlocutors (see Figure 9 Interlocutors of community-led protection advocacy) that may be engaged with:

- **Sources of protection**. Those with protection responsibilities, such as duty bearers;
- **Sources of threat**. Perpetrators and potential perpetrators; and
- **Influencers**. People who can influence sources of threat and/or sources of protection.

The guidance also provides guidance on different levels of advocacy, showing that community-led advocacy does not have to be limited to local levels. As SOPROP from DRC clarifies, whenever possible, CPSs should first seek to engage local authorities. However, if a protection risk cannot

be addressed at the local level, it can be raised with sub-national authorities, in an advocacy effort usually led by networks of civil society actors. If that also fails, humanitarian organizations such as Oxfam and SOPROP can carry out advocacy at the next level. In Lebanon, members of refugee communities had their voices heard at the national level through an advocacy event featuring their stories and photos, and indirectly at the global level, as Oxfam delivered their messages at the first Brussels Conference on the Syrian crisis.

Figure 9: Interlocutors of community-led protection advocacy

Oxfam in Colombia shares several recommendations on engaging indigenous Wayúu authorities; its advice on how to manage a relationship with traditional authorities may be useful to protection actors more broadly.

Persuasion, mobilization and denunciation

The guidance on community-led protection advocacy also explains that advocacy can involve:

- **Persuasion**. Direct engagement of sources of protection and/or threat;
- **Mobilization**.[29] Making use of actors who can influence sources of protection and/or threat; or
- **Denunciation**. Publicly speaking out about abuses.[30]

Although CPSs usually do not carry out denunciations, the views and voices of community members often inform public advocacy campaigns that involve denunciation, for example the 2020 report on the protection crisis in Taiz governorate, Yemen.[31].

In some situations, CPSs may be best placed to persuade authorities directly, for instance, when they have good relationships with local duty bearers.

> 'We even sometimes engage with rebel armed groups to turn them into allies and try to convince their leaders to order them to refrain from attacking us. We managed to build good relationships with these groups.' (Male member of CPC in Bria, Central African Republic)

For instance, in Masisi territory, DRC, a CPS persuaded traditional authorities to build a new market closer to the community at risk, so that the women would no longer need to travel long distances to sell their products.

Local duty bearers may be engaged not just as sources of protection, but also as sources of threats. Examples from the guidance show that CPSs have been successful in advocating for better detention conditions, or for the release of individuals arrested arbitrarily.

CPSs and other community actors may also be best placed to hold duty bearers accountable when dealing with culturally sensitive issues. In one of the initial discussions that informed the creation of this resource pack, one contributor argued that CBP is about local people discussing protection concerns, thereby contributing to the legitimacy of advocacy calls. For example, if a humanitarian actor (especially an international one) were to raise concerns about gender-based violence, it may be perceived as a foreign issue; however, that would not be the case if it were coming from community members themselves.

This is precisely what happened in Yemen, where local authorities initially accused Oxfam and its partner of challenging social practices. In this context, the CPS and staff from a local community centre played a key role in changing local authorities' positioning on the centre's work supporting survivors of gender-based violence.

Similarly, in Somalia/Somaliland, women's forums were essential to advocacy efforts vis-à-vis local stakeholders aimed at ensuring their own acceptance as CPSs. Community members also addressed sensitive protection issues, such as gender-based violence, through forums with authorities and humanitarian organizations.

As well as persuasion, CPSs carry out advocacy through mobilization. This is particularly the case when a protection concern is raised at a higher level.

> 'Community protection committee members… can get in touch with a community leader, an imam or a pastor with influence in the area… to ask them to advocate for the victim's release to the perpetrator.' (Male member of CPC in Bria, Central African Republic)

As SOPROP from DRC explains, such efforts can involve the mobilization of different CPSs at a sub-national level, or humanitarian organizations at a provincial level. Advocacy networks mobilized at sub-national level on protection from armed groups and marriage certificate fees; the Protection Cluster and Oxfam mobilized at provincial and national levels on illegal taxation at checkpoints, and extortion.

These advocacy efforts are usually carried out through meetings with duty bearers. These can include regular meetings in which CPSs present the community protection action plan to local authorities, as detailed in the guidance on community-led protection advocacy. They can also include direct one-on-one engagement of a duty bearer, and meetings of the Protection Cluster at different levels.

Other forms of engagement

In addition to meetings, CPSs can also engage duty bearers in more creative ways. One such example is the legislative (interactive) theatre in DRC, also detailed in the guidance on community-led protection advocacy. In this approach, CPS members act roles in a scenario that presents a protection concern. They then invite the audience, usually local authorities and leaders, to play the role of the protagonist (but never the antagonist) so that they can try to find a solution. As CEDIER explains, this approach has numerous advantages. For instance, the legislative theatre creates a space where women CPS members feel more comfortable to engage duty bearers in advocacy. Furthermore, the approach allows for the involvement of a greater number of CPS members in advocacy, as opposed to smaller meetings. The theatre helped to reduce the authoritarian character of some duty bearers, by making them more approachable and relatable to community members.

Another example of an activity aimed at bringing authorities closer to communities is football matches in DRC. These matches were organized by SOPROP and Oxfam between mixed-sex teams of CPS members, and of local authorities and community leaders. While not an advocacy activity per se, the matches constitute engagement of duty bearers, and contribute to maintaining good relationships between CPSs and authorities, which are necessary for advocacy.

Both legislative theatre and the football matches also contribute to the raising awareness on protection issues. As such, these activities blur the lines between advocacy and sensitization.

Another effort to ensure collaboration between CPSs and duty bearers was the creation of liaison committees in DRC. These committees, composed of two community leaders (one woman and one man), were created in response to the constant turnover of local authorities, and were specifically responsible for briefing new authorities on the work of CPSs and the commitments made by previous authorities.

