



Protection Policy

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Introduction

COOPI – Cooperazione Internazionale is an independent and secular humanitarian foundation established in 1965. For close to 50 years, it has carried out more than 1,600 projects in 60 countries, involving thousands of local operators and provided direct assistance to millions of people worldwide. Its mission consists of contributing, through the commitment, motivation, determination and professionalism of its staff, to the process of poverty reduction and growth in the communities with which it cooperates around the world. COOPI intervenes in emergency, reconstruction and development contexts in order

to achieve a better balance between the Global North and the Global South, between developed and deprived or developing parts of the world.

The Protection Policy¹ is part of a series of theoretical and operational documents put together by COOPI which set out its position, on which it can draw and which provide the building-blocks as regards the issues that are central to its work.² These documents outline the international theoretical framework that guides and underpins COOPI's approach and that expands on topics which were set out in COOPI's policies on gender, childhood and adolescence. In addition to this policy document, COOPI has developed a practical guidance document (COOPI's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on Protection), which translates the theoretical framework into programmes in the field and provides COOPI with a manual for its operations.

As a humanitarian organization, COOPI has made protection one of its core values and places it at the heart of its operations on the ground. In the light of the complexity of the theoretical discourse on protection and its multiple uses on the ground it is necessary to develop a more transparent and coherent approach so as to define COOPI's attributes and added value in this regard. Its extensive experience in the field and its wide-ranging expertise in such varied geographical areas have allowed COOPI to focus on these strengths and best practices to ensure the quality of its operations, the satisfaction of the people assisted and the sharing of knowledge.

INTERNATIONAL THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Key definitions

Protection interventions are undertaken to ensure full respect for the rights of all persons on equal terms, regardless of age, gender, religion, ethnic or social origin or other considerations, at times of conflict, humanitarian crisis, displacement, war and/or natural disaster.

Specifically, protection is defined as:

¹ The Protection Policy was approved by COOPI's Board of Directors on 17 May 2016.

² To date, the organization has policies on childhood and adolescence, environment and disaster risk reduction, food security, corporate social responsibility and gender. A policy on food security should be in place by late 2016.

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 law³ (i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law and refugee law).

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) 1999

Protection can be seen as:

Table 1: The relationship between various aspects of protection, adapted from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Handbook, HCR, 2008



³ Definition provided by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the main inter-agency coordination mechanism for humanitarian intervention, which includes representatives of the United Nations (UN) and the Red Cross Movement.

Table 2: Protection in practice

To ensure quality protection programmes it is essential to involve all stakeholders, including vulnerable populations, local communities and national authorities in order to:

- prevent human rights violations from occurring or reoccurring;
- put an end to ongoing violations;
- provide solutions to rights violations through reparation and/or rehabilitation mechanisms;
- promote an environment conducive to respect for the rights of women, men, girls and boys, through information and awareness-raising activities and the provision of specific services and assistance;
- use advocacy to persuade those in power to protect individuals;
- strengthen the capacity of national authorities and civil society of a country or region to protect their populations;
- provide services or assistance directly, so that people can protect themselves from risks related to the circumstances which are the cause of their vulnerability.

International rights law as a legal basis for protection

Protection consists of ensuring that all women, girls, men and boys can enjoy their rights on equal terms, in safety and dignity, including at times of internal displacement, war, conflict and/or natural disaster. National law is the main legal framework for protection activities. Protection activities must nonetheless be grounded in international law and be based on rights. States have a responsibility to ensure the full enjoyment of the rights of all individuals, on equal terms, within their territory or under their jurisdiction.⁴ When a State becomes party to a treaty, international law obliges it to respect, protect and give effect to human rights. Respecting human rights means that States must avoid hindering the exercise of

⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the obligations of States under international human rights law, see, for example, General Comment No. 31 (1980) of the Human Rights Committee on the nature of the general legal obligation imposed on States Parties to the Covenant, UN Doc. CCPR /C/21/Rev.1/Add.13.

