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Protection Analysis Framework (PAF) and Data Entry and Exploration Platform (DEEP) Project

Lessons Learnt and Best Practices Report

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AoR	Area of Responsibility
BHA	Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance
DEEP	Data Entry and Exploration Platform
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
GCAP	Global Call to Action Against Poverty
GPC	Global Protection Cluster
GPU	Global Protection Update
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HPC	Humanitarian Programme Cycle
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IMO	Information Management Officer
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NLP	Natural Language Processing
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PAF	Protection Analytical Framework
PAU	Protection Analysis Update
PiN	People in Need
PROMO	Protection Monitoring Working Group – South Sudan
SAT	Structured Analytical Techniques
UN	United Nations

Project Overview

The Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance (BHA)-funded Protection Analytical Framework (PAF) – Data Entry and Exploration Platform (DEEP) project ran from October 2022 to July 2024.

The aim

was to strengthen joint protection analysis and processes of Protection Clusters in five countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, and South Sudan.

The project's two main outcomes are:

1. Protection Cluster members have the knowledge, skills and attitudes for strengthened joint protection analysis contributing to improved protection outcomes and better protection response.
2. Protection analysis conclusions are included in protection sectoral, humanitarian needs overview (HNO) or other humanitarian intersectoral and development analysis processes.

The project's 14 activities focused on the use of the PAF to analyse protection risks per context, with the aim of publishing joint analysis products.

A team comprising a project manager and two senior analysts supported the five clusters in collaboration with the Global Protection Cluster (GPC) Operations Cell. The PAF-DEEP team provided support on secondary data review, to complement existing primary data collection (e.g. protection monitoring) processes within the clusters. The secondary data was structured and organised using *DEEP*, to ensure a coherent approach in the use of primary and secondary data for protection risk analysis.

The lessons learned and best practices focus on the above objectives via activities aimed at supporting and strengthening the analysis at cluster level, which included:

- In-person national training for Protection Clusters on the use of PAF and DEEP for protection analysis
- The use of DEEP in compiling protection-related sources, and producing summary protection analysis
- Ongoing support (mentoring and coaching) on analysis activities to Protection Clusters
- In-person joint analysis workshops with Protection Clusters and partners
- Drafting and publication of protection analysis reports

Table 1: Overview of PAF-DEEP activities in five Protection Clusters

Activity	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Mali	Niger	South Sudan
In-person training	√	√	×	√	√
Coaching and mentoring	6 sessions	6 sessions	4 sessions	3 sessions	3 sessions
Risk prioritisation	√	√	√	√	√
Workshop	√	√	√	×	√

The PAF-DEEP team appreciates the constant engagement and collaboration of the Protection Clusters in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger and South Sudan, the GPC Operations Cell, and all partners in jointly implementing this project and finding the best ways to conduct analysis despite operational challenges. The GPC has been instrumental throughout the project, ensuring alignment in messages and project activities with the expected deliverables of the Protection Clusters. Protection Clusters have shown remarkable commitment and support in organising coaching and mentoring sessions, as well as training and workshops, all of which were integral to the project's success. The Protection Cluster coordination teams have done an outstanding job engaging sub-national coordinators and Area of Responsibility coordinators throughout the processes, particularly in the risk prioritisation and the joint analysis process, which are vital for inclusivity and reflect their unwavering commitment.

The section below contains recommendations based on lessons learned from the PAF-DEEP project. These lessons are a mix of observations from the project team, feedback from Protection Clusters and partners, and structured discussions to capture lessons throughout the project.

The lessons learned, and resultant recommendations, are categorised as follows:

The analysis process – Lessons learned about analysis within the Protection Cluster structure

Secondary data review – Lessons learned about the use of secondary data review, how to use DEEP to organise and structure secondary data, and how this can be used for protection analysis

Risk prioritisation and joint protection analysis – Lessons learned about protection risk prioritisation and joint analysis within Protection Clusters

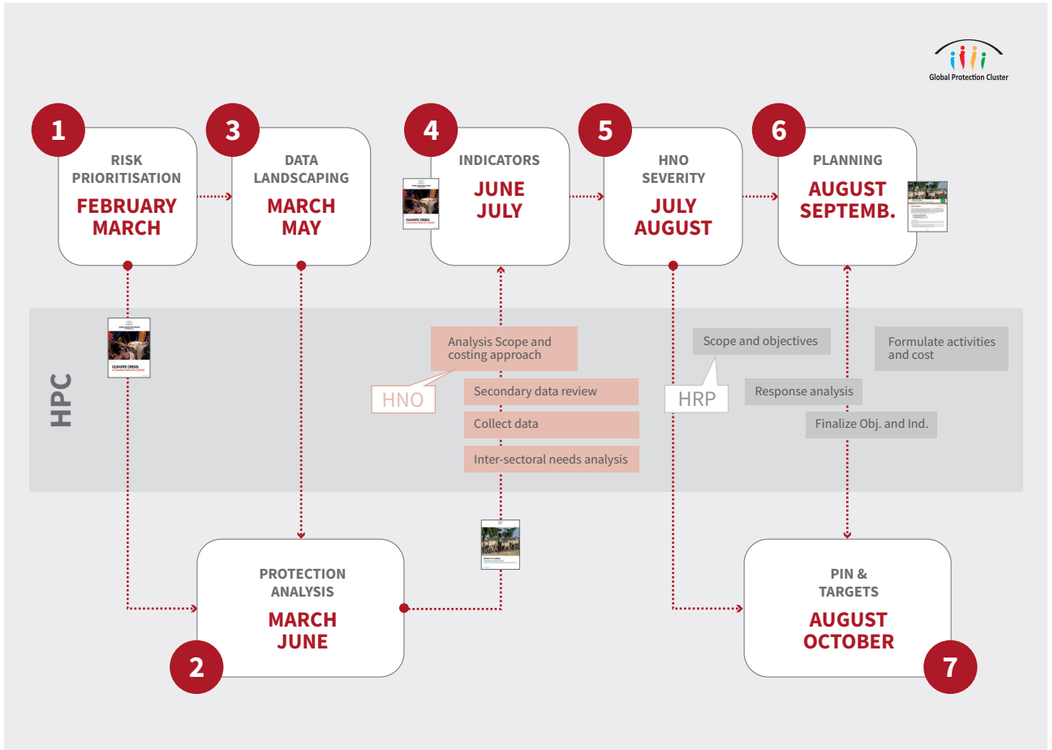
Analysis Process

1. Lessons learned about the analysis process

The analysis process for Protection Clusters

There has been much progress in the production of the protection analytical framework, the standardisation of 15 protection risks, and the focus on protection risk analysis within the cluster. One of the main challenges identified throughout the PAF-DEEP project was that most clusters did not have an established or continuous analysis process. While clusters did engage in analysis activities, it was often ad hoc, or at the onset of a major product or requirement (for example the Humanitarian Programme Cycle – HPC) rather than a continuous dedicated process that is core to the cluster work. Even ahead of the HPC, the approach to drafting the Humanitarian Needs Overview at times remains ad hoc. The GPC recognised this challenge and made significant effort to plan the 2025 HPC in a timely manner by presenting a timeline and process at the start of 2024.

