In the Nepal earthquake response, CRS advocated with the Protection Cluster to carry out a mapping exercise and share the results of available services in relation to protection issues beyond our expertise, such as unaccompanied children or gender-based violence. Photo by Jake Lyell for CRS

Protection Risk Analysis

Step-by-Step How-To Guide for Country Program and Partner Project Teams

OVERVIEW

Why conduct a Protection Risk Analysis?

The purpose of conducting a Protection Risk Analysis is to understand the existing risks that can result from certain threats and vulnerabilities in areas where CRS is implementing projects, and to develop measures that can help to mitigate those risks. Specifically, it is important to examine how threats of violence, coercion or exploitation, deliberate deprivation and/or discrimination can affect people's access to their rights, as well as their safety and dignity.

A protection risk analysis allows CRS and partner project teams to:

1) Gather data on existing protection risks;

2) Identify the most significant risks and vulnerabilities;

3) Assess the potential interaction with the project (both how risks may impact the project, and how the project may exacerbate risks);

4) Plan mitigation measures for each risk that interacts with the project.

Before conducting a Protection Risk Analysis, it is important to consider the level of staff understanding on protection, and what constitutes protection risk. An orientation can be helpful, for which the following resources are recommended:

- CRS' Protection Mainstreaming Briefing Note, which provides guidance on CRS' protection mainstreaming approach, as well as the difference between 'stand-alone' protection programming and protection mainstreaming.
- Short Protection Mainstreaming animation—available here-(or subtitled versions in Spanish, French, or Arabic), which can serve as an introduction to the workshop or Protection Risk Analysis process.

Who can I contact about support or resources?

Please contact the HRD Protection team at: amy.anderson@crs.org and/or emergencies@crs.org. The team can provide you with additional resources, recommendations, and guidance on the adaptation of materials for your country program's context and staff/ partner experience.

Who should be involved?

It is recommended that the analysis process involve the country program or partner project manager(s), technical advisors, animators / field officers, and security officers and drivers, who are often knowledgeable about safety risks in our areas of operation.

Ideally, the process can be led by a program manager or technical advisor who has: experience in protection and/or gender mainstreaming, the ability to analyze broader contextual dynamics of social inclusion and equity, an understanding of safeguarding, and the skills to facilitate participatory processes.

When should I conduct a protection risk analysis?

Prior to the design of a project, a Protection Risk Analysis can first be conducted at the country level to establish a general understanding of the context and protection risks. Once the location has been identified for the project activities, a Protection Risk Analysis should take place related to the targeted geographic area, and the project team should develop risk mitigation measures for that location and population. Ideally, the Protection Risk Analysis is conducted during design phase so that it can inform the proposed interventions; however, it can be conducted at any point in the project cycle, and updated throughout the project given any changes in context.

How much time does it take?

A Protection Risk Analysis begins with an initial desk review, which takes an average of 3-4 hours. The desk review is followed by an analysis, which is most useful when conducted as a participatory session during a design workshop, which can take 2-4 hours depending on the size and scope of the project (potentially longer if the analysis is country-level). However, if time is limited, a meeting with a few key staff can fulfill this purpose. As noted above, it can be helpful to plan additional time to orient staff on protection mainstreaming, depending on the level of staff capacity and familiarity with the topic.

What materials/resources do I need?

- Sticky notes
- Markers / pens
- Flip chart paper
- Tape
- A note taker with laptop and
- Protection Risk Analysis Summary and Action Plan (Annex 1) document open

*If you are conducting a country-level analysis, it is important to establish an understanding of the dynamics of marginalization, exclusion, and social fault lines as they relate to protection risks, as well as to connectors and sources of social resilience. The **Guidance for Conflict-Sensitive Emergency Assessments** is a resource that can help country project teams take into account diverse conflict dynamics in the targeted areas of programming.*

STEPS TO CONDUCTING A PROTECTION RISK ANALYSIS

Step 1: Desk review (individual)

- In advance of the workshop, a staff member—usually a technical advisor or program manager—compiles the available data on protection risks. This data may be drawn from secondary sources[1] when available, or recently conducted internal assessments on issues such as gender, sectoral needs, and rapid conflict scans, which can include data on protection risks/threats. Key informants—such as protection cluster leads and relevant government ministries, among others—can also direct CRS teams to available reports or resources with important data.
- S/he then organizes/categorizes the most significant risks into a Bubbles Analysis document (see Annex 2 for an example). This document need not be exhaustive and is intended as a starting point to inform the participatory analysis process.
- Note that in the immediate phases of a rapid-onset emergency response, the Bubbles Analysis may be used as a hand-out to brief field staff on the key protection issues, and to raise awareness of the environmental context in which they are working.