human rights. Protecting means that States must protect individuals and groups against rights violations. Giving effect means that States must take positive measures to facilitate the exercise of fundamental rights. However, the role of international actors is to bolster, not to assume national responsibility. The international community has an important role to play when national authorities are unable or unwilling to provide an efficacious response to humanitarian crises. This constitutes a profound ethical dilemma and has complex consequences for programmes run by non-governmental organizations which work in protection: in a number of countries, the State itself does not discharge its obligations and/or perpetuates human rights violations. For this reason, humanitarian actors must uphold the national legal framework, while acting upon the imperative to provide assistance to populations who are vulnerable and/or affected by conflict or natural disaster. The following international documents form both a legal basis, and tools to guide humanitarian work:

Table 3: Main international human rights instruments, adapted from the Global Protection Cluster Working Group, 2010 Handbook for the protection of internally displaced persons.

Name	Description
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948	Universal instrument setting out the fundamental rights of all individuals on the basis of equality and non-discrimination.
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), 1966	Sets out economic, social and cultural guarantees, including the right to food, clothing and housing, health care, an adequate standard of living, and guarantees concerning work, social protection, education and participation in cultural life.
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), 1966	Sets forth an extensive body of civil and political rights, including the right to life, physical integrity, recognition before the law, political participation, freedom of movement, freedom to choose his or her residence and protection of the family.
Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), 1984	Defines and prohibits torture in all circumstances. Prohibits States from transferring a person to another State if there are reasons to believe that he or she will be tortured there (principle of non-refoulement).
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), 1965	Prohibits racial discrimination: when a person or group is treated differently because of race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin.

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948	Defines genocide as acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, and declares it a crime, whether committed during peace or war.
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1979	Sets a framework for national action for ensuring that women enjoy, on an equal footing with men, their rights in every respect, including employment, education and administration of property, and for ensuring the protection of women, especially against threats to their physical safety and against rape and sexual exploitation.
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989, and its Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, 2000, and Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, 2000	Comprehensive code to protect the rights and best interests of children (below 18 years of age). Binds States to take measures to ensure the protection, care, psychosocial recovery and social reintegration of children affected by armed conflict, including unaccompanied or separated children. The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict prohibits forcible enlistment and the direct use of persons under the age of 18 years in hostilities.
Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPD), 2006	Reaffirms human rights and emphasizes their importance to disabled persons. Also provides guidance to States on ways to ensure that disabled persons, including victims of landmines and explosive remnants of war, can exercise their rights on a full and on an equal basis with others.
International Convention for the Protection of All Persons Against Enforced Disappearances (CED), 2006	Defines and prohibits enforced disappearance in all circumstances and binds States to prevent such acts, to prosecute and punish or extradite those responsible, and to award reparations to the victims and their families.
Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ILO Convention No. 182), 1999	Binds States to take all necessary measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, such as slavery, trafficking, prostitution, forced labour and the enlistment of children (under the age of 18 years) for their use in armed conflict.
International Convention on the Protection of all	Provides a framework for the protection of the human rights of migrant workers at all stages of the

Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW), 1990	migration process: before departure, during transit and in the country of employment.
Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (ILO Convention No. 169), 1989	Sets a framework for ensuring that indigenous and tribal peoples can enjoy their rights on an equal footing with other persons. Specifically addresses the issue of the relocation of peoples, establishing conditions and guarantees to be fulfilled for relocation to be lawful. ⁵

⁵ For further information, see: www2.ohchr.org/english/law/index.htm#core.

Approaches to and main conclusions on the implementation of a protection programme

The most effective protection strategies are built around three common and interrelated approaches:

Table 4: Implementation of protection, adapted from the IASC 2010 handbook

Approach	Key concept	In our work it is necessary to:
Protection consists of securing human rights (rights-based approach)	Because protection is about respect for rights, it requires an approach grounded upon and geared towards the full and equal enjoyment of rights. This way of working requires that we recognize individuals as rights-holders with legal entitlements to protection and assistance. Unlike “needs”, rights entail the responsibility to ensure the protection and well-being of individuals. The State and other authorities are duty-bearers with the responsibility to respect and protect individuals’ rights.	- be familiar with international legal standards; - use rights as the basis for our activities including situation analysis and participatory needs assessments, protection activities and the planning, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes; - analyse why individuals or groups cannot enjoy their rights; - ensure that our policies, programmes and activities aim to support women, men, girls and boys in exercising their rights; - strengthen the capacity and accountability of national and local authorities to meet their protection responsibilities
Individuals and communities are equal partners in protection (community-based)	Experience has shown that for protection efforts to be effective and sustainable, they must be designed to recognize, support and strengthen the protection capacities of	- understand gender roles, power relations and community dynamics; - recognize the ways in which people enhance their own protection and help