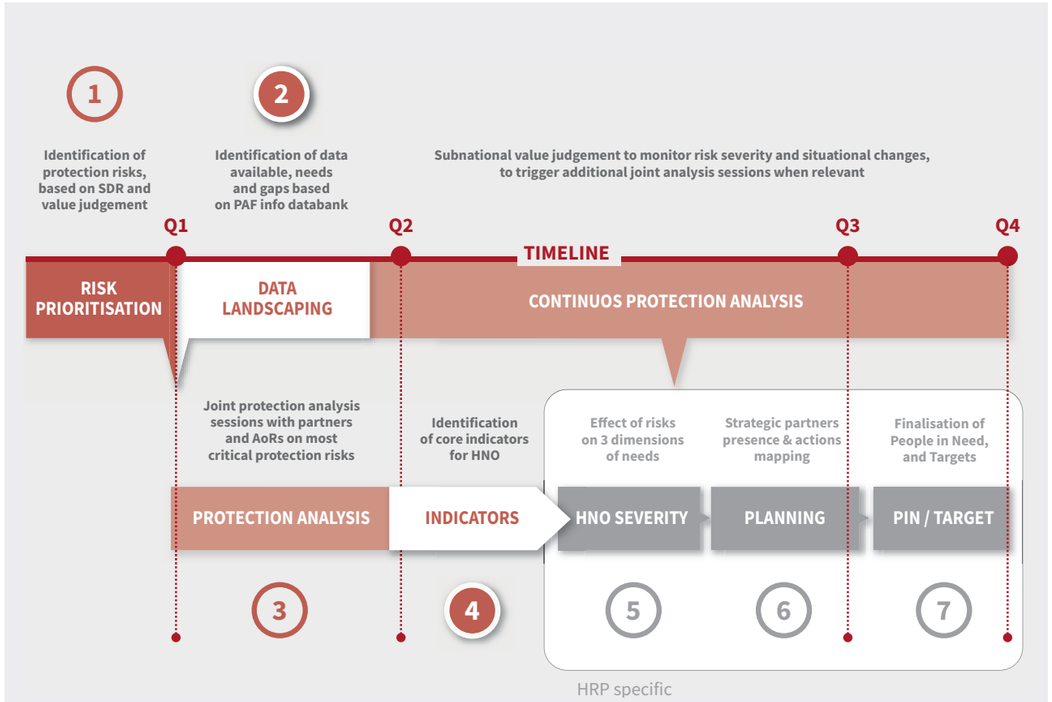
Figure 1: 2024 Timeline Humanitarian Needs Overview and Humanitarian Response Plan analysis and planning steps – Global Protection Cluster



However, the new timeline still largely focuses on the HPC as main output. There remained a lack of understanding of how one continuous analysis process can be used for different outputs, ranging from analysis needed for operations, the Protection Cluster strategy, Centrality of Protection strategies, the HNO, or global requirements including the Global Protection Update (GPU) and Protection Analysis Update (PAU). Changes in messages (e.g. number of PAUs that need to be produced per year) sometimes posed challenges in communication.

In response, the GPC recently published *Protection Cluster Approach to Joined-up Protection Analysis* – guidance clarifying the analysis process and the frequency and type of analysis products that should be produced within the cluster. The PAF-DEEP activities have largely aligned with this process as have the activities outlined for the 2025 HPC, focusing on national training, online coaching and mentoring sessions, risk prioritisation and validation, and joint analysis workshops based on priority protection risks.

Figure 2: Analysis workflow outlined in the Protection Cluster approach to analysis



Implementation of the analysis process including PAF-DEEP activities was different across the supported clusters. In some clusters, one designated member of the Protection Cluster coordination team spearheaded the process, ensuring continuous focus and adherence to timelines. In clusters where the responsibilities for the analysis process were more divided or not clearly defined, it was difficult to advance in a timely manner with a clear understanding of how all activities are interlinked and how the analysis process can be used for different outputs. Responsibility for the protection analysis process often fell solely on the Protection Cluster coordination team (coordinator, co-coordinator, or information management officer (IMO)), rather than the wider team. Although (Area of Responsibility) AoR teams were involved in training, risk prioritisation and joint analysis workshops, ownership typically remained with the coordination team. Partner engagement was often ad hoc, with limited input to analysis or documents and insufficient discussion during monthly meetings. Data sharing remained an issue, with many partners unable or unsure about sharing protection assessments and primary data analysis.

Creating a transparent, inclusive analysis process requires significant time and planning This involves communication with cluster partners, organising designated channels and processes, collection and analysis of both primary and secondary data, strategic direction and visioning, etc. Secondary data analysis in supported clusters often lacks structure. Despite efforts, there is a clear need for dedicated resources, including time and personnel. IMOs frequently handle primary data but may lack the skills to integrate it with secondary data; while coordinators, burdened with various tasks, have limited time to manage secondary data and draft analysis documents.

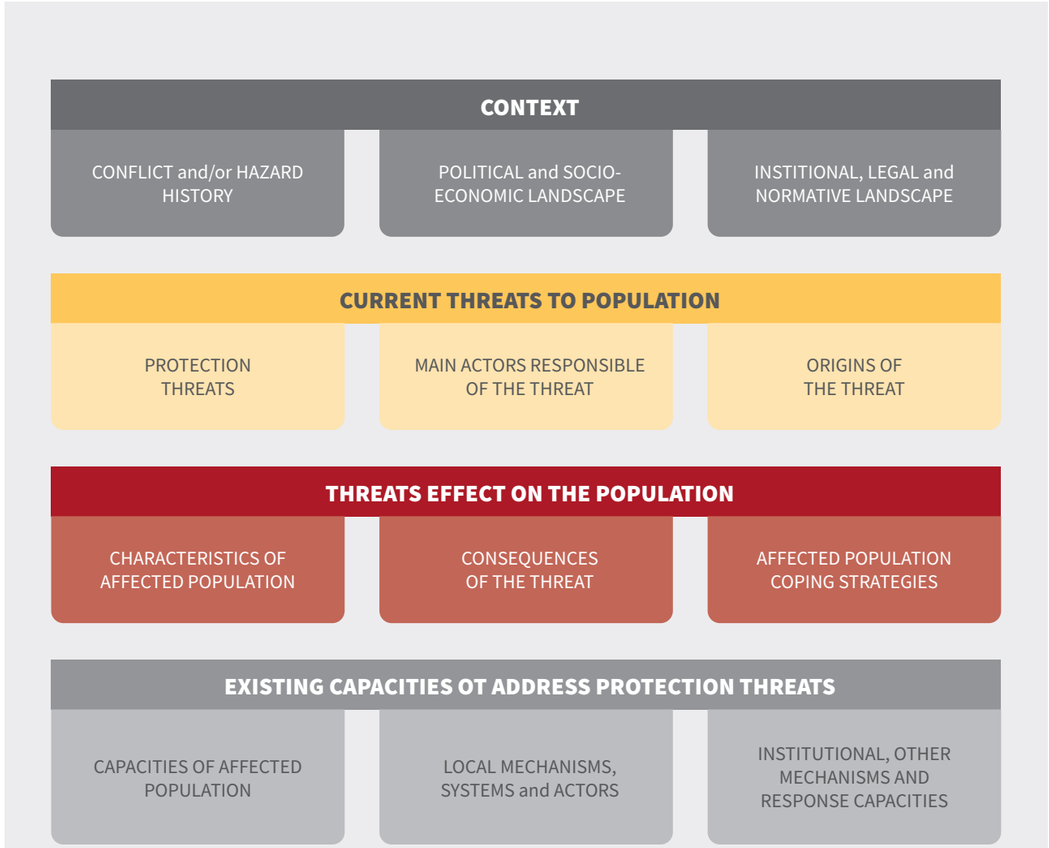
Joint responsibility for the analysis workflow