Finally, as seen in the sub-section on working with existing community structures, supporting community leaders or structures identified by primary duty bearers can contribute to a good relationships between humanitarian organizations and authorities, as exemplified by Azul Positivo in Venezuela.

Sensitization

🔧 **Template tools**	Community-led Sensitization
🔧 **Example tools**	Terms of Reference for Listening Clubs (DRC)
💬 **Case studies**	Interactive and legislative theatre as a means of awareness-raising and advocacy (DRC) Awareness-raising through theatre (DRC) Awareness-raising through radio broadcasts in North Kivu (DRC) Football matches between CPSs and local authorities (DRC) Strengthening women's capacity to identify and fight human trafficking (Bangladesh) Strengthening trust between refugee and host communities (Bangladesh) Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (Uganda) A multi-layered approach to promoting LGBTQ rights (Lebanon) Identifying and supporting self-protection mechanisms (Somalia/Somaliland)

'Sensitization' refers to activities aimed at sharing information and knowledge with groups of people in order to influence their behaviour. It is a common part of CBP programming, as seen in the sub-sections on roles and responsibilities of community protection structures (CPSs) and theories of change. It can also be known as 'awareness raising'.

Similar to training, monitoring and coaching, sensitization contributes to the Knowledge pillar of communities' self-protection capacities. However, while the former contributes to the knowledge of CPS members, sensitization involves sharing information with community members more broadly, as well as others, such as duty bearers. Thus, sensitization is often a way of cascading to the wider community and authorities the information and knowledge held – or learned – by CPSs.

> '*Focal points are very useful because they have the information we need, and they receive training… so they are very helpful for us.*' (Female member of peer group in Hosh Tal Safiye, Lebanon)

Sensitization objectives

As outlined in the guidance on community-led sensitization, sensitization has the overall objective of influencing behaviours, practices and policies by increasing knowledge. Sensitization may also help reduce protection risks by strengthening capacities, most commonly by sharing information on:

people's rights;
prevailing threats;
self-protection strategies; and
services available and how to access them.

The information and knowledge that CPSs share with their communities can support positive self-protection strategies by helping them better protect themselves and/or reclaim their rights, and can help address negative strategies by contributing to changing harmful behaviour.

Types of sensitization activities

The guidance on community-led sensitization offers detailed guidance on the development of sensitization activities and campaigns, and the supporting materials and partnerships required to implement them. It also includes examples of sensitization materials developed in DRC that target harmful practices from within communities – such as denial of women's inheritance rights, child marriage and popular justice – or from duty bearers – such as arbitrary arrests.

The document outlines several types of sensitization activities, many of which are reflected in resources featured in this pack, such as theatre, listening clubs, radio and football matches, which are detailed below.

Legislative (or interactive) theatre discussed in the advocacy sub-section, can also be used to support awareness-raising activities, as CEDIER explains. As a sensitization tool, the theatre has numerous advantages. For example, while certain illiterate volunteers, such as members of women's forums, had faced difficulties carrying out formal sensitization sessions, this approach can empower them to better engage the women and men in their communities.

In addition, the theatre strengthens 'horizontal communication' between CPSs and community members, as all become actors in this type of theatre. This reduces the tendency for hierarchy in which CPSs act as presenters and community members as passive receivers. This can, in turn, contribute to a more collaborative relationship between the structures and their communities.

As GADHOP describes, interactive theatre has raised communities' awareness of several protection concerns. For instance, a play on gender-based violence emphasizes the importance of seeking medical care following sexual assault, and the possibility of also reporting the incident to the police if the survivor so wishes. Another play raises awareness of women's inheritance rights and the avenues for seeking justice on these rights.

Sensitization efforts in DRC also include listening clubs. As the guidance clarifies, listening clubs are spaces where a group of people can 'listen to a radio show together, discuss it, ask questions to clarify what is being said and even create their own radio shows'. Although they are not themselves CPSs, they have their own terms of reference, which detail their functions and processes, including guidance on the selection of themes. Since listening clubs are spaces for the discussion of protection themes, they allow for their members to collectively decide on what to do about an issue, and thus potentially associate themselves to a CPS action plan.

In DRC, GADHOP conducted sensitization through regular radio broadcasts, which not only raised community members' awareness of various protection issues, but also made communities and local authorities familiar with GADHOP's protection work, which facilitated its advocacy efforts. The broadcasts also served to share information on services available, thus supporting communities' access to services.

Due to their large audiences, football matches also provide great opportunities to disseminate key protection messages. As SOPROP from DRC explains, these messages can be delivered by authorities before matches and at halftime.

In Bangladesh, a relatively small sensitization initiative was quickly able to expand and reach large numbers. An initial group of 123 women was trained on how to identify human trafficking and provide support to survivors. Each of these women then passed their knowledge on to 30 women and girls from their own community, reaching a total of 3690. In another example from Bangladesh, religious leaders were trained on protection issues and peaceful coexistence, and asked to pass on key messages to their communities during prayers and mass gatherings.

These two cases demonstrate the way in which sensitization can function as a transfer of information and knowledge to the wider community – in these cases by women heads of household and religious leaders, rather than CPSs.

In Uganda, the organization African Women and Youth Action for Development (AWYAD) works on preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence. Its sensitization efforts include sharing information with community members to ensure that survivors can access medical services, psychosocial support, justice and material assistance.

In Lebanon, a project developed with and for LGBTQIA+ individuals aims to document their stories and translate them into different forms of shareable knowledge, such as comics, public installations, maps, interactive events, information guides and podcasts. Each of these materials has its own specific communication targets. They are all aimed at raising awareness of the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community and the different forms of discrimination faced. This project testifies to the variety of forms sensitization efforts can take, and reiterates the power of sensitization in contributing to challenging harmful gender norms.

