WeWorld-**GVC's Community Protection Approach**–An example of analysis tools that provide a basis for multi-disciplinary strategies to reduce risk

WeWorld-GVC is an international NGO that drives and implements a Community Protection Approach (CPA) to protection that embraces all three RBP Key Elements. The CPA, awarded "First Place" in InterAction's 2020 Results-Based Protection Good Practice Contest, was submitted by Paloma Solo de Zaldivar, Francesco Michele, Betina Borova, and Ahmad Sharif. It promotes a community engagement and empowerment methodology to design integrated protection programs (e.g., multi-disciplinary strategies) and provide operational tools to facilitate coordination and complementarity between different actors in order to find sustainable solutions to a given population's needs and protection issues. The CPA is built on many years of research and testing and can be tailored depending on the context.

The CPA has two specific objectives:

Increase the **capacities of communities and individuals to make informed decisions** about their **safety**, to organize their resources and efforts to **reduce exposure to harm**, and to develop **local strategies** to increase protection from hindered access to safe and dignified living.

Support the **coordinated mobilization of multi-stakeholder and multi-sector efforts** to **prevent and respond** to the most serious protection threats, to **reduce risk** of harm and rights violations, and to **enable opportunities** to ensure safety and dignity of people.

(Community Protection Approach Handbook – Overview pg. 15)

First piloted in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the approach is now being used by many NGOs and other actors in several country contexts. While the CPA is a great example of continuous, context-specific protection analysis that engages communities, one unique and important aspect is the second objective to support multi-stakeholder and multi-sector efforts to reduce risk for affected populations.

In certain country contexts, an established consortium or other group of actors–including protection and non-protection actors–who are familiar with the approach and tools capture qualitative and quantitative information from the individual, household, and institutional levels pertaining to their projects and sector. The tools help identify threats, vulnerabilities, and capacities from a set of quantitative indicators. This initial identification is then qualified through population engagement to further explore causes, consequences, coping strategies, and other dynamics. A wide range of engagement modalities is provided to adapt the approach to the specific context.

Overall, the CPA tools for engagement and data collection are designed to collect information about protection risks pertaining to different sectors. The data collected is input into a digital collective protection data dashboard. The dashboard synthesizes and collates information and data and categorizes it based on different categories, including the component of the risk equation (threat, vulnerability, and capacity). Information can be sorted by community or theme so the user can easily extract the information they require for their programming.

While the dashboard contains multiple levels of information, WeWorld-GVC can tailor the amount accessible to different actors depending on their involvement and needs, an important and sometimes challenging aspect of information sharing amongst partners. For example, those who collect the data have access to raw data, others–generally managers and some staff at the HQ level–may only have access to the aggregated analysis of information, and other decision-makers and some donors have access to still other parts of the dashboard. This is to ensure data privacy is respected and vulnerable populations are no exposed to further harm.

From a multi-disciplinary perspective, one helpful page on the dashboard is one that displays all key protection risks alongside the various ongoing activities designed to address those protection risks by sector. This gives key actors within the response a snapshot of where collective efforts are concentrated. This information could then feed into program adaptation (or design if at the start of the project cycle) so organizations can ensure they're delivering the most impactful programs given the other actors in the area and identified protection priorities.

The CPA may sound like a multi-sectoral needs assessment, however, the key aspect is in its continuous nature that creates a localized, continuous process of analysis and monitoring of the threats, vulnerabilities, and capacities of a given population. To do it well, this approach requires staff time and resources, but the result is a holistic understanding of the needs of the affected population and the building blocks for effective multi-disciplinary strategies.

Focus Groups, Prioritization, and a Rapid Protection Analysis: A snapshot of how the Danish Refugee Council in Iraq has adopted results-based approaches in an effort to adapt common practices in support of protection outcomes

As a submission to the 2020 Results-Based Protection (RBP) Good Practice Contest, Elena Bartoloni from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) team in Iraq presented a tool that is designed to facilitate a community-based and participatory approach to the identification, prioritization, and analysis of protection risks. The tool, awarded "Runner-Up" in the RBP contest, provides an excellent framework for light-touch context-specific protection analysis according to the risk equation, a key element of Results-Based Protection (RBP).