Activities from the PAF-DEEP project were aimed at building capacity of the cluster and protection partners at large, but they were not necessarily structured around the creation of a designated analysis working group. This meant that while partners were targeted in capacity building, including in-person training and online coaching and mentoring, high turnover or absence of people meant there was little consistency or continuity in participants. In addition, it was unclear how these partners contributed to analysis processes or products. The PAF-DEEP project aimed to mitigate this by establishing some accountability measures (e.g. to participate in joint workshops, attendance of online training is mandatory) but there were no specific accountability measures within the clusters to ensure partners attended capacity-building efforts and participated in joint analysis.

The use of the protection analysis framework

The PAF is structured along four main pillars and three sub-pillars. With the publication of the PAF, protection analysis centred on protection risk, with clear terminology. The PAF closed a longstanding gap in protection analysis, yet capacity had to be built on its use. The PAF-DEEP project, through a baseline assessment, found that 60% of respondents (Protection Cluster members) needed capacity building in operationalising the PAF for protection analysis, as they were aware of its existence but unsure of how to use it. 30% had some knowledge about how to use the PAF for joint protection analysis but required more support.

Figure 3: The Protection Analytical Framework



At the start of mapping secondary data against the PAF, it was quickly noted that definitions of the analytical framework were at times unclear, or that these could be interpreted in different ways by different analysts. Sometimes, overlapping or close definitions require a thorough understanding of each pillar and how to categorise data in a clear and consistent manner. While the protection-focused terminology of the framework is logical within the Protection Cluster context, within the national training and coaching and mentoring sessions, it was apparent that not all Protection Cluster partners knew or understood these concepts. To use this framework for analysis, it takes time for analysts/partners to understand each category.

Below are some examples of points that came up when discussing the PAF during the training or online coaching and mentoring sessions:

- The PAF is divided into (1) pillars, (2) sub-pillars (see Figure 3), and further broken down into (3) categories (without a definition) and (4) analytical questions. When confusion arises over a pillar/sub-pillar, the categories do not always provide sufficient clarification as they are not defined.
- Natural disasters are not meant to be classified as a threat, given that protection threats are the consequence of human activity. However, there are situations where natural disasters cause, for example, displacement, which in turn can give rise to a myriad of risks. Within the current framework it is difficult to capture such nuances.
- There is little distinction in available data with regard to the 'affected population's coping strategies', or 'capacities of the affected population' sub-pillars.
- There appeared to be confusion between the sub-pillars of 'institutional, legal and normative landscape' and 'institutional, other mechanisms, and response capacities'. Also, the 'institutional, legal and normative landscape' is often referred to as a capacity, hence the category may be seen as a duplication.

2. Recommendations on the analysis process

Establish continuous analysis and assign clear responsibilities

Target audience:
Global Protection Cluster and AoRs
Protection Cluster/AoR coordination teams
Protection Cluster partners

The recently published GPC document *Protection Cluster Approach to Joined-up Protection Analysis* provides further clarity on the process needed to ensure a link between field operations and analysis needs at other levels. However, even with this document, time and resources are required to ensure the protection analysis process is understood and implemented at field level.

Feedback on the *PAUs* indicated they were perceived as global advocacy tools and not always linked to other cluster work. While changes have been made to align the PAUs with the HNO, more effort is needed to establish a continuous analysis process, informing different products like PAUs, HNOs and protection strategies. This requires **coordinated efforts from the GPC and AoRs to ensure all teams understand and implement a consistent analysis process.**

Commitment to – and ownership of – the analysis process is critical. Designating one person within the coordination team to lead the analysis enhances clarity and responsibility, ensuring focus and timely progress. In Ethiopia and South Sudan, the co-coordinator and IMO have been instrumental in this role. However, because of the multitude of tasks, co-coordinators and IMOs often struggle to manage secondary data and draft analysis documents. **Clusters should invest in dedicated analytical roles with specific data analysis skills, ensuring these positions are well funded and planned for.** The responsibility for analysis should be included in the terms of reference or workplan for one person within the cluster coordination team, with support from other team members. A **one Protection Cluster approach** can also be adopted, **where activities are agreed upon collectively and responsibility for implementing the analysis process lies with one Protection Cluster/AoR coordination team staff member.**

Standardising analytical tasks – for example primary data analysis by IMOs, secondary data review by co-coordinator, first draft of PAU by coordinator, etc. – will help develop a capacity-building plan for specific staff. The 'analyst' role, which involves the review of secondary data and the drafting of narratives that combine primary and secondary data, is often missing within the cluster/AoR coordination teams, despite being instrumental to the analysis process. **If analytical capacity does not exist within the Protection Cluster/AoR coordination teams, designated analysts, such as analysts based in the GPC or from protection partners, can support clusters. Alternatively, a regional model as used in the PAF-DEEP project, can be adopted** (see Table 3 for suggested models).

Establish a dedicated working group for analysis

Target audience:
Protection Cluster/AoR coordination team
Protection Cluster partners

In most supported clusters, the Protection Cluster coordination team was primarily responsible for analysis, often only engaging partners on an ad hoc basis. This inconsistent engagement sometimes resulted from the coordination team's lack of involving partners as well as partners' limited feedback if they were engaged. Similar dynamics were observed with AoR coordination teams, which are essential for joint protection analysis but often did not provide input. To address this, **a key recommendation is establishing a dedicated analysis working group to ensure analysis is not solely dependent on the Protection Cluster coordination team**. For instance, the Protection Monitoring (PROMO) working group in South Sudan (see Box 1 below) and Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) in Burkina Faso.