Finally, sensitization activities can help promote positive self-protection strategies, such as traveling in groups, as was the case with community protection volunteers in Somalia/Somaliland. The links between sensitization and self-protection are further discussed in the sub-section on self-protection outside CPSs.

Access to services

Template tools	● Protection Service Mapping
Case studies	● Service mapping by and for the community (Lebanon) ● Community response strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic (Venezuela) ● Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (Uganda) ● Awareness-raising through radio broadcasts in North Kivu (DRC) ● Women's empowerment and CBP responses in Lokurunyang (South Sudan) ● A multi-layered approach to promoting LGBTQ rights (Lebanon)

Facilitating access to services is an important element of CBP programming. Such services include:

- medical care;
- mental health and psychosocial support;
- legal assistance;
- family tracing;
- physical rehabilitation; and
- socioeconomic reintegration.

Supporting access to services entails mapping key providers in an area, sharing information on how to access services with communities and/or directly referring survivors.

Facilitating access to services directly contributes to the Engagement pillar of communities' self-protection capacities, as it strengthens communities' capacity to engage service providers. These activities also contribute to the Knowledge pillar of communities' self-protection strategies, inasmuch as they strengthen communities' information and knowledge on service providers and how to access them.

Service mapping

In order to share information on available services, or to refer community members directly to them, CPSs must first know where these services are and how to access them. This first requires enquiring – for example, with humanitarian organizations and/or the Protection Cluster – whether a service map already exists. If it does, CPSs should verify the information in it, and update or develop it if necessary. If it does not exist, CPSs should map services themselves.

The guidance on community-led service mapping clarifies what information should be included in service maps, and features a service-mapping matrix for information collection. It also outlines different methods of collecting information, from relying on secondary data to visiting service locations. The guidance also provides advice on how to display and disseminate service maps, and includes an example of a service map from DRC.

Finally, the document offers guidance and tools, including a questionnaire, to help assess and address barriers to accessing essential services, ranging from a lack of information and/or means, to discrimination from service providers or the charging of illegal fees.

Thus, while service mapping serves to inform CPSs' referrals activities, it also complements their protection monitoring and advocacy work, as it involves identifying and analysing specific threats that prevent community members from accessing services, and then advocating for solutions to these barriers.

For example, in Lebanon, CPSs identified the presence of army checkpoints and a lack of legal residency permits for most Syrian refugees as obstacles to them accessing services. They also found that community members prefer nearby services, even if these are limited, to avoid the transportation costs of accessing more comprehensive services, such as those provided by humanitarian organizations. In this context, existing service maps, due to their focus on services provided by humanitarian actors, did not include several service providers more accessed by and more accessible to communities. In order to address this gap, Utopia provided training and material support to CPSs on how to update existing service maps. Thus, CPSs collected information on, and added, service providers such as local dispensaries, private clinics, schools, community-based organizations and independent individuals.

After this experience, Utopia moved the responsibility of updating the service maps from its protection team to the CPSs. This example reiterates the power of communities as experts on their own needs and solutions, and the ones best placed to conduct service mapping.

Finally, in Venezuela, *Azul Positivo* maps not only health and security services, but also religious institutions. The organization clarifies that service mapping is not only necessary to inform referrals, it also helps the organization develop protocols for the security and health challenges affecting its own staff, and identify allies among communities – as seen in the community profiling sub-section.

Facilitating Referrals

Referrals are about ensuring survivors of abuse – such as violence, coercion and deliberate deprivation – have access to appropriate services. There are two main ways in which referrals can be done:

- supporting self-referrals, i.e. informing survivors how to access services themselves; and
- sharing information with service providers directly, with informed consent.

CPSs can share information with community members about available services, so that they can independently access them directly when needed (self-referrals). As seen in the sensitization sub-section, self-referrals are enabled and promoted by AWYAD's response to gender-based violence in Uganda, and GADHOP's radio broadcasts in DRC.

In some examples, where no case management organization is present, CPSs share information directly with service providers upon the request of and with the informed consent of survivors. That is the case in South Sudan, where CPSs often refer gender-based violence survivors to medical care.

In such cases, CPSs and supporting humanitarian organizations must be attentive to how they manage, share and store survivors' data.[32]

> 'We Community Protection Committee members ensure confidentiality to avoid causing harm to survivors.' (Member of CPC in Lokurunyang, South Sudan)

Material support to survivors and service providers

Other ways of facilitating access to services include material support to survivors and/or service providers. For example, where transportation costs are a significant obstacle to accessing services, CPSs may allocate a fraction of their running costs to cover these for survivors – as was done in DRC[33]. Nonetheless, this practice introduces risks. For example, if a person is seen receiving such money prior to taking transportation to a hospital, it could be guessed that they are a survivor of abuse, which could put them at risk of discrimination, stigmatization or further harm by their abuser.

In other contexts, CPSs may pay for the transportation of survivors[34] to service providers with their own money, or drive them there by their own means. Nonetheless, this also poses challenges to CPSs, especially when they do not have appropriate vehicles, as reflected in testimonies from volunteers in CAR.

Moreover, transporting survivors exposes CPS members to liabilities, for example if they are injured during a journey.

Ensuring access to services may also entail offering financial support to service providers. That is the case, for example, in Lebanon, where local organizations providing medical and legal services to LGBTQIA+ individuals will receive a sub-grant.