Recommendation:

While it is important to seek input from communities on what they perceive as key risks, staff should first seek information from secondary sources, and be cautious about asking sensitive protection questions unless they are trained to do so, or unless they are supported by a gender, protection, or Gender-based Violence (GBV) specialist. This is because, in areas where a community identifies protection risks but no services exist to respond to them--or where agencies do not have the skills, systems and protocols to provide them—we risk doing harm. The Global Protection Cluster advises:

1. Refraining from asking questions about individual incidents or trying to 'investigate' protection issues;
2. Not asking specific questions about GBV; and
3. Ensuring that staff involved in an assessment know how to appropriately refer any protection issues that come up in the assessment.

1 Potential sources might include: http://www.humanitarianresponse.info/home; http://www.hrw.org/; http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c4b2.html; http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/; http://www.internal-displacement.org/.

Step 2: Identifying risks (small group work)

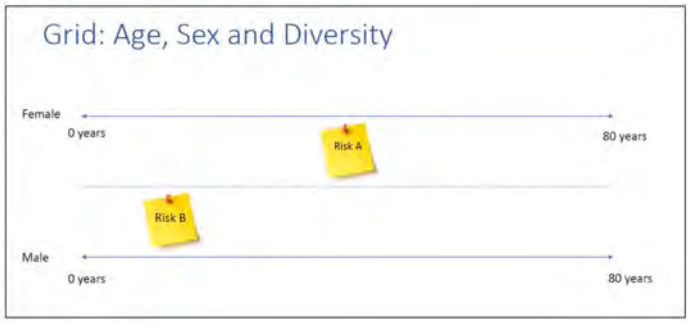
- Divide the participants into groups of three to five people.
- Provide the groups with copies of the Bubbles Analysis developed from the desk review in Step 1 above. Each group should review the analysis and circle or write in the risks they believe are most relevant to the project's context, and eliminate those that are not. *Optional*: Each group can also review the Common Protection Risks document (Annex 3) for consideration of additional risks.
- Alternatively, the groups with staff who have less field experience receive the Bubbles Analysis /desk review, and the groups with staff who have more field experience are asked to generate ideas on the most important risks (using only the list of Common Protection Risks as a prompt).

Step 3: Prioritizing risks (small group work)

- Once groups have listed the protection risks, ask them to evaluate each risk by priority level (low, medium, or high), based on the likelihood of it happening and the severity of impact if it does[2].
- Write one risk per sticky note (these will be used again in the next step), noting the level of risk on each (or use different color sticky notes for different levels of risk).

Step 4: Prioritizing risks (plenary)

- Draw the grid below on a piece of flip chart.



- In plenary, ask each group to read the risks they have prioritized as high or medium, and place their sticky notes beside the flip chart. Group together those that are the same.

In Sulawesi, Indonesia, after a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami in September 2018, CRS staff meet with displaced families to talk about their priority needs and concerns. Photo by Putu Sayoga/Redux.

Step 5: Analyzing age, sex[3], and diversity (plenary)

Ask for each sticky note:

- Is this risk more relevant to males, females or both? Why?
- If relevant to both males and females, place the sticky note at the center of the grid.
- Is this risk more relevant to children, working adults or older people[4]? Why?
- Place the sticky note on the age line accordingly.
- Is this risk more relevant to certain diversity factors (examples might include disability[5], nationality, ethnic group / tribe, etc.)?

Write any relevant factors on the sticky note. Ensure the note-taker is capturing this information and discussion in the Protection Risk Summary and Action Plan matrix (Annex 1).