approach)	individuals and communities themselves. This is achieved by ensuring that women, men, girls and boys of all ages and backgrounds are regarded and involved as active partners and subjects in all aspects of our work; recognizing their resilience, capacities and resources; and mobilizing and building on the capacities of communities to enhance their own protection.	them to do so; - build an equal and active partnership with women, men, girls and boys by ensuring that they participate in identifying and addressing protection risks and priorities.
Protection promotes full and equal respect for the human rights of all individuals, without discrimination of any kind (mainstreaming of age, gender and diversity)	Conflict, natural disasters and displacement can affect individuals in different ways depending on factors such as age, gender, and ethnic, social, religious and other backgrounds. Certain groups of persons, including women, children, older persons and minorities, are often marginalized within communities and less represented in formal decision-making bodies.	- understand how the crisis affects women, men, girls and boys of all ages and backgrounds differently; - incorporate age, gender and diversity analysis into assessments, analyses, strategy development, design, implementation and monitoring of protection programmes and activities; - work in partnership with women, men, girls and boys to identify protection risks faced by different members of the community, and to prevent and address such risks through targeted action to enable disadvantaged groups to enjoy their rights; - work towards the elimination of all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, in close collaboration with local

		communities, civil society and the national government; - ensure that our strategies, programmes and activities do not inadvertently lead to discrimination or the exclusion of different groups.
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COOPI'S APPROACH TO PROTECTION: KEY CONCEPTS AND GOOD PRACTICES



Table 5: Rivelli/COOPI

This section describes COOPI's approach in the field of protection, setting out its added value and the innovative way in which it operates. COOPI carries out its interventions in the field following two main approaches.

In the first instance, COOPI implements **protection-focused programmes** with specific responsive activities (to prevent or stop violations of rights); remedial activities (to provide a remedy to violations and redress); and transformative activities (to promote respect for rights and the rule of law). Secondly, COOPI **mainstreams protection** activities into all of its humanitarian and development interventions to ensure sustainable and participatory effectiveness of its programmes.

(i) **Implementing protection-focused programmes.** Table 5 depicts the various actions which COOPI might carry out worldwide as part of a protection programme according to the various parameters. COOPI considers protection from a human rights perspective (arrow pointing upwards in Table 5), and in the field promotes remedial and responsive measures to prevent further risk, limit

harm, and, ultimately, redress human rights violations. These programmes may focus on providing international protection to refugees and internally displaced people, and on restoring the rights of indigenous and ethnic minorities. Moreover, COOPI regards protection as going hand in hand with the provision of humanitarian assistance to affected populations so as to increase or improve their access to basic services, by helping them meet their need to bolster their resilience⁶ mechanisms and to limit their vulnerability to violations and abuses. For instance, COOPI provides access to food assistance and livelihood opportunities for those in need; provides nutrition programmes for children, and supports healthcare facilities in providing care for people affected by conflict or natural disasters.

Depending on the context, protection programmes consistently take into consideration the specific needs of the target groups. In fact, during situations of conflict and/or disasters, COOPI specifically deals with certain people/groups who are usually more affected by specific risks or protection issues and hence who need more specific assistance. For instance, COOPI implements programmes addressing survivors of gender-based violence (also referred to as GBV programming), children associated with armed groups or forces, separated children and unaccompanied children (also referred as child protection programmes). COOPI also takes into account the specific needs of older people and people with disabilities without family and community support. COOPI's programmes, are, for example, aimed at the monitoring of violations of international humanitarian law and of human rights law; the registration of and provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees/returnees; IDP profiling, medical care and psychosocial support for GBV survivors; rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups and forces; protection by being present and through access to rights.