Social cohesion

Case studies	• Supporting community initiatives to ensure their own protection (Yemen) • Women's empowerment and CBP responses in Lokurunyang (South Sudan) • Strengthening trust between refugee and host communities (Bangladesh) • Identifying and supporting self-protection mechanisms (Somalia/Somaliland) • Responding to protection concerns at the domestic level (Somalia/Somaliland) • Women's empowerment and CBP responses in Lokurunyang (South Sudan) • How the community taught us protection work: Lessons from Gaza (OPT)
Recommendations	• Strengthening local humanitarian leadership in La Guajira (Colombia)

CPSs may carry out activities that contribute to greater social cohesion within and/or between communities. This is important because, as seen in the sub-section on the protection risk equation, the Solidarity pillar of communities' self-protection capacities relies on such cohesiveness. The more socially cohesive a community is, the more likely its self-protection strategies are to succeed.

As argued in Section 4, CPSs contribute to social cohesion not only through dedicated activities, but also through their very existence. The inclusive process in which structures are created, and members selected, encourages and requires the collective engagement of the wider community.

'Oxfam built social cohesion within our community, which was split after the crisis.'
(Female member of CPC in Bria, Central African Republic)

Once established, CPSs become a space where community members can come together, share their protection concerns and devise collective responses. In addition to embodying greater social cohesion, CPSs are also responsible for strengthening solidarity ties within their community.

'As members of this group, we must protect [the community] from dangers. We also act as brokers to make it easier for everyone to live as a community.' (Male member of CPC in Bria, Central African Republic)

Social cohesion within and between communities

Activities aimed at strengthening social cohesion may focus on improving the relationships within a family, between different families, or among different segments of a community, such as youth groups, women's groups and the elderly.

Social cohesion efforts may also target the relationship between what are perceived as two separate communities – such as host and displaced communities. In this example, while host and displaced communities may be seen as separate communities, they are also part of a wider community living in a same location. Thus, strengthening solidarity between them also contributes to their collective self-protection capacities.

This resource pack features examples of both intra- and inter-communal social cohesion activities. For instance, in Yemen, the creation of safe spaces allowed women and youth groups in the same community to socialize and strengthen their ties. Several other community initiatives in Yemen addressed issues that could weaken solidarity within a community; these include sexual violence and harassment, which can lead to stigmatization of some community members, and drug addiction, which may lead users to distance themselves from their families.

Social cohesion within communities may also be strengthened by actions aimed at promoting peaceful solutions to community problems, for example, the sensitization of communities on revenge in South Sudan.

Listening clubs in the Democratic Republic of Congo can function as a space for dialogue where disagreements between members can be discussed and resolved. The clubs are also spaces where members can discuss subjects considered taboo, such as sexual violence. This helps fight misinformation and prejudice, which can otherwise weaken communities' solidarity.

Solidarity among community members can be weakened by gender inequalities, which underpin and perpetuate discriminatory practices, for instance, against women, girls and LGBTQIA+ individuals. Different initiatives discussed in Section 7 counter these by increasing social cohesion.

In contrast with the examples above, aimed at strengthening solidarity within communities, social cohesion activities in Bangladesh targeted different communities. Oxfam's protection team worked together with religious leaders from host and refugee communities to promote peaceful coexistence. For example, these religious leaders played a key role in de-escalating tensions following some killings in August 2019.

Similarly, in Somalia/Somaliland, tensions between opposing clans can easily escalate into violence, which has prompted CPSs and authorities to consider peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms as an alternative to retaliation.

Mediation

Strengthening cohesion involves, among other things, efforts to promote peaceful coexistence and solutions to disputes between community members. These can be encouraged through the dissemination of messages from respected leaders, as well as the creation of spaces where

community members can engage in dialogue and solve disagreements. However, in certain cases (e.g. in Colombia, Somalia/Somaliland, and South Sudan), CPS members and other community members intervene directly to mediate discussions and help settle disputes.

Mediation is a type of dispute resolution in which a neutral third party facilitates discussions between the parties in disagreement, and helps them achieve a mutually acceptable solution.[35] Most of the CPSs referred to in this resource pack have no training or expertise in mediation; instead, their mediation role has developed spontaneously, especially as CPS members were asked by community members to intervene. However, this carries risks both for the parties to the dispute and the CPS members who mediate.

For instance, a 2017 evaluation of Oxfam's community-based protection work in CAR[36] observed that the engagement of CPSs in mediation for domestic violence cases could 'expose survivors of violence to a significant risk of further violence', and also put CPS members at risk. However, the same evaluation emphasized the long history of alternative dispute resolution in CAR and concluded that, instead of ignoring or attempting to abolish such practices, 'actors should commit to prioritizing the voice and action of survivors and empowering them to protect the rights and safety of all citizens'. This is particularly relevant in contexts such as CAR, where survivors have little alternative to returning home – for example, if there is no alternative shelter for survivors, or if local medical services usually recommend that they return home. In other contexts, survivors of domestic violence may be able to leave their abusers, and humanitarian organizations may play role in supporting them in doing so, as documented in a case study from the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Direct responses to protection threats

As some of the examples above illustrate, social cohesion activities and mediation can sometimes directly respond to protection threats. This is the case, for instance, when mediation helps put an end to family separation or domestic violence, or when interventions by religious leaders help de-escalate violence between their communities.

However, these initiatives should be accompanied by other efforts, such as referrals of survivors to medical care and psychosocial support, family tracing and wider sensitization efforts aimed at promoting peaceful coexistence.

Self-protection outside community protection structures

Case studies
- Supporting community initiatives to ensure their own protection (Yemen)
- Supporting refugees with a market-based approach (Bangladesh)
- A multi-layered approach to promoting LGBTQ rights (Lebanon)
- Working with communities to reduce risk exposure at night (Bangladesh)
- Community lighting project (Lebanon)
- How the community taught us protection work: Lessons from Gaza (OPT)
- Identifying and supporting self-protection mechanisms (Somalia/ Somaliland)
- Women's empowerment and CBP responses in Lokurunyang (South Sudan)
- Creating safe spaces for women's groups (Somalia/Somaliland)
- Advocacy actions in the village of Mashuba (DRC)

As discussed in Section 1, CBP is about supporting communities' own self-protection strategies and capacities.

