



Turkey Protection Sector Working Group Terms of reference

December
2016

Background

Turkey hosts the world's largest number of refugees and asylum seekers. The Government of Turkey (GoT) is primary responsible for the protection of refugees, including their access to services, and is the overall coordinator of the refugee response.

Thus, in cooperation with GoT, UNHCR and partners have established an inter-agency refugee response coordination structure in Turkey as part of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan in Response to the Syrian Crisis (3RP) which draws upon the expertise of UN agencies in providing leadership to sectoral working groups. The national Protection Working Group (PWG) based in Ankara was formed in December 2014 in light of these developments as a central element of the refugee protection response in Turkey.

Definition and scope of intervention

Protection encompasses "all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the relevant bodies of law, including international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law".

The PWG focuses on setting overall strategic direction; setting minimum standards and guidelines in line with the national legal framework; conducting advocacy with the authorities and other key stakeholders; capacity building and training initiatives; taking the lead in resource mobilization and communication with donors.

The primary purpose of the PWG is to strengthen and coordinate the protection needs of Syrians and other persons of concern in Turkey. To meet this purpose, the needs of host communities will also be taken into consideration.

Key priorities for 2016

- Strengthening national capacity to ensure sustainability and national ownership of protection interventions,
- Expansion of outreach mechanisms to strengthen community mobilization and improve the delivery of assistance and services to refugees.
- Strengthening of community-based protection coordination and referral mechanisms.

Guiding principles and approaches

The Protection Working Group shall be guided by following principles: ¹

Impartiality: Activities must be carried out through making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation, class or political opinions

Participatory approach: Different protection needs of women, girls, men and boys will be taken into consideration based on age, gender and diversity approach.

Neutrality: Humanitarian actors must not take sides in hostilities or engage in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

¹ Humanitarian Principles, OCHA, https://docs.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf



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Independence: Activities must be autonomous from the political, economic, military or other objectives that any actor may hold with regard to areas where humanitarian action is being implemented

Respect: Actions and responses of all actors will be guided by respect for the choices, wishes, rights and the dignity of the persons of concern.

Confidentiality: All information regarding persons of concern with protection risks shall be kept confidential. No identifying information on specific cases discussed during Working Group will be revealed in public sources.

The activities of members of the PWG shall be guided by the protection principles, namely:

- Do no harm principles through avoiding exposing people to further harm as a result of your actions
- Access to assistance through ensuring people's access to assistance – in proportion to need and without discrimination
- Physical and psychological protection to persons of concern against violence and coercion
- Rights-based approach through assisting persons of concern to claim their rights, access available remedies and recover from the effects of abuse.

Activities and tasks

Within this framework, the PWG tasks will include:

1. Improving coordination and information sharing to inform humanitarian response and strategic decision making:
 - a. Ensure information sharing among members of PWG;
 - b. Ensure service delivery is coordinated among Protection actors as reflected in the 3RP and other strategic planning documents;
 - c. Maintain sector information including by regularly updating 4W, dashboards and other tools (ActivityInfo);
 - d. Identify and analyze trends and emerging issues in coordination with other sectors;
 - e. Identify and analyse gaps (across and within sectors) as well as find coordinated solutions while avoiding duplication of efforts
 - f. Develop a national PWG strategy and work plan to address protection priorities at the national level. The work plan will include a set of prioritized activities and outputs and specific timeframes and responsible and collaborating organizations.
2. Tools development and standard setting:



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- a. Develop contextualized protection guidelines on key issues and based on request from field-based Protection working groups to ensure a more systematic approach accordance with national and international standards;
 - b. Develop and/or strengthen protection referral pathways and case management and ensure their effectiveness through regular updates
3. Advocacy:
- a. Strengthen protection advocacy at the national level by developing interagency advocacy initiatives targeting relevant stakeholders based on identified priorities;
 - b. Support and complement advocacy conducted by field-based Protection Working Groups
4. Capacity building:
- a. Organize interagency training opportunities for protection stakeholders including national institutions, UN agencies, International and national NGOs as appropriate, and use the coordination platform to share tools and other initiatives to develop further the capacity of actors involved in the protection response.

Membership and Structure

UNHCR shall act as Lead of the PWG. The PWG will meet monthly.

Ad-hoc meetings are scheduled upon consultation with the members of the Working Group, when this is considered necessary to address an urgent issue. The establishment, process and outcomes of a technical task force to work on specific protection issues will be communicated to all members and agreed upon in a transparent manner. The task forces report to the national PWG.

Membership of the PWG is open to UN and NGOs engaged in protection activities in Turkey. There shall be no limit to the number of members of the PWG but, for logistical purposes, the number of representatives of each agency present at PWG meetings may be limited by the Lead.

Role and responsibilities within the PWG

CHAIR

The group is chaired by an Inter-agency Protection Coordinator from UNHCR. The Chair acts as a neutral representative of the PWG as a whole, rather than as representative of his/her particular agency. In addition, the Chair:

- Prepares and facilitates meetings of the PWG, including the identification of its members;
- Drafts and timely shares the minutes of PWG meeting and follow up on action points;
- Ensures open and ongoing information sharing among PWG members and represent the group within other interagency platforms including Inter-Sectoral Coordination forum, and other working groups as appropriate;



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- Coordinates the input from the PWG to the 3RP;
- Ensures that all PWG's plans and decisions are developed/taken through a consultative process with the members of the working group;
- Ensures that deliberations, suggestions of the PWG are conveyed to relevant Government authorities in order to promote the full realization of the refugee rights.

ALL MEMBERS

All Protection Working Group members have a shared mutual responsibility to meet the humanitarian protection needs of affected people in a timely manner. The minimum expectations of PWG members are:

- Commitment to humanitarian principles and protection minimum standards, including the Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse;
- Commitment to mainstream protection in programme delivery;
- Readiness to participate in actions that specifically improve accountability to affected people, in line with the IASC Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations;
- Active participation in the working group and a commitment to consistently engage in the working group's collective work;
- Capacity and willingness to contribute to the working group's response plan and activities, which includes inter-sector coordination;
- Commitment to mainstream key programmatic cross-cutting issues (including age and gender);
- Commitment to provide a relevant staff member to consistently participate in the working group and contribute to fulfilling its mission;
- Commitment to work cooperatively with other working group partners to ensure an optimal and strategic use of available resources, and share information on organizational resources;
- Willingness to take on leadership responsibilities in the working group as needed, subject to capacity and mandate;
- Undertake advocacy, and disseminate advocacy messages to affected communities, the host Government, donors, the Syria Task Force, the media and other audiences; and
- Where needed, support the working group to provide interpretation so that all working group partners are able to participate, including local organizations (and national and local authorities where appropriate).

TASK FORCES

Task forces are small, task oriented and time limited. They are created on a needs-basis, for example to complete a task identified by the PWG, and should dissolve once they have completed their task. Task forces are coordinated by a focal point and are composed of relevant technical experts who volunteer their time to support completion of the task on behalf of the PWG. All task force products are submitted to the PWG for review and final endorsement.

Linkages with the field and other sub working groups

The PWG works closely with the GBV and Child Protection sub working groups established at national level.



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Turkey

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The PWG supports the work of field-based Protection working groups established in South east Turkey, Izmir and Istanbul.

Linkage between the national and sub-national level groups will be ensured through:

- Regular weekly communication between the national and sub-national PWG chairs;
- Mutual provision of updates for monthly PWG meetings; and
- Well documented PWG meeting minutes, including action points and decisions taken

Application and Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference govern the meetings, activities and publications by or on behalf of the PWG or any related activities and can be amended by suggestion and endorsement of the chair/lead.