*The best practice observed throughout the PAF-DEEP project is the **PROMO** working group established under the South Sudan cluster, where partners meet on a monthly basis to discuss analysis. The discussions are centred around protection monitoring data, to look at trends, discuss new data and give meaning to the statistics through interpretation. Every month, the discussions are used to inform the Spotlight report, a monthly report documenting protection monitoring data and secondary qualitative data, that is based on the discussions held in the monthly PROMO meeting. All protection partners who are interested are invited to the working group. The principle is that analysis is discussed in those designated meetings – and discussions in these meetings are final to inform analysis products. The establishment of this group took dedicated time and effort. Because of the high turnover of colleagues, continuous capacity building of partners on key analysis principles (protection risk, the PAF, etc.) is needed.*

***GCAP** in Burkina Faso comprises data-collection partners and analysis partners, i.e. organisations that do not directly collect data on protection but have competencies in analysis, such as Human Rights partners. This group is the continuation of a protection monitoring working group that was created and existed under the Protection Cluster structure. GCAP was initially created to coordinate technical aspects, particularly the harmonisation of data-collection tools, the creation of joint analysis and recommendations and capacity building of partners.*

This group could take the shape of a protection monitoring working group, or analysis working group, or where it is not feasible to create such structures, analysis within the Strategic Advisory Group. **The establishment of a dedicated working group consisting of protection partners, ensures that analysis is not only seen as the responsibility of the cluster coordination team, but becomes an inclusive**

and joint responsibility that requires continuous engagement. The partners within this group can be trained on analytical concepts, including the PAF and protection risk, and can be mobilised to discuss collection of primary data, harmonisation of tools, sharing of assessments and secondary data, can help in reviewing secondary data, and can jointly analyse both primary and secondary data. **In addition, within this group, a data-sharing protocol can be established following Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines, with continuous discussion on what data is being collected, what can be shared and who it can be shared with**. Having a standard agenda item on analysis means information from the analysis working group can be shared to inform cluster partners at large.

The working groups in South Sudan and Burkina Faso demonstrate the importance of diverse participants in analysis groups, including data-collection partners, analysts, national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, and human rights organisations. This diversity brings varied viewpoints and expertise from different locations and protection-specific backgrounds, thereby enhancing the analysis. These groups are usually at national level, so sub-national representation is crucial. National-level protection partners should also represent their colleagues across the operation to ensure comprehensive and inclusive analysis.

Strengthen PAF implementation with training and iterative feedback

Target audience:
Protection Cluster/AoR coordination team
Global Protection Cluster

With the development of the PAF (published 2021) and the *Protection risks explanatory note* (published in 2023), significant progress has been made on protection analysis. However, capacity building and familiarisation with the PAF and protection risks, as well as in the implementation of protection risk analysis as a continuous process within the cluster remain necessary.

Building capacity on the use of the PAF is essential for ensuring its effective implementation across all Protection Clusters. Training and capacity-building initiatives should be prioritised to familiarise cluster members with the framework and its application in analysis of protection risk. This includes detailed workshops, hands-on training sessions, and the development of clear, accessible training materials. Additionally, it is crucial to establish mechanisms for ongoing feedback from partners and stakeholders who use the PAF in their daily operations. The GPC should continuously solicit feedback to identify areas where the framework can be refined and clarified. This iterative feedback process will help ensure that the PAF remains relevant and user-friendly, addressing any ambiguities or challenges encountered in the cluster.

Secondary Data Review

As part of the PAF-DEEP project, the team supported secondary data review for protection analysis in the five clusters. This focused on the identification of information needs, structuring and organising secondary data using DEEP, and using secondary data review to inform protection analysis.

1. Lessons learned about secondary data review

Assessing the information landscape

Within the PAF-DEEP project, assessing the information landscape – listed as the second step in the analysis process (see Figure 2), was one of the first steps completed. This exercise varied across the supported clusters as follows:

- Sources mapped out against the Protection Information Management matrix
- Sources mapped out against the PAF
- Sources mapped out against protection risks

It seemed easier for clusters to map out their primary data sources against a framework than against secondary data sources.[1] For primary data sources, it generally worked well to map indicators against protection risks, which helped to inform exactly what data is available for each protection risk, particularly for harmonised data-collection tools. This can also be useful in further steps of risk prioritisation and can inform any changes or modifications needed within primary data collection, to ensure data-collection efforts are centred on collecting key indicators on protection risks. While most clusters/operations have some form of primary data collection, many clusters do not map out which of the protection risks are covered through these assessments.

All supported clusters mentioned that a lack of data sharing is a challenge to assessing the information landscape. However, relatively less attention was paid to mapping out all available secondary data and monitoring this in a consistent manner over time. Assessing the information landscape for secondary data sources is slightly less straightforward as a process, as the content of secondary data sources can change per report (it is not a continuous collection of the same indicators, as is more often the case in primary data collection). For example, an Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) situation report can contain information on humanitarian access in one iteration one time, and on attacks against civilians in another. It is thus easier to establish a list of sources that generally need to be monitored, read and shared.

The PAF-DEEP project has supported mapping out those data sources, and provided a list of reoccurring secondary sources that are published. This mapping exercise demonstrated that there was a multitude of secondary data available that could be used for protection analysis. This data can include OCHA situation reports, updates from Human Rights Watch, analysis from International Crisis Group, or reports from other clusters. However, consistently monitoring these sources does take dedicated resources to ensure secondary data is also shared consistently across cluster partners, and that these sources are used within the analysis process. Within the PAF-DEEP project it was noted that it was difficult to transfer the responsibility of establishing and monitoring the information landscape to a Protection Cluster coordination team member.

The findings from the PAF-DEEP project show that there is consensus that secondary sources mostly provide information on the PAF pillars of context, threats and threat effects. See more detailed information in Annex 3.

1 In this report, primary data is referred to as a large data-collection exercise for which the raw data is accessible (e.g. Protection Monitoring, Multi-Sectoral Needs Overview, Displacement Tracking Matrix).

Using the DEEP for protection secondary data review

One of the main lessons learned from this project was that qualitative analysis and extensive secondary data review had a limited to non-established place in the analysis processes of the supported clusters. Consequently, during the HPC, secondary data review was seen as an ad hoc, burdensome task rather than a necessary step that deepens analysis and lightens overall work when done consistently. Without regular secondary data review, the cluster limits analysis to using primary assessment data and a handful of key indicators, which are then considered insufficient to provide a full picture of the protection situation.

The DEEP platform helps create a repository of all available secondary sources, mapping information against the PAF and protection risks, thereby assisting in the entire process of secondary data review. Introducing DEEP to the clusters within the PAF-DEEP project was intended to create space for secondary data review and qualitative analysis, with defined roles on monitoring secondary sources, collecting and organising information and eventually using this information in analytical secondary data reviews. A structured approach is crucial for integrating qualitative analysis into the cluster workflow. DEEP facilitates the review of hundreds of documents over time, which would otherwise be a daunting task when done ad hoc. The PAF-DEEP project supported secondary data review through DEEP by structuring all secondary sources. The use of this platform also allows the gradual building of a qualitative protection database that can be used for analysis over time.

