



Recommendations for Protection Mainstreaming in Livelihood Programming

This note aims to provide a protection-oriented approach to ensure that Livelihoods' partners from the Livelihood Sector ensure safety and dignity throughout their response including principles of “do no harm”, meaningful access, participation, and accountability within the refugee Rohingya community. This document is based on the protection mainstreaming tip sheet for Food Security and Livelihood programs developed by the Global Protection Cluster¹ and it updates the Food Security & Livelihoods Programs Tips for Protection Mainstreaming developed by the Sector in February 2022². The following tips are not meant to be exhaustive but present examples of important actions to be taken as to ensure the integration of protection principles in Livelihood activities in the context of the Rohingya Refugee Response.

Although each tip should be considered throughout the implementation, some key actions are especially important in the assessment, design, and monitoring stages. Some activities can be sensitive by nature or may need to be referred to either protection focal points at the camp level or to the Protection Sector in Cox's Bazar for guidance or intervention.

The tips have been adapted to the context of the refugee response in Bangladesh to maximize the positive impacts of livelihood programs on people's safety and dignity, and to support affected populations access to and enjoyment of their rights. The tip sheet was developed by Protection Sector, the Child Protection Sub-Sector and GBV Sub Sector.

Prioritize safety & dignity, and avoid doing harm

- Work in close coordination with protection actors, such as camp Protection/Child Protection/GBV Focal Points and Protection Emergency Response Units (PERU) to put in place measures to prevent and respond to any form of violence that may arise during training and livelihoods activities. Livelihood focal points should be aware of the camps' existing mechanisms for prompt referrals to the protection focal points including Child Protection and GBV.
- Apply effective data protection measures: keep lists of female and male beneficiaries and personal data confidential and safe from unintended use, at any time.
- Beneficiaries may be exposed to sexual assault, theft, intimidation, extortion, while moving to trainings and livelihood activities in the camp. The environment through which beneficiaries must travel must be safe and accessible. If there are specific locations identified as having safety concerns, inform Camp-in-Charge (CiC), Site Management, or Protection Focal Points in the camps as appropriate. Confidentiality in reporting is of utmost importance. Camp authorities and other actors should only be informed on a need-to-know basis.

¹ Available at: https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/sites/default/files/2022-10/protection_mainstreaming_tip_sheet_-_fsl_programs.pdf

² Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/food-security-livelihoods-programs-tips-protection-mainstreaming-edited-february>



- Make sure people feel safe to move to locations and back to their shelters and allow them to suggest the time and means that they feel better with (daylight hours gives refugees enough time to travel home before nightfall).
- Identify high-risk practices and activities, collect information to better understand the local security environment, including recent history of looting/stealing, access to livestock services/markets.
- Identify possible groups at risk of unsafe livelihood practices (e.g., child labour) and prioritize the provision of alternatives for these groups (pregnant and lactating women).
- Develop livelihoods activities in a way that protect and support household caring responsibilities between household members and promotes family unity. Participation in livelihood opportunities should not undermine child protection or other caring responsibilities. Consider supporting community care mechanisms to enable women's participation in livelihoods activities.
- When planning for livelihoods interventions, be aware of, and adhere to, the applicable labor laws and codes and the economic implications of the activities and livelihood programs. A comprehensive context-specific analysis, including cost efficiency, secondary market impacts, and risks of insecurity (extortion), exploitation and corruption, should inform the choice of program. Monitoring should be regularly conducted to respond to potential exploitative practices or abuse of power by employers in livelihood projects.
- Do not engage children under the age of 18, in livelihoods interventions.
- Consider whether conditional and unconditional cash can be used for intended purposes, e.g. purchase of or exchange for small arms or alcohol, tobacco or drugs. In this case, the risk of abuse can increase violence (including intimate partner violence IPV). Special attention should be given to resource allocation in situations of polygamy or divorce. Assessments (with protection questions), focus group discussions and complaint mechanisms are useful tools to prevent and respond to this.
- Monitor if distributions are creating tension between the refugee and host communities, undermining peaceful coexistence between the communities. When challenges arise, reach out to Camp-In-Charge to support mitigation jointly with local officials. Consult both displaced and host communities about food security and livelihoods needs.
- Livelihoods and Skills Development interventions or other interventions should not harm the local labour market. Livelihoods intervention for marginalized groups should consider the impact on the relationships within and beyond communities, as activities may exacerbate tension or build cohesion amongst certain groups against others.

Meaningful Access

- Collect disaggregated data by age, gender, disability, and location to assess and monitor access to livelihood programs. This data may help identify whether there is discrimination -if any- when implementing trainings and/or livelihoods and/or if a particular profile or group is left aside from the possibility of the skills/livelihood programs.
- Identify and prioritize people with specific needs in the community and prevent discrimination or exclusion of marginalized groups (refer to existing registration data or reach out to Protection/CP/GBV focal points and Age and Disability Focal Points in the camps). [see above]
- When delivering training and/or livelihood activities, ensure that location, distance and access routes to the distribution points are accessible to all members of the community, including people with disabilities.