Most of the examples of CBP programming profiled in this resource pack concern the work of CPSs. However, despite the centrality of CPSs in CBP programming, they are not a requirement. Self-protection is not dependent on CPSs, and can occur at individual or household level, or even be carried out by groups of community members who nonetheless do not constitute a formal 'structure'.

This section refers to such initiatives simply as 'self-protection' because they do not easily fit labels common to humanitarian jargon, such as 'advocacy' or 'sensitization'. However, this does not mean that CBP actions led by CPSs cannot also be considered self-protection.

Supporting self-protection

The guidance on community self-protection helps CPSs and humanitarian organizations identify existing or potential self-protection strategies and the factors that enable communities to implement them.

Some examples in this resource pack demonstrate the different ways in which humanitarian organizations and CPSs can support self-protection strategies of community members who do not take part in CPSs.

For instance, as part of a recent project in Lebanon, the Lebanese NGO Qorras and Oxfam's gender team have been working directly with LGBTQIA+ people in challenging the stereotypes that underpin violence and discrimination against them, as well as the obstacles they face to access essential services. Although it was not conceptualized as a protection project, the initiative addresses protection threats such as violence and deliberate deprivation. Its approach centres on the meaningful participation of LGBTQIA+ individuals, who contribute to the design, content and implementation of the project – which in turn also renders it community-based.

In Bangladesh, Oxfam's market-based protection programme provides vouchers to refugees for the purchase of non-food items that reduce their exposure to protection threats, strengthening the Resources pillar of their self-protection capacities. The programme also contributed to the solidarity pillar by strengthening social cohesion between refugees and local businesses (host communities), as seen in the social cohesion sub-section.

In Yemen, communities were provided with small grants to finance safe spaces and other protection initiatives, addressing issues such as sexual violence, child marriage and child abuse. This project testifies to the importance of material resources in enabling self-protection. Resources such as lights, latrines and fences contributed to the prevention or mitigation of protection threats, and to creating safe spaces where people could come together, thus strengthening their solidarity, as seen in the social cohesion sub-section.

Material resources were also essential to communities' self-protection in Bangladesh and Lebanon. In these cases, community members, particularly women and girls, had been limiting their movements at night. Streetlights helped reduce potential risks and improved freedom of movement. In both examples, communities' solidarity was also strengthened, as members came together to ensure the maintenance of the lights and generators.

Material resources can also help ensure the sustainability of certain self-protection strategies. For instance, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, a survivor of domestic violence had left her abusive husband, but was being pressured by her family to return to him, and could not count on their financial support. In this case, an income-generating activity programme from which the survivor was benefitting played a decisive role in her decision to remain separated.

The role of community protection structures

The examples above illustrate different initiatives aimed at strengthening the self-protection strategies of individuals and groups that were not part of CPSs. Nonetheless, this does not mean that CPSs do not have a role to play in supporting community-led self-protection.

For instance, the lighting project in Lebanon, discussed above, was the outcome of a protection analysis and action plan developed by protection peer groups. These CPSs identified the lack of safety during night-time as a key issue for community members, and helped design a response based on communities' preferences (e.g., for electrical generators) and resources (e.g. volunteers to install them).

CPSs can also contribute to self-protection through sensitization activities. The guidance on action plans emphasizes that sensitization activities can be a way of strengthening community self-protection by sharing with community members different ways of preventing, avoiding, mitigating or ending protection threats. Similarly, the sensitization guidance mentions that information, education and communications materials can be used to encourage reflection on self-protection measures. This was the case, for example, in Somalia/Somaliland, where community protection structures promoted travelling in groups as a self-protection strategy.

Sensitization can also be a way of tackling negative self-protection strategies, as seen in the way CPSs raise awareness of the harmful consequences of child marriage or revenge in South Sudan.

As seen in the self-protection guidance, negative self-protection strategies can also be addressed through the Engagement pillar, such as by supporting women's participation in decision making, which makes communities' dialogues with key actors more inclusive. They can also be tackled through material support (i.e. supporting the Resources pillar), such as with income-generating activities for survivors of gender-based violence in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (even though, in this case, such support was offered by Oxfam directly, not CPSs).

Finally, CPSs can play a key role in finding alternatives to self-protection strategies that fail to prevent, avoid, mitigate or end protection threats. That was the case in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where women's forums advocated with local authorities to find ways to protect women going to market, as their self-protection strategy of going in groups had proven unsuccessful.

Section 7: Empower

Case studies	• Community-based protection committees and remote engagement (Iraq) • Women's empowerment and CBP responses in Lokurunyang (South Sudan) • Creating safe spaces for women's groups (Somalia/Somaliland) • Identifying and supporting self-protection mechanisms (Somalia/Somaliland) • Interactive and legislative theatre as a means of awareness-raising and advocacy (DRC) • A multi-layered approach to promoting LGBTQ rights (Lebanon) • Rana, a survivor of domestic violence and sexual abuse (Yemen) • Creating forums for discussion of protection concerns (Somalia/Somaliland) • Women's empowerment and CBP responses in Lokurunyang (South Sudan) • Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (Uganda)
Recommendations	• CEDIER's recommendations concerning the partnership (DRC) • Partnership recommendations by KAALO (Somalia)

Power is a key concept in CBP programming. CBP programming has an empowering effect by recognizing and relying on communities' agency, which in turn increases their level of control over activities.

CBP programming also empowers communities by strengthening the four pillars of their self-protection capacities, as reflected throughout Section 6. The more informed, resourceful, united and engaged a community is, the more able they are to ensure their own protection.