Feedback on DEEP was positive, but integrating it into the workflow revealed challenges. It was envisioned that Protection Cluster partners would upload reports and map data on DEEP, but uptake has been slow. Similar issues exist in other operations, where partners do not always upload reports into assessment registries. Despite interest expressed during coaching sessions and South Sudan Protection Cluster's use for structuring data, no designated roles for these tasks were established. The PAF-DEEP project supported mapping secondary data sources for the five clusters and subsequently using these for analysis. Yet, the mapping of data from secondary sources is a time- and resource-intensive process; even within the PAF-DEEP project, two consultancies were used to start these new data repositories. Thus, when a new protection analysis project is started on DEEP, it takes dedicated human resources to start a data repository, much like when there is an ad hoc secondary data review for a Protection Analysis Update or the HNO narrative. However, once this repository is established, monthly mapping of data through monitoring key secondary data sources significantly reduces the time spent on collating and structuring secondary data.

Upon its implementation, it was crucial to address initial misunderstanding about the platform. While DEEP provides a platform to collate and organise data, it does not perform an artificial intelligence (AI) analysis of this data for the PAF (this is available for different frameworks). While new features in DEEP reduce the number of steps between data exports and final analysis, these features are currently either too premature or advanced for full introduction to the clusters. Furthermore, the process of mapping each piece of information from secondary sources against the PAF is time-consuming. This issue is not unique to DEEP but is a general challenge faced in any secondary data analysis process. In addition, the language barrier, with the platform interface only in English, limited its initial reception in West Africa. Additionally, the lack of an offline version made it difficult to use in areas with intermittent connectivity, for example in South Sudan.

Establishing who within the cluster should monitor secondary data sources and keep the DEEP repository up to date has been identified as the responsibility of IMOs. However, concerns about their capacity in terms of time/resources have been raised consistently. The PAF-DEEP project attempted to establish a DEEP workflow with IMOs from the Protection Cluster and AoRs. In some clusters, there was agreement on taking the DEEP platform forward; in others, the capacity to sustain these efforts was limited.

DEEP plays an important role in enabling clusters to process secondary data in a structured and continuous manner and in reducing time spent on ad hoc analysis of secondary data. DEEP has proved a useful tool to create a participatory data repository, where partners can upload their assessments/evaluations. However, it will still require efforts from the Protection Cluster coordination team to ensure all resources are shared and uploaded.

The platform allows for data to be categorised against the PAF and by protection risk. This enables the continuous use of updated secondary data reviews to establish a narrative that informs protection analysis as it forms the basis of discussions, deepens understanding and interpretation of protection data, and triangulates primary data. The use of this platform also allows the gradual building of a qualitative protection database that can be used for analysis over time. The used framework is accessible in DEEP under the name 'PAF-DEEP analysis framework'.

Any secondary data review, with or without the use of a platform that facilitates it, takes time and resources. DEEP is no different: the mapping of information against the PAF and protection risk is time-consuming. This could be ameliorated by using neuro-linguistic programming to automatically extract information from sources, a feature that would likely enhance the uptake of the DEEP platform.

DEEP requires users to be trained on the platform, and its systematisation for secondary data review and analysis process. Creating a project within DEEP requires specific technical knowledge – and interested Protection Clusters may need centralised guidance on its use. Within the Protection Clusters, one person should oversee the project, including the management of new members and the handling of confidential documents. While all Protection Cluster partners could upload documents onto the DEEP to create a single repository, initial mapping against the PAF should be done by one or a few trained individuals. This can later extend to a larger group, with one or two people ensuring quality control, or one quality controller if NLP is enabled, to maintain consistency in data mapping analysis.

Use of PAF in DEEP

In the project, the issues around the PAF and Protection Risks as outlined in Table 2 below were addressed by consolidating a master spreadsheet with examples of entries. This helped clarify what data should be categorised under each pillar and sub-pillar, and provided clearer indications of the type of information needed and consensus on how to categorise it. In this way, consistency is ensured when mapping according to the framework in DEEP. There was also a need for contextualisation for each country, as mapping has subtle differences depending on comprehension, context and available data.

Within the cluster coordination team, there often seems to be a preference to divide responsibility between mapping data (typically deemed the responsibility of the IMO) and reviewing exports/writing the secondary data review (often deemed the responsibility of another team member, e.g. co-coordinator). This division can make it more challenging to maintain a consistent process, from categorising the data to exporting it for analysis.

The issues encountered when mapping data against the PAF (see Figure 3) and protection risk on DEEP are listed in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Challenges in using PAF and protection risk on DEEP

Protection Analytical Framework	Protection Risk
It was not always clear how to distinguish data points for the contextual pillars in comparison to the origins of the threat sub-pillar. Consequently, the origins of the threat sub-pillar was used infrequently.	There was a gap identified in being able to map data that points to protection needs (e.g. the need for mental health and psychosocial support – MHPSS) or priorities, as well as confusion over the distinction between protection risk, priority, concerns and needs.
On the other hand, the protection threats sub-pillar has been the most used on DEEP. However, upon review of the information mapped against this category, it also appears that the lack of clarity in the definition of the category means it is used as a 'catch all' category to map all information that is not specifically related to any other sub-pillar.	The definition of risk in the protection sector is 'actual or potential exposure to…'. This differs from the analytical concept of risk as used in other sectors. An operational definition also exists, which can lead to confusion.
Additionally, some data that could otherwise be useful for analysis, could be lost because there is no designated category to map it against the PAF, as the framework lacks specific pillars or sub-pillars to map priority needs, particularly when it pertains to other clusters. Even though population groups and locations can be mapped under a PAF pillar, this provides insufficient detail to eventually filter any data or information according to specific population groups and locations, which necessitates further breakdown of these aspects in DEEP.	As mentioned elsewhere in this document, the protection risks are all closely linked to one another. For example, the gender-based violence risk includes child marriage, though early/child marriage is a standalone risk. It can at times be difficult to ascertain the risks that should be mapped against data points.
There generally needs to be close attention paid to the understanding of the 'consequences of the threat' and 'coping mechanisms' categories. According to the PAF, information related to negative coping mechanisms (e.g. school dropout, an increase in child marriage, eating less preferred foods), should be categorised under 'consequences of the threat'. This may be counterintuitive for some users. The category of coping mechanisms was one of the least utilised on DEEP; only data pertaining to evasion strategies has been included.	Tied to the above, risks are often closely linked (e.g. should a data point on child labour or forced displacement be mapped as 'threat' or 'effects of the threat'), which makes it very difficult to ascertain the risks that should be considered. Thus, to map data against a protection risk, there already needs to be a certain level of interpretation of that piece of information, and which risk it pertains to. This renders the joint analysis difficult, as data is already mapped against certain risks prior to any analysis process.

Using secondary data for protection analysis

Once secondary data sources were collected/centralised, processing this information was crucial. Within the PAF-DEEP project, analysts created summaries for each protection risk by exporting relevant data tagged and categorised on DEEP, structured along the three main pillars of threat, threat effect, and capacities (see Annex 4 for examples). This involved documenting the data in a secondary data review or mapping information from these sources for summarisation and use in analysis. These DEEP summaries provided exports by location, PAF pillars/sub-pillars or protection risk. Exporting data by protection risk limits page length of exports and and helped organise available secondary information for each risk. These exports still need to be analysed, to provide easy-to-read narratives offering descriptive and explanatory analysis of each protection risk.

