



## Protection

Young people in humanitarian settings are subject to a host of protection risks, often different from those faced by younger children or adults aged 25 and over. Urban refugee and displaced young people often reside in the least safe neighbourhoods, where crime is high and police may routinely harass, beat and detain them. In conflict zones there may be mines and explosive remnants of war. Young people may become associated with armed forces or armed groups. Often their only livelihood options are in the informal economy, where risks of crime and violence can be high. For crisis-affected adolescent girls especially, the threat of GBV looms large in everyday life. Young people, particularly girls, are often sexually exploited or abused by those with the responsibility to protect them, including humanitarian staff, school staff, law enforcement and military personnel.

Young people are increasingly playing key roles in ensuring their own protection in humanitarian response. Community-based and women-led approaches to protection are engaging women and girls in identifying

protection needs (e.g., patrol groups established in camps, in coordination with camp committees), mapping available services, establishing referral pathways, providing basic psychosocial support, and addressing social norms that can lead to safety risks and increased need for protection.

There may be risks involved in young people's participation in protection activities, especially where it increases the visibility of organized youth groups, or where they start looking into power dynamics and root causes of conflict. This has the potential to bring them into conflict with local authorities. A risk assessment tool to support safe participation is included as [ANNEX 1](#).

The following tip sheet is applicable to Protection programming overall, but the Protection cluster/working group also encompasses Child Protection, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Housing, Land, Property (HLP), and Mine Action (see [BOX 2](#)), and separate tip sheets are presented for each of those Areas of Responsibility below.



## Tip sheet

### Key actions for Protection programming at each stage of the humanitarian programme cycle (HPC)

HPC phases	What to do	Tips for young people's participation
<b>Needs assessment and analysis</b>  <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Collect data on needs, priorities and capabilities to understand differing protection needs of young people before and after the crisis, and analyse these data disaggregated by sex, age and disability.</li> <li>→ Map mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) and Protection services prior to consultations in case any referrals need to be made.</li> <li>→ Collect data on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ age of consent within the country</li> <li>→ legal age of marriage</li> <li>→ legal minimum age of employment</li> <li>→ age of criminal responsibility.</li> </ul> </li> <li>→ Analyse data to understand if young people have specific needs with regard to civil documentation or school-related papers: birth certificates, national identity documents, school records, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Hold consultations – grouped by sex and age of participants – with a diverse cross-section of young people to identify needs and challenges related to Protection.</li> <li>→ Ensure that consultations do no harm and are managed by actors with expertise in engaging and supporting adolescents and youth.</li> <li>→ Ensure young people are consulted to provide their perspectives on the definition of protection and identifying protection risks and solutions.</li> <li>→ Use the participation risk assessment (<b>ANNEX 1 ►</b>) and analyse the potential risks for young people to participate in Protection programming.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic planning</b>  <b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Ensure that the Protection response plan addresses the needs of adolescents and youth identified during the needs assessment, and from other relevant data on young people.</li> <li>→ Identify established Protection coordination mechanisms, if they exist, as part of the response planning.</li> <li>→ Consider if or how young people and their organizations could be part of any existing Protection coordination bodies.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Without doing harm, engage adolescents and youth in a process to understand the dynamics and root causes of the conflicts in their context (see also <b>SUSTAINING PEACE ►</b>).</li> </ul>

HPC phases	What to do	Tips for young people's participation
<p><b>Resource mobilization</b></p> <div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 10px auto;">3</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Develop information and key messages on adolescents and youth, such as from assessment reports, to influence Protection funding priorities.</li> <li>→ Report on gaps in funding for adolescents and youth in Protection to donors and other humanitarian stakeholders.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Work with young people to develop advocacy messages for Protection funding.</li> <li>→ Seek young people's views and feedback, especially on how their needs are being addressed in Protection programming, when developing proposals and reports for donors and partners.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementation and monitoring</b></p> <div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 10px auto;">4</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Implement Protection programming that targets the needs of young people and draws on their capabilities.</li> <li>→ Analyse if Protection services take into account the needs of young people, with particular attention to vulnerable groups (see <b>BOX 6 ► Vulnerable categories of crisis-affected young people</b>).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ If Protection capacity exists within the team, build the capacity of older youths to register, manage and refer relevant cases, in volunteer or paid roles, as context allows.</li> <li>→ Engage with older adults (caregivers, community leaders) in order for young people to safely engage in humanitarian response.</li> <li>→ Ensure young people – especially adolescent girls and young women – are integrated into community-based Protection committees or other activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Operational peer review and evaluation</b></p> <div style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 10px auto;">5</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Review projects in the Protection response plan to assess to what extent adolescents and youth were effectively reached through humanitarian programming.</li> <li>→ Document and share good practices on addressing the needs of young people in Protection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Engage young people in policy review and advocacy processes, without causing them any harm, and maintaining their confidentiality should they choose.</li> </ul>