Power dynamics and inequalities can be the source of divisiveness within and between communities. Thus, addressing these can contribute to the Solidarity pillar of communities' self-protection strategies. More broadly, power dynamics and inequalities can also be the source of, or exacerbate, the protection risks faced by community members.

CBP's participatory and inclusive approaches require the empowerment of individuals or groups within a community who are usually excluded or marginalized by their peers. Efforts to ensure that CBP programming is inclusive involves tackling the power dynamics, inequalities, practices and behaviours that underpin and perpetuate marginalization.

This section explores the different ways in which CBP programming contributes to shifting power through efforts to mobilize communities, support their efforts, and respond to protection risks.

Empowerment through mobilization

The empowerment of certain community members is a necessary part of the design and implementation of CBP programming. Reaching the most marginalized starts with a good analysis of power dynamics, including the level of decision-making power held by different groups and the factors that hinder or underpin such power.

Empowerment is remains a central concern during the earliest stage of mobilization[37] – the establishment of community protection structures (CPSs) through inclusive processes. For instance, the participation of women, youth and people living with disabilities in the CPS member selection process not only intends to ensure their presence, but their meaningful involvement in discussions. The process also aims to guarantee that all participants understand that, for example, women and girls may face specific protection risks, and thus must be involved in the selection of CPS members and in CPSs themselves.

Therefore, the composition of CPSs may itself contribute to challenging power dynamics and inequalities. For example, when Hassan, one of Oxfam's youth volunteers in Iraq, learned about Oxfam's programme, he thought 'finally we found someone who is willing to listen to us in the [internally displaced people] camp, and this is our time to raise our voice'.

During the focus group discussions that informed this resource pack, women volunteers in South Sudan said that being members of Community Protection Committees has helped them participate in other decision-making bodies in their communities, as they have been able to demonstrate their ability to contribute to community life. This is also reflected in a case study from South Sudan, where a volunteer with a disability said that his work with the committee helped him claim decision-making power in the community.

Nonetheless, such inclusion is not without challenges. For example, in Bangladesh, volunteers reported that some community members disapprove of women and men working together in CPSs.

> 'Some community members do not like that male and female refugee Oxfam volunteers work together, and they perceive it badly when we visit blocks of camps.' (Male volunteer from Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh)

Similar challenges were faced in Somalia/Somaliland, where 'a combination of deep-seated cultural and social norms, which set the position of women in the house', prevented women from meaningfully participating in community decisions. Still, CPSs can play an important role in addressing such challenges, as detailed in the sub-section on empowerment through responses.

Where the participation of women in CPSs is challenged by local social and cultural norms, ensuring meaningful participation in responses requires a shift in power dynamics. For instance, in Somalia/Somaliland, Women's Forums and Community Protection Volunteers carried out awareness-raising sessions about the importance of women's participation in decision-making, and advocated with local authorities and religious leaders for the acceptance of the work of the Women's Forums themselves.

Empowerment through support

The establishment of CPSs is followed by considerable efforts to support and strengthen the capacities of members. While the participation of certain individuals or groups already has an empowering effect, support to CPS members can further contribute to shifting power dynamics.

Training sessions have the potential to transform the behaviour of volunteers, including behaviours that perpetuate power dynamics and discriminatory practices. Testimonies from volunteers suggests that training has a particular impact on volunteers' understanding of women's rights, and reducing violent behaviour towards women and children.

Power dynamics underpin and perpetuate inequalities not only between individuals or community groups, but also between humanitarian actors. These can also be challenged by and through CBP programming, which often builds on collaborations between international, national and/or local organizations. Greater collaboration between organizations can be encouraged, for example, through exchange programmes between international and national actors, or the facilitation of access to donors.

Considerable progress must be made to make such partnerships more empowering, and further shift power in the humanitarian system towards national and local actors.

Empowerment through responses

CBP activities have the potential to transform social cultural norms that inform discriminatory power dynamics and inequalities, especially gender norms. The work of CPSs must consider – and include measures to address – the specific needs and vulnerabilities of different groups within the community. This is reflected in their terms of reference, which underscore the specific needs of groups such as women and girls, persons with disabilities, the elderly and other marginalized groups.

Participation has shifted power dynamics, for example, with the listening clubs in DRC. By promoting women's access to information, the clubs improve women's confidence, participation and capacity for action. The clubs also encourage participants to recognize the value of women's participation.

The legislative theatre in DRC also contributes to women's empowerment, as evidenced in testimony from participants.

> *'[The legislative theatre] helps women because it makes men put themselves in women's shoes and feel what they would really feel if they were women. It allows women… to express themselves by role-playing with men in the market, which had never happened before, especially for women of the Banyamulenge tribe.' (Female participant in a sensitization session in Uvira territory, DRC)*

Finally, it may also be necessary to challenge social and cultural norms when these underpin protection risks. For example, this was the case in Yemen and Somalia/Somaliland, where CPSs advocated for right of gender-based violence survivors to access services. It was also the case in South Sudan, where CPSs have contributed to making community members and local authorities more responsive to culturally sensitive issues such as rape and child marriage

In Uganda, AWYAD works to change 'the social norms that perpetuate women's vulnerability to [sexual and gender-based violence].

In Lebanon, a project on LGBTQIA+ issues also challenges gender norms, with a specific focus on the power dynamics that marginalize individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identities. The project seeks to challenge the stereotypes that underpin violence and discrimination against LGBTQ individuals by raising awareness of the abuses they suffer and advocating for their rights.

Conclusion: From participation to leadership

This resource pack sought to explore and draw lessons from several examples of community-based protection, while at the same time providing templates and tools that humanitarian organizations can draw upon for their community-based protection programming at different stages of the programme cycle. Efforts by humanitarian organizations to mobilize communities to act collectively for their own protection through CPSs, as well as to support such structures, amount to CBP as do the actions that these CPSs carry out to respond to protection. Examples of self-protection strategies implemented by individuals or groups outside CPSs also amount to community-based protection, and illustrate that not only humanitarian organizations, but also CPSs themselves can support spontaneous self-protection efforts.