The use of DEEP and production of these summaries proved instrumental in helping clusters carry out protection analysis.

First, **secondary data was used to quickly draft ad hoc short narratives** on the protection situation for different products. For example, clusters could request an overview of the secondary data in a specific location, which could be easily exported from DEEP and summarised into a narrative.

Second, structuring secondary data against the PAF and protection risk helped continuous protection analysis processes. For example, secondary data summaries were used in South Sudan to **triangulate** protection monitoring data in their monthly PROMO working group meetings. The summaries provided the backdrop for a narrative, and the basis for monthly discussions that were used to interpret the new findings through continuous primary data collection with protection monitoring.

Third, in all clusters, summaries were used to **inform the risk prioritisation process**. Analysts were able to provide a short overview of secondary data for each protection risk; this could help guide the validation of the risk prioritisation process, to provide an overview of information available on each of the 15 protection risks.

Lastly, in all clusters, the summaries served as the backbone of the joint analysis workshop and were used as the **basis of discussions**. The summaries provided an overview of all information available on the protection risk at hand, which participants could then complement, critique, modify or otherwise discuss. Through having the summaries prepared based on secondary data in DEEP, it was easier to establish a common narrative, and to discuss any data gaps, nuances needed, or pointers as to where discussion would help enrich interpretation of protection data. As participants held discussions, their feedback was integrated into the summaries, primary data was incorporated, and drafts were circulated for feedback. This structure significantly reduced the time spent drafting a PAU following the workshop, as secondary data review had already taken place and did not have to be done ad hoc. Clusters reacted positively to this use of DEEP and the secondary data reviews provided.

In summary, secondary data review summaries by protection risk were used to:

- Inform the risk prioritisation process
- Provide a common basis for discussions during workshops
- Significantly reduce the time spent drafting PAUs following the workshops

2. Recommendations on secondary data review

Incorporate secondary data review as part of the analysis process

Target audience:
Protection Cluster/AoR coordination teams
Global Protection Cluster/AoRs
Protection Cluster Partners

Assessing the information landscape and subsequent secondary data analysis needs to be incorporated as an integral part of the analysis process, as it can form the basis of discussions, and informs all steps within the process, including risk prioritisation and joint analysis. Further conversations within the Global Protection Cluster/AoRs and with protection partners are needed to **define how secondary data analysis will be systematically incorporated into the analysis process**. Moreover, there should be a systematic **sharing and monitoring of assessments and reports** within the Protection Cluster.

For a systematic and comprehensive secondary data revie, a cluster needs to take five key steps:

1. Map information needs
Using the GPC information needs mapping tool, clusters can map their information needs according to priority protection risk. **First, clusters and partners need to understand what information they need for analysis.**

2. Establish a list of pertinent sources and create an assessment registry/data repository
This outlines which secondary data (and primary) sources are reoccurring, such as Protection Monitoring/REACH/Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM)/Others assessment reports, OCHA situation reports, or reports by partners or other clusters. Outlining this for secondary data should be done in conjunction with outlining available primary data. Designating a role to a Protection Cluster/AoR coordination team member or analysis working-group team member ensures that sources are monitored consistently, and the data repository remains up to date. **A standing agenda item in the Protection Cluster meeting can help ensure that partners share available reports and assessments**.

3. Map each report against PAF
Each report should be read to define whether it contains useful information that can be used for protection risk analysis, according to the PAF (context, threat, threat effect or capacity). Any useful information in the report should be kept and mapped according to the PAF, next to standard mapping of location and population group.

4. Map information against protection risk
As Protection Clusters analyse according to protection risk, **it is also necessary to classify which protection risks the information pertains to**. This will allow for easier categorisation, sorting and processing when secondary data needs to be exported, as protection analysis remains focused on protection risk.

5. Use secondary data review to inform analysis
Use all mapped information to provide analytical narratives on protection risk, such as shown by examples in Annex 4. What generally worked well is keeping summaries short (two-three pages), following the pillars of threat, threat effect, and capacities.

Adapt DEEP to your needs and capacities for effective data structuring

Target audience:
DEEP governance board
Protection Clusters/AoRs

To maximise DEEP's potential, it is essential to adapt the platform to meet the specific needs and capacities of each cluster. The creation of a secondary data repository using DEEP requires dedicated time and resources. For example, mapping sources and information against the PAF may allow clusters to have a usable database within 3–6 months. **A feasible structure is to allocate one to two days per month for one IMO, ensuring consistency in mapping data across the Protection Cluster/AoR IMOs.**

Clusters can also opt to create a large repository in one go by uploading sources from the past 3–6 months and mapping this information against the PAF, although this will require dedicated human resources. Beyond mere mapping, time must be dedicated to analysing this information. All secondary data in DEEP can be exported by protection risk and/or relevant filters, such as geographical area or specific affected/vulnerable groups. **Ahead of the risk prioritisation**, **the recommendation is to dedicate 3–4 days every quarter to transform secondary data into summaries by protection risk and/or by specific admin level or affected/vulnerable group.**

To achieve the best outcomes, **it is important to inform future interested partners (clusters, organisations, etc.) that DEEP needs to be part of the regular workflow and processes and to be ingrained in any analysis working group established**. DEEP should be considered a continuous process rather than a one-off task typically performed in the month prior to the HNO. As a continuous process, DEEP will provide structure to secondary data analysis and remain a repository of secondary data, reducing the workload needed for ad hoc secondary data reviews.

Consistency in categorising data is essential. For example, in each DEEP project, those responsible for mapping should agree on categorisation to ensure consistency. The person who maps the majority of the data is best placed to review data exports and produce a secondary data review for protection analysis. Having said that, to maximise DEEP's potential, it is essential to adapt the platform to meet the specific needs and capacities of each cluster.

The models shown in Table 3 below can be used depending on the capacities and resources available for the cluster and the objectives they have for analysis.

Table 3: Models for analysis support

Global-level model: An agency leads on the structuring and summarising of protection-related data in DEEP that is provided to country operations.
Opportunities: This simplifies the process for Protection Clusters. In consultation with Protection Clusters, relevant data sources are defined and shared. Structuring, organising and summarising this data is carried out outside of country and provided to clusters for further use in analysis. Challenges: The analysts who work on DEEP may not have direct contact with cluster partners and may lack information and resource, which can be crucial in the effective use of the platform. This includes aspects like data sharing among partners, understanding the country's context and thus more effective tagging and overall use of the platform. These challenges could be overcome with proper planning and engagement with cluster partners and processes
Regional-level model: Resources at the regional level are established and provide clusters/agencies to structure and summarise protection-related data.
Opportunities: Analysts potentially have enlarged contextual understanding, facilitating regional analysis, and can potentially provide more tailored support to Protection Clusters. Challenges: Similar challenges as noted in the Global-level model.
Country-level model: Resources housed in Protection Clusters to structure and summarise protection-related data or resources provided by protection partners to support collective protection analysis.
Positives: The analyst working on DEEP will have deep contextual understanding when comparing both primary and secondary data sources, which will facilitate better analysis and can support a consistent analysis workflow driven by the analyst. Negatives: This necessitates resources for dedicated analyst positions in each cluster, or dedicated resources from protection partners to support collective protection analysis.