"We have an ethical responsibility to mainstream protection across all humanitarian sectors, as our work always has implications beyond meeting basic needs. Interventions can safeguard wellbeing and dignity but they can also put people at increased risk. It is therefore a shared responsibility of all humanitarian actors to be aware of the potential harm activities can cause and to take steps to prevent this."

- Protection Mainstreaming Briefing Note

2 To help people understand some factors which might increase the likelihood of risk, you can share a few examples or brainstorm in plenary first. For example, a program which will have to hire a large number of field staff quickly who may not come with an understanding of humanitarian principles or appropriate conduct; or a program which works with children in an unsupervised setting may increase risk of sexual exploitation and abuse by staff. Certain sectors may lead teams to consider certain categories of risk with more weight – for example, an infrastructure-heavy program might prompt teams to look at physical safety risks more carefully; or an education program might warrant a deeper consideration of child protection risks.

3 In this document, the word 'sex' is used to refer to both sex and gender.

4 The Humanitarian Inclusion Standards note that "older people are a fast-growing proportion of the population in most countries, but are often neglected in humanitarian action. In many countries and cultures, being considered old is not necessarily a matter of age, but is linked to circumstances, such as being a grandparent or showing physical signs of ageing, such as white hair. While many sources use the age of 60 and above as a definition of old age, 50 years and over may be more appropriate in many of the contexts where humanitarian crises occur" (254).

5 According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), people with disabilities include "those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (Article 1)." For more information, please reference the Washington Group Short Set of Disability questions: http://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/washington-group-question-sets/short-set-of-disability-questions/

Step 6: Analyzing interaction with the program (plenary)

For each risk, ask the following questions:

- Could project implementation increase this risk in any way? If so, how? (Be sure to capture the "how" in the Protection Risk Summary and Action Plan matrix).
- If 'yes', mark a STAR on the sticky note.
- Could project implementation be affected by this protection risk in any way? If so, how?
- If 'yes', mark a TRIANGLE on the sticky note.

Step 7: Developing mitigation measures (small group work)

- Divide participants into groups of 3-4 people.
- Collect all sticky notes that have a star and/or a triangle. Write down all these risks on a flipchart.
- Divide the risks evenly among the groups. Ask them to develop a mitigation method for each risk, considering ways to (1) decrease the threat; (2) decrease vulnerabilities; and/or (3) strengthen capacities. The sector-specific checklists at the lower half of this Protection Mainstreaming landing page provide helpful tools and ideas for considering potential mitigation measures.
- At the end, take pictures of each flipchart and capture the information in the Protection Risk Analysis Summary and Action Plan (Annex 1). Share the action plan with participants for review and validation.

Step 8: Adapt your program accordingly

- Based on the developed mitigation measures, adapt the proposed activities and strategies to better incorporate safety, dignity, and access considerations. Some mitigation measures will require additional activities to be included in your Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP). This step might be preferred to take after the participatory workshop outline above, and once more specific interventions have been defined in the DIP/activity timeline.

TIPS AND GOOD PRACTICES

- While it is not imperative to conduct a desk review (Step 1)—and some contexts will have less available secondary data—it is an important step to help mitigate the influence of bias, prejudice, or preconceived ideas. For example, it is helpful to encourage teams to go systematically through the risks under each category and not immediately dismiss one. At the same time, staff should be encouraged to bring their field experience to bear, and not dismiss a category only because it is not highlighted in the desk review.
- Programs can interfere with the everyday life of beneficiaries, and with the broader environment. When reflecting on how our project could exacerbate risks and vice versa, it is useful to think beyond a sector- or population-specific perspective, so as not to miss bigger issues or risks that our program can bring to the overall environment, especially in situations of violent conflict. For example: How are we perceived? Which interests does our work benefit (or not)? And, who are we perceived to be allied with?
- For development programs, teams should revisit and udpate the Protection Risk Analysis at least once a year, or as changes in the context necessitate. For rapidly changing contexts (emergency programs or programs that work with migrants, refugees or trafficking survivors), the Protection Risk Analysis should be updated frequently given the fluid or rapidly changing contexts. Good Practice: Incorporate 5-10 minutes in ongoing project meetings for staff to raise any protection risks or trends they have noted in their work. This information can be used to update the Protection Risk Analysis throughout the year.