The pack has also examined how such initiatives, established by both humanitarian organizations and CPSs, have helped empower individuals and groups within communities. They do so by challenging the power dynamics and inequalities that undermine communities' self-protection capacities, underpin or exacerbate protection risks, and hinder the CBP principles of community agency, self-protection capacities, complementarity to authority-centred protection, inclusion and participation, community ownership, and transformational impact.

As argued in Section 1, power marks the distinction between community-informed protection, and community-based protection. The tools, case studies and recommendations in this resource pack illustrate how power can be shifted from the formal humanitarian system towards communities, who are the experts on, and often the first responders to, their own protection needs. Hopefully, these resources can further inspire people-centred approaches to protection.

Endnotes

1 All photos featured in this resource pack were obtained with the informed consent of the people featured.

2 Andrew Bonwick, Who really protects civilians?, June 2006, available at: https://policy-practice. oxfam.org/resources/who-really-protects-civilians-130821/ (accessed in July 2021)

3 Helen Lindley-Jones, *'If we don't do it, who will?' A study into the sustainability of Community Protection Structures supported by Oxfam in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)*, November 2016, available at: https://policy-practice.oxfam. org/resources/if-we-dont-do-it-who-will-a-study-into-the-sustainability-of-community-protecti-620149/ (accessed in July 2021).

4 Helen Lindley-Jones, *Now It Is For Us To Continue: Evaluation of Oxfam's community gender and protection programme in Central African Republic*, June 2018, p. 23, available at: https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/ bitstream/10546/620504/3/er-now-continue-community-gender-protection-car-270618-en.pdf (accessed in July 2021).

5 'The concept of protection encompasses all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law'. IASC, *Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*, Policy Paper, December 1999, p. 4, available at: https://interagencystandingcommittee. org/system/files/legacy_files/protection_of_ internally_displaced_persons_inter_agency_ standing_committee_policy_paper_0.pdf (accessed in July 2021).

For more recent uses of this definition, see, e.g., Global Protection Cluster (GPC), *Strategic Framework 2016-2019*, 2015, p. 2, available at: http://www.globalprotectioncluster. org/_assets/files/about_us/GPC_strategy/ gpcstrategicframework.pdf (accessed in July 2021)

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), *Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action*, 2016, p. 2, available at: https://www.globalprotectioncluster. org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/IASC%20 Guidance%20and%20Tools/iasc-policy-on-protection-in-humanitarian-action.pdf (accessed in July 2021)

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Professional Standards for Protection Work*, 3rd Edition, 2018, p. 68, at p. 10, available at: https://www.icrc.org/en/publication/0999-professional-standards-protection-work-carried-out-humanitarian-and-human-rights (accessed in July 2021)

6 See, e.g., Sorcha O'Callaghan and Sara Pantuliano, *Protective action: incorporating civilian protection into humanitarian response*, Report, HPG Report, 26, Humanitarian Policy Group, Overseas Development Institute, 2007, p. 64, at p. 5, available at: https://www.odi.org/ sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/1640.pdf (accessed in July 2021).

7 ICRC, (2018) *Professional Standards for Protection Work*, Chapter 4: "Building on the legal base of protection".

8 On this, see also Aditi Gorur and Nils Carstensen, "Community Self-Protection", in H. Willmot et al. (eds.), *Protection of Civilians*, Oxford University Press Oxford, 2016, pp. 409–427, at p. 413.

9 See Hugo Slim and Andrew Bonwick, *Protection: an ALNAP guide for humanitarian agencies*, ALNAP, Overseas Development Institute (ODI), 2005, p. 52, available at: https://www.alnap. org/help-library/protection-an-alnap-guide-for-humanitarian-agencies (accessed in July 2021).

10 Ibid.

11 See, e.g., Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO), *Humanitarian Protection: Improving protection outcomes to reduce risks for people in humanitarian crises*, Thematic Policy Document, 8, May 2016, p. 9, available at: https://ec.europa. eu/echo/sites/echo-site/files/policy_guidelines_ humanitarian_protection_en.pdf (accessed in July 2021).

12 Despite the success of this example in deterring perpetrators, it should be noted that it was primary duty bearers who were reinforcing the protection of the community through their armed presence. This does not mean that community members should be taking up arms to protect themselves. In fact, the use of arms by community members as a self-protection strategy has proved ineffective on multiple occasions, even exposing the most vulnerable community members to greater risks. As observed in the self-protection guidance, such strategies amount to violent engagement strategies, which are always considered negative strategies.

13 See, e.g., ICRC, (2018) *Professional Standards for Protection Work*, p. 21.

14 Ibid., p. 16.

15 This categorization builds on the following literature:

Andrew Bonwick, "Who really protects civilians?", *Development in Practice*, Vol. 16, Nos. 03–04, June 2006, available at: http://www.tandfonline. com/doi/abs/10.1080/09614520600694810 (accessed in July 2021)

Casey A. Barrs, "How Civilians Survive Violence: A Preliminary Inventory", *The Cuny Center*, November 2010, available at: https://www.oxfam.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/Casey-Barrs-supporting-documentation-How-Civilians-Survive.pdf (accessed in July 2021)

Casey A. Barrs, "Preparedness Support: Helping Brace Beneficiaries", May 2010, available at: http://cunycenter.org/files/Preparedness%20Support7.pdf (accessed in July 2021)

Richard Horsey, *Local Protection in Zimbabwe*, Local to Global Protection (L2GP), September 2011, available at: https://www.local2global.info/wp-content/uploads/L2GP_Zimbabwe_study.pdf (accessed in July 2021)