(ii) Protection mainstreaming

COOPI also focuses on protection mainstreaming in all of its operations by incorporating the principles of protection and promoting meaningful access, safety and dignity in its operations. COOPI sees the mainstreaming of protection as a way of maximizing the protective impact of programming. Through the incorporation of protection principles into all its interventions, COOPI ensures that its activities focus on the most vulnerable, improve safety, dignity, and promote and protect the human rights of groups of the population without contributing to or perpetuating discrimination, abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation.

⁶ Resilience refers to the capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards to adapt, by resisting or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure (UN/ISDR 2004).

Examples: Ensuring the inclusion of women, boys, men and girls in a distribution programme; ensure meaningful access to health care for women and girls in a conflict zone; implement measures to enhance the participation of children in a humanitarian programme, ensuring that people with specific needs are included in food distribution and other activities.

Table 6: Rivelli/COOPI



A more detailed description of good practices will help us to translate COOPI's approach at the field level and to better understand the history/specific expertise of the organization.

In particular, as it is mindful of the importance of keeping protection at the forefront of its actions, COOPI intervenes in different ways to ensure respect for human rights and to promote access to quality services to persons of all ages.

- 1. Put the individual at the forefront of humanitarian operations** in order to develop his or her own coping mechanisms

This vision has prompted COOPI to implement international guidelines for mental health and psychosocial support programmes, by following the various steps recommended by the IASC, that is to say: integrating psychosocial services in other services and assistance activities; ensuring a multi-sectoral response through support mechanisms and efficient process management; providing psychosocial support to families and communities through cultural and recreational activities; developing a network of social and community workers trained in providing emotional and psychological support; and referring more serious cases of disorders to specialized medical services.⁷

⁷ IASC, 2007, IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings.

In this sense, COOPI has developed a methodology based on the provision of mental health and psychosocial services that outline individual action plans according to the needs and resources of each person, in order to increase their well-being and reactivate their coping mechanisms. COOPI specifically focuses on particular groups such as children associated with armed forces and groups and survivors of gender-based violence. COOPI believes that every action must address the needs but also the individual's capacity and resources so that he/she can recover and regain control of his/her life.

Good practices:

That the individual and his or her needs are at the forefront is readily apparent from most of COOPI's interventions in support of women who are at risk of or who have experienced violence, and children who are vulnerable and/or affected by armed conflict in various countries, such as Colombia, Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Peru, the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sierra Leone and Chad.

PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT IN NIGER AND THE DRC

As of 2014, COOPI has developed **mobile units** in Niger for psychosocial support, which aim to establish services for psychosocial assistance and mental health referrals in order to address the mental health and psychosocial problems caused by the population movements ensuing from Boko Haram's atrocities in northern Nigeria. COOPI has also endeavoured to prevent cases of family separation by providing provisional care for unaccompanied and separated children and a process of psychosocial rehabilitation, which involved 22,739 children (including 11,470 girls) associated with armed forces and armed groups. Furthermore, COOPI has developed an assistance model focused on the needs of survivors of gender-based violence (GBV). Similarly, from 2010 to 2012, in Ituri District, Maniema Province, DRC, COOPI supported the survivors of GBV inflicted during and after the civil war, through specific psychosocial care, and holistic support and referrals to health services for appropriate medical care. The method, applied both to women and girls and to children, consisted of the provision of holistic support to individuals by targeting specific needs concerning health and psychosocial well-being. The programme bolstered 60 health centres and access to medical assistance for more than 10,000 survivors, be they male or female. At the same time more than 25,000 GBV survivors received psychosocial support and more than 12,000 people were helped to carry out income-generating activities.

Each individual participated in the development of an individual action plan, as part of a process of counselling, emotional support or psychosocial

activities necessary for his/her psychosocial recovery by identifying his or her own specific needs and resources.

The success of this programme shows the importance of developing action plans and specific pathways for each boy, girl, woman and man, by taking into account the context of their vulnerability and their family and/or community coping mechanisms. The involvement of the community in preventing and addressing rights violations and abuses has proven to be key to the accountability of the action.