"When we talk about protection, you have to ensure three things for a person. That is, you have to take into perspective their age, sex, and diversity. As humanitarian workers, it is our duty to provide them that safety, access, and dignity. As humans, we have to put human beings first."

- Ferdinand Pereirra,
Caritas Bangladesh Protection Manager

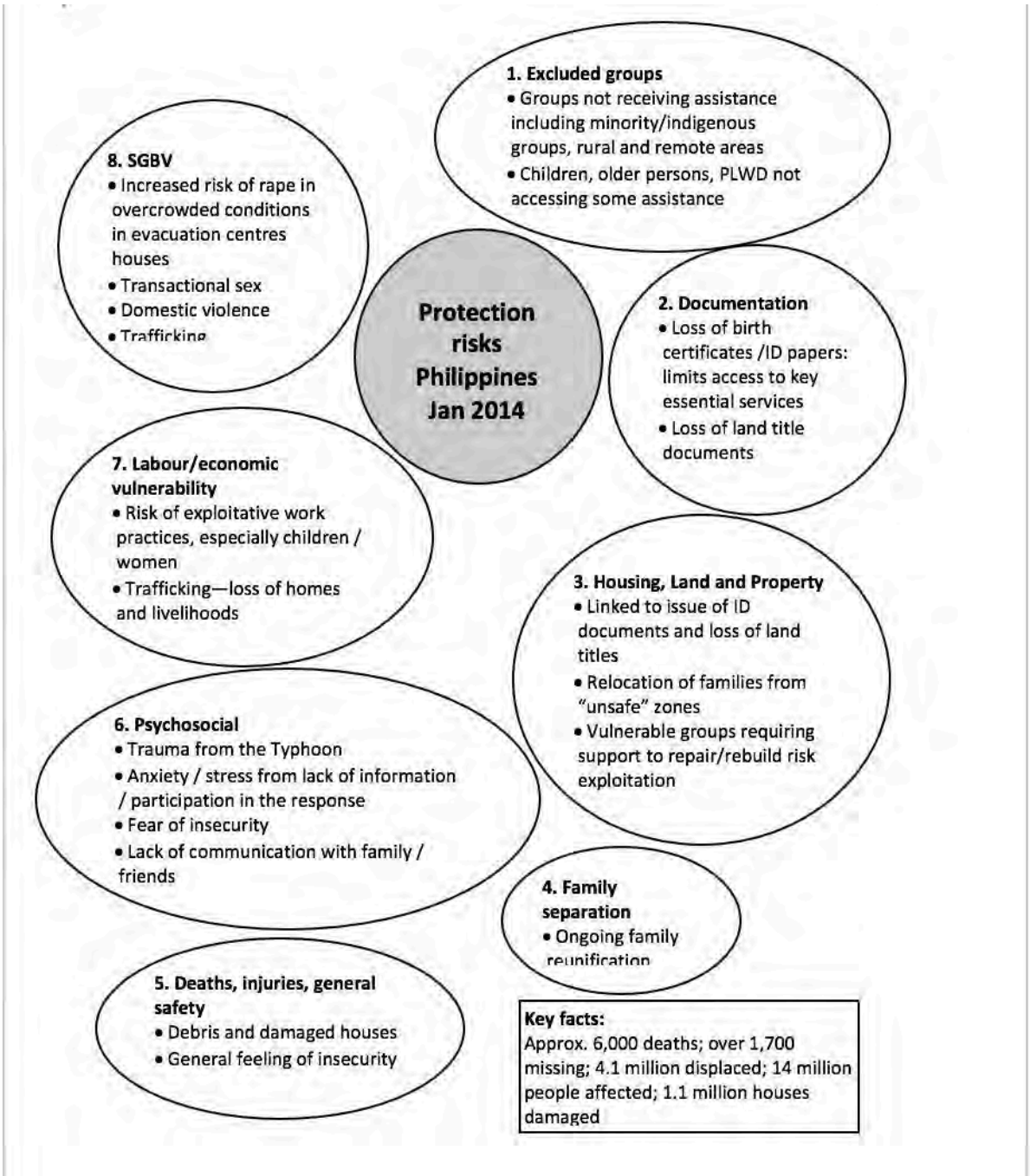
Annex 1: Protection Risk Analysis: Summary and Action Plan
(Excel document also available, attached)