Ashley South, Malin Perhult, and Nils Carstensen, "Conflict and Survival: Self-protection in south-east Burma", *Asia Program Paper*. London: Chatham House, 2010, available at: https://www.local2global.info/wp-content/uploads/L2GP_karem_study_burma_myanmar_CH.pdf (accessed in July 2021)

E. Baines and E. Paddon, "'This is how we survived': Civilian agency and humanitarian protection", *Security Dialogue*, Vol. 43, No. 3, 01 June 2012, available at: http://sdi.sagepub.com/cgi/doi/10.1177/0967010612444150 (accessed in July 2021)

Matt Schissler, *Potential refugee return in eastern Myanmar: Exploring the relevance of a study into local protection concerns, plans, and aspirations*, Local to Global Protection (L2GP), April 2015, available at: https://www.local2global.info/wp-content/uploads/L2G-Myanmar-Schissler.pdf (accessed in July 2021).

16 This categorization builds on Betcy Jose and Peace A. Medie, "Understanding Why and How Civilians Resort to Self-Protection in Armed Conflict", *International Studies Review*, Vol. 17, No. 4, September 2015, available at: http://isr.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/doi/10.1111/misr.12254 (accessed in July 2021).

17 As clarified in the self-protection guidance, positive and negative strategies are categorized based on their impact on communities, not on their success in preventing, avoiding, mitigating or putting an end to a threat. Therefore, moving around in groups can be considered positive when it does not have a negative effect, even if the strategy fails to deter perpetrators. When such a strategy fails, the harm caused on the individuals is not inflicted by the strategy itself, but by the perpetrators. Conversely, avoiding going out at night may be successful in avoiding a threat, but is a negative strategy due to its impact on freedom of movement.

18 UNHCR-NGO-Academia team, "Community-Based Protection: Survey Findings and Analysis", in "Community-Based Protection: Survey Findings and Analysis", March 2014, available at: http://www.unhcr.org/ngo-consultations/ngo-consultations-2014/CBP-Survey-Findings-Final-June2014.pdf (accessed in July 2021).

19 The term 'mobilize' here, similar to 'mobilization' in Section 5, refers to the mobilization of community members as agents in their own protection. These terms are not to be confused with 'mobilization' as used in the advocacy sub-section, which refers to an advocacy approach.

20 The term 'mobilize' here, similar to 'mobilization' in Section 5, refers to the mobilization of community members as agents in their own protection. These terms are not to be confused with 'mobilization' as used in the advocacy sub-section, which refers to an advocacy approach.

21 'Safeguarding' in Oxfam is a set of procedures, measures and practices to ensure that the organization upholds its commitment to prevent, respond to and protect individuals from harm committed by staff, related personnel and volunteers. In Oxfam, we focus on sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and child abuse. For further information for Oxfam staff: https://compass.oxfam.org/communities/safeguarding-community (last accessed July 2021).

22 See also Helen Lindley-Jones, (2018) *Now It Is For Us To Continue*, p. 23.

23 Helen Lindley-Jones, (2018) *Now It Is For Us To Continue*, p. 4.

24 Helen Lindley-Jones, (2018) *Now It Is For Us To Continue*.

25 Helen Lindley-Jones, (2016) *'If we don't do it, who will?'*.

26 Helen Lindley-Jones, (2016) *'If we don't do it, who will?'*.

27 Helen Lindley-Jones, (2018) *Now It Is For Us To Continue*, p. 4.

28 Previous research by Oxfam in DRC found 'several examples where, since project closure, protection structure members decided to each contribute a small amount of money or materials in-kind (e.g. batteries) on a regular basis, in order to cover basic materials'. See Helen Lindley-Jones, (2016) *'If we don't do it, who will?'*, p. 9.

29 The term 'mobilize' here, similar to 'mobilization' in Section 5, refers to the mobilization of community members as agents in their own protection. These terms are not to be confused with 'mobilization' as used in the advocacy sub-section, which refers to an advocacy approach.

30 See also International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), *Enhancing Protection for Civilians in Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence*, 2008, p.29, available at: https://shop.icrc.org/icrc/pdf/view/id/665 (accessed in July 2021).

31 Abdulwasea Mohammed and Hannah Cooper, *A Crisis With No End in Sight: How the ongoing crisis in Taiz Governorate continues to put civilians at risk*, Oxfam Briefing Note, Oxfam International, December 2020, available at: https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/a-crisis-with-no-end-in-sight-how-the-ongoing-crisis-in-taiz-governorate-contin-621136/ (accessed in January 2021).

32 For more information on responsible data management, see Oxfam, *"Responsible Program Data Policy"*, 2015, available at https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/oxfam-responsible-program-data-policy-575950/ (accessed in July 2021), and

Oxfam, *"Responsible Data Management Training Pack"*, 2017, available at https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/responsible-data-management-training-pack-620235/ (accessed in July 2021).

33 Helen Lindley-Jones, (2016) *'If we don't do it, who will?'*, p.14.

34 Ibid.

35 Harvard Law School Program on Negotiation, *"What are the Three Basic Types of Dispute Resolution? What to Know About Mediation, Arbitration, and Litigation"*, 8 October 2020, available at: https://www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/dispute-resolution/what-are-the-three-basic-types-of-dispute-resolution-what-to-know-about-mediation-arbitration-and-litigation/ (accessed in January 2021).

36 Helen Lindley-Jones, (2018) *Now It Is For Us To Continue*, p. 4.

37 The term 'mobilize' here, similar to 'mobilization' in Section 5, refers to the mobilization of community members as agents in their own protection. These terms are not to be confused with 'mobilization' as used in the advocacy sub-section, which refers to an advocacy approach.