To increase the uptake of the DEEP platform within the protection sector, **the DEEP governance board should integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) for tagging sources according to the PAF.** AI and NLP can automate data extraction and categorisation, significantly reducing the time and resources needed for manual data mapping. This would enhance data analysis efficiency and accuracy, allowing Protection Clusters to process large volumes of secondary data continuously and systematically, ensuring more consistent and comprehensive protection analysis.

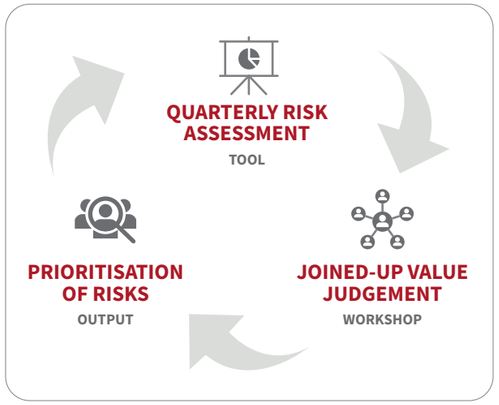
Risk Prioritisation and Joint Analysis

1. Lessons learned about risks and joint analysis

Risk prioritisation within protection analysis

From the onset of the PAF-DEEP Project, it was clear that a uniform methodology on protection risk prioritisation was lacking. While the PAU is centred on five priority protection risks, there was no common methodology used to prioritise these risks. The methodologies for prioritising risk consisted of using quantitative protection monitoring data to prioritise risk, discussions with Protection Cluster coordination team and AoRs or SAG, or ad hoc decisions. This also meant that decision-making on risk prioritisation was not integral to the analysis process.

Figure 4: Global Protection Cluster – Risk prioritisation process



In 2024, the GPC piloted a protection risk prioritisation tool. This tool addressed a critical gap by giving more guidance on how to prioritise risk, with methodology and guidance for structured expert judgment.[2]

However, the launch of this tool raised some issues.

- Sub-national coordinators were tasked with scoring protection risks but often lacked sufficient understanding of the PAF, protection risk list, and their definitions. This knowledge gap limited their ability to complete the tool accurately and in a timely manner, indicating a need for increased engagement and training to bring sub-national coordinators up to speed.
- There was inconsistent representation in the prioritisation process. While sub-national coordinators were supposed to consult partners, most filled out the tool independently. Ensuring consistent partner involvement is crucial for accuracy and inclusivity in the prioritisation process.
- The validation process also presented challenges. While online validation sessions with Protection

2 To prioritise risk, it is recommended that coordinators at *sub-national* level fill out the tool and discuss the ranking of 15 protection risks together with their partners. At national level, the coordination team assigns a weight to each risk, which is used to calculate the final score of the risk across all areas. Subsequently, the aggregated scores (calculated over weighted score x allocated score by area) can be discussed at national level. The risks with the highest scores could be considered as priority risks.

Cluster partners were co-facilitated, future validations can be streamlined within established analysis working groups or discussed in national Protection Cluster meetings to validate priority risks without undermining sub-national efforts.

- There was confusion about how risk prioritisation affects the HNO People in Need (PiN) severity and subsequent actions like response strategies and resource allocation. Clear explanations and consistent messaging are necessary to ensure buy-in and understanding across AoRs.
- Biases by AoRs were noted, as they tended to prioritise risks specifically mentioning their areas of responsibility. Joint messaging from AoRs to their constituents can help mitigate this issue and ensure a holistic approach to risk prioritisation.
- There was a lack of clarity on risk definitions and classification phases, leading to debates and confusion during the process. Strong facilitation and more precise definitions are needed to streamline the risk classification and scoring process.

Figure 5: Results of protection risk prioritisation process

	Burkina Faso	Ethiopia	Mali	South Sudan	Niger	TOTAL
Abduction, kidnapping, enforced disappearance, arbitrary or unlawful arrest and/or detention	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	2
Attacks on civilians and other unlawful killings, and attacks on civilian objects	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	4
Child and forced family separation	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	1
Child, early or forced marriage	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	1
Discrimination and stigmatization, denial of resources, opportunities, services and/or humanitarian access	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	2
Disinformation and denial of access to information	No	No	No	No	No	0
Forced recruitment and association of children in armed forces and groups	Yes	No	No	No	No	1
Gender-based violence	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	5
Impediments and/or restrictions to access to legal identity, remedies and justice	No	No	No	No	No	0
Presence of mine and other explosive ordnance	No	No	Yes	No	No	1
Psychological/emotional abuse or inflicted distress	No	No	No	No	Yes	1
Theft, extortion, forced eviction or destruction of personal property	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	2
Torture or cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment	No	No	No	No	No	0
Trafficking in persons, forced labour or slavery-like practices	No	Yes	No	No	No	1
Unlawful impediments or restrictions to freedom of movement, siege and forced displacement	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	4

As shown in Figure 5, some risks were prioritised across clusters. While this can indeed indicate that these risks are the highest priority in all clusters, in some cases this was also due to broad or confusing definitions of these risks. For example, gender-based violence was prioritised across all clusters, which could in part be attributed to the broad definition of this risk. Child marriage for example, was not prioritised in any cluster, partly because in discussion partners noted that this could be included into the gender-based violence definition.

Further, some risks were not prioritised, potentially because their definition was less well-known or understood. For example, the risk of disinformation and denial of access to information was not prioritised in any cluster. However, in the joint analysis workshops, it appeared that this risk was often identified as a main driver across the other protection risks prioritised – which was not discussed at the stage of severity classification. At times, different risks were not prioritised because the full risk definition or title was not adapted to the context. For example, the risk of 'trafficking, forced labour or slavery-like practices' was not prioritised in Mali and Burkina Faso, as limited information was available on the trafficking dimension. Yet, often there was data available on the child labour dimension of the risk, which was considered endemic and often cited as one of the most important protection issues. Where risks are not prioritised, despite the guided expert judgment in place to navigate classifying risk severity in the absence of data, the prioritisation of risks still follows common narratives (there is no information available on trafficking/few actors specialised in trafficking).

There were also other points of confusion about risk definition, such as whether 'attacks on civilians' risks could only apply in situation of armed conflict (not all crises can be openly classified as such), or which elements of family separation are considered 'forced'. Because of the importance and emphasis on protection risk within protection analysis, it remains key for sub-national coordinators and any other facilitator involved in the classification process to have a strong understanding of each protection risk and definition.

Understanding the criteria for ranking the severity and weighting of risks has been challenging for some cluster coordination teams. First, it was not necessarily clear who should be undertaking the weighting (Protection Cluster coordination team including or excluding AoR coordination teams). With the absence of clear definitions, there is potential for significant bias in weighting, including from protection coordinators and AoR coordinators. At times, coordination teams preferred to do the weighting after the risk severity classification at sub-national level, which allowed them to influence the overall prioritisation after the fact, rather than weight overall risks based on their perceived severity/impact.