To understand how this tool came about, we need to take a little historical journey.

Prior to joining DRC, Elena Bartoloni worked as a Protection Consultant in the Disputed Border areas of Iraq. She noticed that Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with communities experiencing protection risks were approached more as group interviews based on a structured pre-set of questions. This approach often reduced FGDs to a "box-ticking" exercise, which did not encourage active and meaningful participation by the participants, nor in-depth and context specific discussion and analysis of the protection issues and coping strategies described by the participants. The approaches used also lacked a framework for analysis of the information gathered. This hindered the capacity of protection actors to adequately identify ways to minimize protection risks and to effectively assist vulnerable populations. Inspired by these observations, she began drafting a tool for exploring the breadth of protection risks affecting a community, how to prioritize those most important to them, and ways to break those risks down to better understand the component parts of risk (threat, vulnerability, capacity) by using the risk equation. All of this information needed to then feed into a light-touch protection analysis that could inform programming.

While working in various protection roles, Elena brought in new learning and iterated to improve the tool. As it stands now, the tool promotes a set of questions and a systematization tool to prompt a participatory and results-based approach to community discussions and protection analysis.

Although continually being updated based on new learning, the tool was picked up and piloted by the DRC Iraq protection team and is now being integrated within their approach to protection monitoring as a qualitative data collection tool. Additionally, the DRC Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) team is exploring the application of qualitative data analysis software to support effective analysis on a broader scale. The demographic information and tag words will be used to bolster protection analysis, specifically to support trends analysis.

Addressing Eviction Experienced by Refugees and Asylum Seekers: How the International Rescue Committee in Italy adapted a two-way information platform to contribute to protection outcomes

Refugee.Info is a two-way, multi-disciplinary communication platform in Italy that is used to understand the issues users are facing and to connect them with available services. A key population that uses the platform are refugees and asylum seekers who are facing a myriad of challenges, including protection issues such as forced eviction in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. After introducing and testing the tool, it became clear how it could be used to track emerging protection risk patterns in support of achieving protection outcomes. This new initiative was submitted to InterAction's 2020 Results-Based Protection Good Practice Contest by Katie Grant, Elena Caracciolo, and Camilla Fabozzi on behalf of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) team in Italy. The team was awarded "Second Runner-Up" for the initiative.

"I couldn't pay my rent because everywhere is on lockdown. I can't go out and I don't have a job yet. I do minor jobs like cleaning of house and making hair. I don't know what to do. Please what should I do […] I can't even report to the police because my residen[ce] is not there. Please help me."
-   Refugee.Info Client, April 2020

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) team in Italy, through Refugee.info, has received an uptick of messages similar to the one above in which users emphasized the deterioration of their living conditions. Many noted that they could not pay their rent and thus, feared being evicted.

Through research and its own analysis, IRC discovered that those most at risk were refugees and asylum-seekers who did not have formalized housing contracts and as a result, were unable to legally benefit from state protections against evictions. To equip the aforementioned affected population and alleviate anxiety induced by evictions, the IRC team published an article on the Refugee.Info website and its Facebook page which discussed the rights of refugees to accommodation. The article also informed refugees on how to navigate the measures adopted by the government to support tenant's rights. The overwhelming response to the posts allowed the IRC team in Italy to identify local service providers who could offer legal or housing assistance. Additionally, to combat misinformation, the moderators monitored the chat and produced subsequent informative articles that addressed them.

In addition to the website and a Facebook page, the Refugee.info initiative, as part of IRC's global Signpost project[1] , also includes Messenger and a "group chat" of more than 26,600 users and partners. By using platforms that are familiar to users and adapting their language to reflect a peer-to-peer approach–including emojis and slang–the team has been able to build trust with its user base; In a 2019 study, 90% of users reported trusting the content and information services provided via the platform. Apart from helping refugees and asylum seekers access services, know their rights, and navigate a changing policy landscape through responsive information, IRC Italy is exploring how Refugee.info can be used to track trends in risk patterns that users share on the platform, like forced evictions. The team has been working to develop context-specific indicators to help them better monitor how protection risks are developing and changing in Italy. This systemized tracking will strengthen the team's protection analysis and ability to inform IRC's own programming and engage other organizations with the expertise and skills to reduce protection risks.