2. Promote community mobilization and involvement in the promotion of local support networks and the raising of the population's awareness so as to support local resilience

COOPI places the community at the heart of all interventions. The community is regarded as the beneficiary of the action but also as a driver of change to improve living conditions and increase local resilience. For this reason, COOPI organizes, in a structured way, awareness-raising campaigns, and promotes local partnerships and capacity-building activities to ensure that the community takes ownership of the programme. COOPI considers that community mobilization and involvement are essential to ensuring that, wherever possible, the population is encouraged to take charge of itself and to be the key to promoting sustainability.

Furthermore, from the programmes' outset, COOPI sets a clear strategy for mobilization to enable communities to respond appropriately to their own protection needs, to strengthen their coping mechanisms and to manage conflicts in a positive manner, especially in the future. COOPI's main approach consists of facilitating the restoration of community associations and mechanisms, in particular governance and representation associations, and women's and youth organizations so as to reinstate, to the extent possible, previous community groupings.

Good practices

This key concept is apparent in several countries where COOPI operates, specifically Ecuador, Guatemala, Kenya, Niger, the DRC, the CAR, Peru, Somalia and Chad. In particular, in the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) sector, COOPI has developed expertise in community mobilization and involvement, which, from a programme perspective, sees local actors as the drivers of a programme in which COOPI has developed in a structured and participatory way the involvement and mobilization of the local community in disaster risk reduction, where local actors are, from a programme perspective, seen as the drivers of the programme itself.

ENHANCING SOCIAL AUDITING PROCESSES IN GUATEMALA

Since 2012, as part of a DIPECHO⁸ project, COOPI has developed a social audit model in Guatemala that identifies the key actions for community mobilization through the establishment of a participatory process in which civil society actors, local authorities and government officials were involved in achieving the objectives of the programme. Through this process of involvement and mobilization, COOPI has shown that the success of its actions is related to structured capacity-building of local actors so that they become independent and autonomous by the end of the programme and so as to acknowledge the transformative role of the community in securing compliance with a human rights agenda, in self-protection and in increasing their resilience. The Guatemala experience has also created practical tools to develop community mobilization as an opportunity for the community to exercise its own rights and civic duties of political participation and to bring to the fore its abilities and opinions in the public sphere. Community mobilization has thus become an exercise in democracy, where the community identifies its needs, develops the tools to address them in collaboration with other actors and ultimately puts in place a public and transparent process of monitoring and validation to ensure participatory and democratic accountability.

3. Support, through specific measures, the participation and empowerment of the most vulnerable groups so as to transform a more equal society

Protection consists not only of humanitarian assistance but also aims to establish the foundations to bolster the active participation, the empowerment and the autonomy of the target population in the life of a country so that all citizens have equal access to services and their rights are respected. The empowerment of certain groups who have been excluded or subjected to discrimination is thus seen as a factor in democratic development that reduces human rights violations and supports the enjoyment of such rights by all strata of the population.

COOPI's approach aims to give vulnerable and indigenous groups, who are usually excluded from political participation, the knowledge and the skills to address the socio-political problems in their own country.

⁸ The acronym denotes Disaster Preparedness ECHO programme (Disaster Preparedness Programme of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection(ECHO)).

This approach is intended to give those groups the political, economic and social tools to improve their living conditions and to be acknowledged as an integral part of the population and the democratic life of a country.

Good practices:

COOPI has developed a participatory approach to support indigenous groups in various countries. The manner of implementation may vary but it is always consistent with that approach, in particular in Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru and the Central African Republic (CAR).

