

Protection Strategy Preliminary Findings:

What We Know So Far:

Supporting results-based approaches to protection

The following findings are based on several stakeholder interviews carried out with INGOs, In-Country NGO Coordination Bodies, and ProCap Officers. The geographical scope of the interviews covers the following countries: Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Central African Republic, Lebanon, Nigeria, South Sudan

PROCESS

1. Differing views and understanding on what a protection strategy is or should be creates confusion and an inability to effectively engage in strategic planning processes. For local organization the barriers to participation are even higher.
2. Effective coordination is fundamental for developing a protection strategy.
3. A limited consultative process undermines the credibility and uptake of a protection strategy.
4. Strategy development is often driven from the top rather than building from the ground up, limiting the involvement and sense of ownership at the field level and among those implementing programs.
5. Ad hoc methodological approaches and facilitation at the start of a planning process contribute to an unsuccessful protection strategy.
6. Strong leadership helps to mobilize a diverse set of actors to prioritize protection as an overarching goal of the humanitarian response.
7. There are examples of effective processes at an organizational level that may offer some lessons for interagency strategy development.

CONTENT/COVERAGE

1. It is unclear from recent protection strategies what prioritization is based on. (what is driving the prioritization)
2. Protection strategies have become a laundry list of activities driven by agency mandates, organizational models, and services that donors fund. These activities may have little to do with the reality on the ground.
3. Protection strategies have become everything without achieving anything.
4. Service delivery and setting up systems (e.g. referral pathways) dominate most protection strategies with safe programming becoming the default for addressing risk. Little attention on prevention with advocacy often cited as the main activity for stopping violations and abuse.

5. Differing views about what a protection strategy is and should be creates a tangled output of plans, processes, and activities with little to no substance on the desired change and what results will lead to protection outcomes.
6. Questions: Should it be an open or confidential document?

ANALYSIS

1. Strategies are not based on a comprehensive protection analysis. Little attention is given to understanding the context-specific threats, vulnerabilities, and capacities.
2. Historical and contextual analysis is lacking.
3. Limited investment in identifying community/self-protection mechanisms
4. There are efforts at an organizational level to strengthen analysis.

CAUSAL LOGIC or THEORY OF CHANGE

1. Developing a context-specific theory of change may be useful in articulating assumptions and causal pathways to achieve protection outcomes. In addition, it may help to identify the contributions of actors outside the humanitarian system necessary to reduce risk. This process is a necessary, but often neglected, step in the development of a protection strategy.
2. The development of a theory of change can be influenced by several factors (e.g. donor priorities, mandates, organizational focus/capacity, political agendas) that transform the underpinning causal logic into a misguided pathway not reflecting context or historical and cultural aspects for change.

CONTRIBUTION BY Relevant Actors

1. Protection strategies do not go far enough in articulating who and what is needed to bring about a protection outcome. The contribution of stakeholders to respond to protection issues is often limited to who participates in a protection cluster/working group and how the discussion is facilitated.

ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Opposing views on whether or not a protection strategy should be used as a means to hold actors accountable.

THE ROLE OF HUMANITARIANS TO ADDRESS THREAT

1. How humanitarians perceive their role influences the analysis that drives the protection strategy.
2. Huge variance across those interviewed; from no role, to direct to indirect role.