---

[1] Signpost is an initiative originally launched by IRC and Mercy Corps in 2015 as a response to the needs of refugees arriving in Greece. Since then it has been expanded to three other instances including Refugee.info in Italy, CuéntaNos in El Salvador and Khabrona in Jordan.

Context-Specific Protection Analysis: How UNFPA Regional Syria Hub and the Whole of Syria GBV AoR embraced streamlined approaches to improve the gathering of GBV data to inform the humanitarian response in Syria

When the crisis broke out in Syria, little to no information existed on gender-based violence in this context. GBV actors faced additional difficulties in creating a needs-based response, particularly in a context where approvals from relevant authorities to conduct protection/GBV assessments were challenging, and where assessments were rendered more difficult by remote management and security risks for GBV actors engaging in data collection.

While it is widely recognized and accepted that GBV is underreported and that prevalence figures are not needed to establish an effective GBV response, having an analysis that includes information on the types of GBV taking place, the specific demographics it is impacting, and the evolution of trends over time does help ensure a tailored, targeted, and ultimately more effective response. Therefore, the UNFPA Regional Syria Hub and the Whole of Syria GBV Are of Responsibility (AoR) set out to devise an assessment methodology to obtain GBV data to inform the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). Their approach, submitted by Fulvia Boniardi to InterAction's 2020 Results-Based Protection Good Practice Contest and awarded "Honorable Mention", employs a community-based approach that uses contextualized tools and indicators, including proxy indicators, to better analyze and measure GBV issues country-wide.

What makes this different from other approaches to GBV data collection is its focus on qualitative data, rather than prevalence data, and that it is collected through community Focus Group Discussions with women, girls, men, and boys, thus helping to ensure their perspective and direct voices are incorporated. Information is bolstered and triangulated through FGDs with GBV experts and through Key Informant Interviews (KII), while the analysis also considers proxy indicators coming from the HNO Multisectoral Needs Assessments (MSNA). For example, within the MSNA, GBV actors regarded kidnapping and abduction as an appropriate proxy indicator for GBV, as previous assessments indicated that sexual violence and "honor killings" are closely linked to kidnapping/abduction.

Starting in 2017, the analysis derived from the framework has been used to generate an annual report titled *Voices from Syria*. The report has proven beneficial when informing the Syria HNO and guiding GBV organisations on how to respond, as featured in the Syria Humanitarian Response Plan. The report helped to identify the risks of GBV that need to be mitigated throughout the response by all humanitarians, while simultaneously providing information that is conducive to results-oriented programming. The analysis has also informed several programs and initiatives aimed at reducing people's vulnerability to GBV and increasing their capacity to deal with it when it does occur. There is also huge potential for the analysis to

inform prevention programming and other initiatives intended to reduce the threat–a key component of the risk equation.

An example of this is the Turkey Cross Border GBV Sub-Cluster GBV Awareness Raising Toolkit, developed to support GBV organizations working in parts of North West Syria to engage in long term GBV prevention programs.

It is because of the recognition of this assessment as a global best practice[2] that the UNFPA Regional Syria hub has developed *Beyond Numbers*, a how-to guide to support the replication of a similar assessment in other countries responding to GBV in humanitarian crises. The guide provides an in-depth description of the methodology used to collect qualitative data in Syria and the reasons for doing so. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19, a section has been added at the end of the guidance to provide recommendations on how to adapt data collection.

To learn more about how WeWorld-GVC, DRC Iraq, IRC Italy, UNFPA Regional Syria Hub and the Whole of Syria GBV AoR, and others are working to achieve results and protection outcomes, stay tuned for InterAction's forthcoming publication "Mindshift" – a collection of examples from around the world of RBP in practice!

---

[2] In 2018, an independent evaluation of UNFPA's response to the Syria crisis (available at https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/admin-resource/Syria_Evaluation_Report_Volume_1_UPDATED_4MB.pdf) identified the Whole of Syria GBV coordination (and the use of gender-based violence qualitative data to inform responses) as a global best practice that should be replicated in other countries responding to gender-based violence in humanitarian crises.