- Ensure that lack of or incomplete documentation doesn't exclude individuals from accessing trainings and livelihood activities and refer them to obtain the correct documentation. If there are issues, reach out to protection focal points and UNHCR's Registration Unit.
- If a protection issue is identified during an activity or training, reach out to protection focal points or child protection focal points as needed.
- If access remains an issue, ensure that special arrangements are made to ensure that those who cannot access trainings and livelihood activities are involved. It should not be assumed that friends or family will do it. Coordinate with specialized protection actors, e.g. Age and Disability Working focal points, community groups, youth groups, protection focal points and Protection Emergency Response Units (PERU), to identify individuals with limited mobility and include them in the available and suitable activities.
- Activities must not discriminate (or be perceived as doing so) against any group despite social gender-norms. Consider whether women and men may have different barriers to access some of the trainings. Activities should promote and help protect the rights of people who have historically been marginalized or discriminated against.
- Ensure that both men and women have equal and fair access to opportunities, including skills training, and that they receive the same benefits for their input and work. Ensure that marginalized and disenfranchised groups have equal and fair access to livelihood/agricultural assets (e.g. land, tools, seeds, fertilizers for homestead gardening and livestock). Offer livelihood opportunities that are suitable for persons with disabilities and older persons – these groups are often excluded from such projects and find it difficult to source funds or other inputs.
- Ensure clear and open communication. Inform refugees about the process, the entitlements, and the criteria applied to the trainings and activities in an appropriate way. Ensure that beneficiaries know how to get involved, where and when the trainings take place, what they will get, how long it will last, and why it is being done.
- Communicate information regarding the activities and availability of trainings through various means to reach the broader community and to account for: different literacy levels (e.g. door-to-door, poster, radio, social media, use of pictograms); age differences (elderly persons or unaccompanied children), and specific needs (e.g. functional limitations related to vision, hearing, mobility, cognition, self-care, medical and psychological conditions).
- Ensure livelihoods programs do not disrupt wider education and learning, and that child labour is not exacerbated by livelihoods activities. Designing programme should follow age and gender diversity.
- Livelihood activities and trainings of boys and girls (if applicable) is not the same so their diversity should take under consideration when planning to access to the services for them.

Participation & Empowerment

- Engage male and female community and committee representative to play an active role in identifying solutions and in the decision-making processes that affect them, to promote a sense of ownership, build their self-esteem and improve the relevance and sustainability of the response.



- Go beyond community leaders as to reach and consult vulnerable community members and other existing committees to collect accurate information about their specific preferences and skills for livelihood services, in the most age and gender appropriate way.
- Be sure to include persons with functional limitations related to vision, hearing, and mobility, among other participants.
- When selecting training and livelihood staff make sure that all groups within the community (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity, socio-economic group, disability) are represented. All staff and committee members should receive protection mainstreaming training. In fact, they are on the frontline and can play a key role in identifying issues related to exclusion and discrimination and be proactive in ensuring the voice of marginalized groups is represented.
- Reinforce the capacity of the community and encourage collective livelihood projects over those that benefit individuals. Collaborative practices contribute to community protection and resilience.

Accountability

- Clearly communicate the purpose of the trainings and manage expectation from refugees concerning selection criteria for trainings and livelihood activities. Livelihood actors need to be transparent in their objectives with communities and with the local authorities (including CiCs and other relevant actors).
- Provide communities with accessible, efficient and confidential complaint and feedback mechanisms to improve programming, understand community perceptions, promoting beneficiary empowerment and assist in the early detection of misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse, food diversion and fraud.
- A complaint and feedback mechanism should: a) include a standard complaints form, though all complaints should be reviewed regardless of format; b) give persons submitting a complaint the opportunity to identify themselves while respecting their anonymity should they fear retaliation; c) include provisions to submit complaints through a person other than the one against whom the complaint is made; and d) incorporate appropriate procedures for effective follow-up and response.
- The complaints mechanism should be staffed by both men and women, and it should be accessible for children and persons with specific needs. Privacy and confidentiality should be ensured throughout the process.
- Respond to complaints in a reasonable time. Provide feedback even if no corrective measures can or need to be put in place.
- Organize awareness-raising sessions, targeting the community with different tools (specific to their different needs), so that people know how it works.
- Consider a joint feedback mechanism with other sectors to minimize confusion, promote strong referrals and dignified holistic services for people in need.
- Receive feedback from children as part of accountability to them, maintaining separate complain/suggestion box and provide child friendly information and avenues for reporting for the children in your facility will encourage them to express their opinion about any of the services for them. Feedback and complaint mechanism ensure that humanitarian actors respond appropriately. Children must be able to provide feedback or say complaints in a safe, dignified, child-friendly and confidential manner and we should receive appropriate response when they deserve.
- Ensure implementing partners and volunteers working with refugees understand, sign and adhere to a code of conduct stating their commitment to respect and foster humanitarian standards and the rights of beneficiaries, including child safeguarding. Ensure measures in



case of violation and fight impunity. Similarly, for PSEA network to ensure that mechanisms are in place from Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and that they are, regularly updated and are functioning effectively.

- Continue to strengthen coordination with the PSEA network in addressing sexual exploitation and abuse. Respond to all complaints, regardless of whether corrective measures can or need to be put in place following existing principles and procedures recommended by the PSEA network. Ensure that signs are available at distribution sites saying all services are free of charge. Ensure mechanisms are in place to mitigate and report PSEA. In partnership with PSEA network, identify dedicated focal points and raise awareness about PSEA. Provide clear information that beneficiaries do not have to provide services or favors in exchange for receiving services or accessing facilities.
- Inform child protection focal points immediately if you hear of or observe any protection concerns for children or come across any vulnerable/at risk/abused children. If you identify any children that you think might be extremely vulnerable, for example, child headed households, separated and unaccompanied children or disabled children, please pass concerns onto the child protection focal point.

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