10 YEARS WITH THE AKA PYGMIES IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

From 2005 to 2015, COOPI has worked closely with the minority populations of CAR, specifically with the Aka Pygmies in the Prefectures of Lobaye, Sangha-Mbaéré and Mambéré-Kadéï. Five macro-indicators of success of the programme in the CAR can be identified: (i) the monitoring of human rights violations and discrimination suffered by indigenous groups; (ii) the value attached to the culture and traditions of the cultural, linguistic and religious identity of indigenous groups, for instance, by restoring the Pygmy Hall and the Documentation Room in the Boganda Museum and establishing the Cultural Centre for the Promotion of the Rights of the Aka in Mbaïki; (iii) the issuance of birth certificates to thousands of unregistered children; (iv) the improvement of access to basic services, especially education and health, for women and children from indigenous groups; (v) advocacy efforts that culminated in the ratification of International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples (No. 169). The interplay between these efforts has been welcomed by the Pygmies, who have begun to exercise their civic rights and to recognize the importance of their community. This approach has fostered awareness, greater skills and knowledge and has ultimately contributed to fostering the Aka Pygmies' participation in the country's public life.

- 4. Mainstreaming protection into humanitarian assistance programmes** so that human rights and the promotion thereof are part and parcel of each intervention, thereby laying the foundations for reconstruction and fairer and more sustainable development (mainstreaming of protection).

In line with international developments in the theoretical framework, COOPI also ensures the full participation and involvement of women, men, boys and girls so to

mainstream protection in all humanitarian assistance or development programmes. The process of mainstreaming protection principles to promote meaningful, safe and dignified access to humanitarian activities by people affected by humanitarian crises or natural disasters is a key approach in the implementation of COOPI's programmes. This applies particularly to programmes which are not directly focused on protection.

In fact, equal access to services, attention to and analysis of specific needs and the tailoring of activities to the specific needs of groups within the target population, for example, are readily apparent components of COOPI's activities and its programme design. Protection mainstreaming is a key to promoting the resilience of the individual and the community among populations affected by conflict and/or natural disaster so as to contribute to its participation in the process of recovery and development of the country.

Good practices

Ensuring the mainstreaming of the main principles of protection in each humanitarian programme is an essential aspect of each of COOPI's interventions and is apparent in its operations in various countries such as the DRC, Niger, Nigeria, the CAR, Sierra Leone and Chad.

MULTISECTORAL RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Since the outbreak of the humanitarian crisis in the CAR in 2012, COOPI has supported a multisectoral response focused on providing basic services to the population affected by the armed conflict. A system for tracing and identifying direct and indirect victims of the Lord's Resistance Army was set up at the beginning of the intervention, identifying 409 direct victims, who were given psychological support through a socio-economic reintegration process. At the same time, around 5,000 people, 45% of who were refugees or displaced people, had a direct part in food security activities undertaken as part of the intervention, while around 17,000 people participated in activities to build community awareness. The protection principles have been successfully mainstreamed into all phases of the humanitarian programme implemented by COOPI. Moreover, the needs assessment required for the programme design was based on the analysis of the specific needs of vulnerable groups, with particular emphasis on children and young people. Food security activities were implemented by applying the principles of dignity and equality in access to food distribution, taking into account the presence and characteristics of vulnerable groups so that all could benefit from the activities without discrimination. Programme monitoring also took into account data broken down by sex and age to assess the impact of the action on distinct strata of the population. Lastly, the success of the multi-sectoral programme in an emergency phase was secured by prompt mainstreaming of protection aspects and by adhering to its principles in the course of the design, implementation

and evaluation of the programme.

GLOSSARY

Abuse: The misuse of power through which the perpetrator gains control or advantage of the abused, using and causing physical or psychological harm or inciting fear of that harm. Abuse prevents persons from making free decisions and forces them to behave against their will.

(UNHCR, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Guidelines for Prevention and Response, 2003)

Accountability: The means through which power is used responsibly. It is a process of taking account of, and being held accountable by, different stakeholders, and primarily those who are affected by the exercise of power. Along with the process of writing reports or giving an account of decisions and actions, accountability comprises considering the needs, concerns, capacities and abilities of the affected parties, and explaining the meaning and the implications of actions and decisions, and their reasons. Accountability is therefore a measure of the quality of the relationship between an agent (an organ that provides a service or product) and a principal (the person or group the service or product is intended for).

(Humanitarian Accountability Partnership)

Capacity building: The process by which individuals, institutions and societies develop and strengthen, individually and collectively, their ability to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives.

