

GUIDANCE NOTE 6

Protection Mainstreaming

Protection mainstreaming seeks to incorporate the key protection principles for all sectors throughout the programme cycle starting with assessment, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Often, protection mainstreaming does not change what is delivered, but provides clarity to why it is delivered and how.

Bringing a ‘protection lense’ to the sectoral activities would require the following at minimum:

Improving Access to Assistance and Services without Discrimination: The sector coordinators should highlight how activities, aimed at expanding access to services and assistance to women, men, girls and boys without discrimination while paying particular attention those with specific needs including elderly and disabled refugees; unaccompanied and separated boys and girls; and households headed by women, girls and boys. Programming should highlight activities that ensure equitable access despite identified challenges and/or barriers. It is recommended that sectors consult the IASC Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action to explore the scope of actions that will meaningfully engage women, girls, boys and men.

Delivering Protection and Assistance in Safety and with Dignity: Sector coordinators should ensure that activities in their design (and subsequent implementation) aim at reducing and mitigating protection risks including the risk of SGBV to women, men, girls and boys and promoting an environment where protection and assistance are delivered in safety and with dignity. This includes paying attention to the identified dynamics within households and in public spaces. It is recommended that the programming adheres to the IASC Guidelines for GBV Interventions in Humanitarian Settings.

Engaging Refugees and Communities for their Own Protection: Sector response plans and programmes should harness the capacity of women, men, girls and boys to contribute to the protection of their communities and their own protection. Community-based protection mechanisms and safety nets that engage women and men, girls and boys intended to benefit from the support are stronger and more likely to be transformative. Two-way communication with persons, in particular with those in urban/rural areas, who might be excluded from decision-making processes, should be encouraged and strengthened as needed. Participation of refugees and communities in the development of sector response plans and activities throughout the programme cycle is encouraged.

Adhering to the Principle of “Do No Harm”: Sector response plans and planned activities need to be based on an assessment of impact and understanding of gender dynamics, so that any unintended negative effects that may increase the vulnerabilities of women, men, girls and boys to protection risks as much as possible are prevented or minimized. Monitoring of the impact on supported women, girls, boys and men should be sufficient to uncover unintended consequences.