Risk identified	Group concerned - Sex/Gender, Age, Diversity											Likelihood	Impact	Interaction with the project		Mitigation measures proposed	
	More male	More female	Both	Infant	Child	Youth	Adult	Elderly	Type of impairment (e.g. physical, visual, aural)	Economic status	Social group	What is the likelihood of this occurring? (score 1-5, with low=1, high=5)	What would be the impact if it occurred? (score 1-5, with low=1, high=5)	Could the project increase this risk directly or indirectly? If YES, how?	Could the project be affected directly or indirectly by this risk? If YES, how?	Proposed mitigation measure (i.e adaptation of the project ito mitigate the identified risk)	Challenges encountered in implementing mitigation measure
Gender-based violence																	
1																	
2																	
3																	
Child protection																	
Physical safety of civilians																	
Housing, land and property																	
Exclusion/ lack of access to services																	
Psychosocial distress																	
Safeguarding																	

Annex 2: Example of Bubbles Analysis – Philippines

Compiled for the Typhoon Haiyan response in January 2014

Source: MIRA II; GPC updates; OCHA updates



Annex 3: Common Protection Risks

These categories are not intended to be fixed, and there may be some overlap between them (e.g. SGBV and child protection). Staff may wish to organize/categorize them differently (as in the Philippines bubbles analysis above). **It is also important to consider safeguarding-related risks, keeping in mind that many of the risks below could be committed by aid workers themselves to beneficiaries of our programs, and not just by external actors/forces.**

Sexual and gender-based violence	• Sexual violence (rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, child sexual abuse) • Physical violence (physical assault, trafficking, slavery) • Psychological violence (emotional abuse, isolation) • Harmful traditional practices (female genital mutilation/ Cutting, early or forced marriage, 'honour' crimes, accusations of witchcraft or female infanticide) • Socio-economic violence (discrimination, denial of opportunities or services, denial of property rights e.g. income or inheritance on the basis of gender) • Transactional sex: sexual exploitation or abuse in exchange for food, favors, or other goods/resources between aid workers/peacekeepers and beneficiaries. • Intra-household dynamics and tensions, e.g. between intimate partners, inter-generational, etc.
Child protection	• Physical violence (such as corporal punishment) • Sexual violence against boys and girls • Psychosocial distress and mental disorders • Forced recruitment to armed groups • Child labor[6] • Separated or unaccompanied minors • Lack of access to education • Lack of documentation (including birth certificates)
Physical safety of civilians	• Debris and damaged infrastructure • General insecurity and criminality • Violence (such as extrajudicial killings, kidnappings, unlawful detention, torture) • Inter-household and inter-group tensions and conflicts, e.g. refugee/IDP and host communities • Forced displacement, and/or deliberate controls on freedom of movement • Deliberate denial of access to basic services • Deliberate targeting of protected infrastructure (such as schools, hospitals) • Landmines and explosive remnants of war
Housing, land and property	• Loss of land tenure documentation (lost or destroyed) • Forced evictions • Destruction of property and civilian infrastructure • Unsafe or inadequate housing • Lack of land, property and housing rights for women
Exclusion/ lack of access to services	• Lack of documentation • Other barriers to access to services (social, political, cultural, geographical, logistical) • Exclusion of specific ethnic, tribal or religious groups • Restriction on political or religious freedom • Discrimination in access to assistance by other vulnerable groups such as older people, people living with disabilities, children or female headed households, people living with HIV/AIDS
Mental Health and Psychosocial	• Distress caused by witnessing or experience acts of violence; loss of loved ones; displacement from, or loss of, home and livelihoods. • Feeling of fear living in insecure environments • Loss of routine, social networks and sense of stability • Anxiety from lack of information on available assistance

6 Not all work done by children is harmful to their development or education. Child labor is defined in article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as "any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development."