Child: Every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

(UN, Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, art. 1)

Child associated with an armed force or armed group: Any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities. Child soldiers are also called combatant children.

(UNICEF, The Paris principles: Principles and guidelines on children associated with armed forces or armed groups, February 2007)

Community-based approach: Way of working that is based on an inclusive partnership with communities of persons of concern that recognizes their

resilience, capacities and resources. It mobilizes and builds on these to deliver protection, assistance and solutions while supporting community processes and goals.

(UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls, 2008)

Empowerment: A process or phenomenon that allows people to take greater control over the decisions, activities, policies, processes and institutions that affect their lives.

(UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls, 2008)

Demobilization: The formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of demobilization encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized, which is called reinsertion.

(UN Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Centre)

Disarmament: The collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons from combatants and often from the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

(UN Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Centre)

Gender-based violence: A generic term describing any harmful act perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed (gender) differences between males and females.

(IASC, Guidelines for gender-based violence interventions in humanitarian emergencies: focusing on prevention and response to sexual violence, 2005, Geneva)

Humanitarian assistance: Aid that seeks to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis-affected population. Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality, as stated in United Nations General Assembly Resolution 46/182 (19 December 1991). In addition, the international community seeks to provide humanitarian assistance with full respect for the sovereignty of States.

(OCHA, Glossary of Humanitarian Terms in relation to the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, 2003)

Human rights: A body of international norms that recognize and protect the inherent dignity of all people and their inalienable rights without distinction of any kind such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, wealth, birth or other status. These standards may form

part of customary international law and/or be set out in a number of legal instruments at national, regional and international level.

(Adapted from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Art.2)

Indigenous peoples: Indigenous peoples generally have a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories. This continuity may be in the form of occupation of ancestral lands (at least in part), ancestry, language and/or cultural manifestations. These historical links are sometimes reflected in the term “first peoples”. As with minorities, indigenous communities tend to be non-dominant compared to the majority. Indigenous peoples enjoy particular rights, including the right to practice customary law and the right to protect traditional knowledge, intellectual property and cultural heritage.

(UNHCR, Working with National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and Indigenous Peoples in Forced Displacement, 2011)

Mental health and psychosocial support: ~~The composite expression “mental health and psychosocial support” describes~~ any type of internal or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and/or prevent or treat mental disorder. Although the terms *mental health* and *psychosocial support* are closely related and overlap, for many aid workers they reflect different, yet complementary, approaches. Aid agencies outside the health sector tend to speak of supporting psychosocial well-being. Health sector agencies tend to speak of mental health, yet historically have also used the terms psychosocial rehabilitation and psychosocial treatment to describe non-biological interventions for people with mental disorders.

(IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings, 2007)

Minority: An ethnic, religious or linguistic group, fewer in number than the rest of the population, whose members share a common identity. Minorities are usually non-dominant in comparison with majorities in the economic and political spheres of their countries. Members of minorities also share ethnic, religious, linguistic or cultural characteristics that differentiate them from majorities, and they generally seek to maintain these distinguishing identities. At the same time, the characteristics defining minorities may vary from one context to another, for example as regards whether a group’s minority identity is primarily ethnic, religious or both.

(UNHCR, Working with National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities and Indigenous Peoples in Forced Displacement, 2011)

Multi-sectoral approach: A framework for developing and implementing a plan to respond to the causes and consequences of a particular problem by comprehensively involving all sectors who have influence over that problem.

(UNHCR Handbook for the Protection of Women and Girls, 2008)

Protection: ~~Concept of protection which~~ 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 (i.e. human rights law, international humanitarian law, refugee law). Protection encompasses creating an environment conducive to full respect for the rights of individuals, preventing and/or alleviating the immediate effects of an established pattern of abuse and restoring dignified living conditions through rehabilitation, restitution and reparation.

(IASC, 1999)

Separated children: Children separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary care-giver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members.

(International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, 2004)

Unaccompanied children: Children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.

(International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, 2004)

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COOPI reference documents

Policies currently available:

- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Childhood and adolescence
- Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction
- Food Security
- Gender

Other reference documents:

COOPI's Standard Operating Procedures on protection

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