Practices and challenges in joint protection analysis workshops

This section contains lessons learned on joint protection analysis derived from the workshops that took place in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, South Sudan, and Mali (hybrid). The PAF-DEEP project workshops were held over two days, covered analysis on five protection risks covering threats, threat effects, capacities and recommendations. The workshops were organised according to the PAF with the goal of finalising a PAU. A detailed agenda for the workshops can be found in Annex 7.

Incorporating Structured Analytical Techniques (SATs) such as structured brainstorming, mind maps and concept maps, and ranking, scoring and prioritisation was beneficial. These techniques helped facilitate discussions and make the analysis process more transparent and systematic. For instance, structured brainstorming allowed participants to generate a comprehensive list of relevant factors and potential threats and their consequences, which were then organised and further analysed using mind maps (i.e. problem tree). The problem tree technique was employed to outline the threats, their origins and their consequences, providing a clear visual representation of the relationships between different factors. Ranking, scoring and prioritisation were particularly useful during the Risk Prioritisation exercise, helping to systematically evaluate and prioritise protection

risks. By integrating these techniques, the workshops ensured a more robust and comprehensive analysis, enabling participants to systematically evaluate the data and make informed decisions.

While some aspects worked well, two days was generally too short to discuss all the different elements and make meaningful and practical recommendations. Given the nature of recommendations for national Protection Clusters, it may be better placed in the SAG to follow up with recommendations in a dedicated session. For recommendations on response strategies or options, a designated follow-up session needs to be held on this topic.

Engagement at the sub-national level was challenging, as the workshops took place at the national level, making it difficult to incorporate specific regional analysis into the overall narrative. Although elements per geographic area were discussed, comparison between administrative levels was limited.

Across the workshops, general reflections on what worked included that all Protection Clusters and partners appreciated the dedicated time to reflect on priority protection risk and spending time in joint discussion and group work to further analyse these risks. Some participants noted that there is often limited time available in the cluster to reflect on these issues collectively, and that it helped to share ideas and viewpoints that otherwise are not discussed transparently. For example, participants of South Sudan and Burkina Faso noted that they often do not have opportunities to discuss perpetrators of the threats, which is often deemed too sensitive to discuss openly in some contexts. The joint protection analysis workshops thus provided the ideal setting for partners to come together and reflect on the priority protection risks.

In addition, the workshops were structured, which helped guide the participants through the analysis step by step, enabling them to focus on the discussions rather than analytical concepts. It was helpful to have a mix of participants, from national and international NGOs as well as UN staff, with a variety of backgrounds. In workshops in Ethiopia and Mali, there was more success in adding non-protection staff, such as Heads of Programme, Humanitarian Affairs Officers, or cluster coordinators (e.g. Food), which enhanced discussions by bringing different perspectives.

Participants appreciated the opportunity to jointly discuss protection risks, and the continued emphasis on the analysis discussion rather than output. While a PAU was a main output following the workshops, the discussions were not limited to these documents as there is often a discrepancy between what partners can discuss in private and what can be documented publicly. Additionally, the focus and the outcomes of the analysis can vary depending on the intended output.

Key reflections from joint protection analysis workshops on PAF

In relation to aspects of the PAF, discussions on the **threats** were generally well executed. However, in some discussions the main actors or perpetrators of risks were not specifically identified or named, and it often required extensive probing to initiate this conversation, as participants were in some cases not accustomed to discussing these issues openly. The discussions around threats were particularly important for gaining a cultural understanding of the threats and how they are perceived by the affected communities. Many of the identified risks were deemed as driven by cultural or social norms (such as cattle raiding, child labour, or marital rape), which could be explained and nuanced through discussions. Participants shared their expert opinions on how these threats are perceived, providing a deeper understanding of the social context and underlying reasons for these behaviours. A recap for the discussions after day one (threat and threat effects) was pivotal, as it allowed the facilitators more time to reflect and ask questions for clarification, as well as for participants to rectify or deepen any analytical statements with additional information.

When it came to **threat effects**, the discussions were mostly centred on general effects from the threats that were quite similar across all contexts. For example, the threat effects for the gender-based violence risk (prioritised in all countries), included stigmatisation, health concerns, psychological needs, unwanted pregnancy, etc. across all contexts. There was little distinction between specific areas or population groups. Upon reflection, it is unclear whether the threat effects really differ significantly across different contexts, or whether these are relatively similar. Across all workshops, the least time was spent discussing the threat effects. It may be better to discuss specific threat effects per sub-national level and population group, to verify if those discussions yield significant distinctions.

The sessions on **capacities** were generally informative, especially as information on capacities is sparsely available through primary or secondary data. It is therefore pivotal to include a session on capacities in a joint analysis setting, as it is a way to extract and publicly discuss this information from protection experts. In a longer format, the discussion on capacities can be broadened to discuss humanitarian actors, and specifically more operational constraints that are generally important for practical recommendations. In addition, humanitarian access issues are often protection-related, and while these were discussed – often as related to a specific risk, such as checkpoints restricting movement or women avoiding movement at night or in specific areas for fear of gender-based violence – time did not allow for a deep discussion on these issues. Lastly, other humanitarian capacities, such as the capacity of local and international protection actors, were not discussed. In a different format, this discussion could be possible and may strengthen practical recommendations. Similar to the recap session on the threats and threat effects, it might be beneficial to have a recap session on capacities.

In the **recommendations** session what worked well was to discuss recommendations along the lines of different actors (donors, humanitarian community / humanitarian coordinators / humanitarian country teams, peace/development actors, protection actors, government/armed actors). One message that came across clearly in the workshop is that humanitarian actors often make recommendations to humanitarian/ protection actors but may not consider other actors that are needed, specifically to address the threat and build capacities.

However, it remained difficult for participants to make practical and concrete recommendations (following the principles of action, target, timeline). This was partly because of the format (the recommendations were done at the end of day two, at which point participants were tired), but generally facilitators noted that it seems difficult for participants to make recommendations that do not, for example, appeal for additional funding. Given that it is a discussion at national cluster level, it also seems that most recommendations pertain to public or private advocacy, e.g. ‘the government needs to ensure the enforcement of national and international laws’.

2. Recommendations on risks and joint analysis

Clarify the risk prioritisation process and linkages to the HPC

Target audience:
GPC and AoRs

While the tool and methodology help provide a structured process to risk prioritisation, implementation takes sustained engagement efforts over time. After the first pilot, there is still some lack of clarity re the risk prioritisation tool and this might need to be addressed for further use. First, the methodology or thresholds on assigning weighted scores to each protection risk is not clearly defined. While the rationale behind this is explained, it does lead to situations where weights may be assigned only when scoring by location has already taken place, which influences the overall prioritisation after the fact. This could lead to implicit (or explicit) bias in the weighting of risks.

To enhance the clarity of the prioritisation process and minimise bias, capacity building at both the national and sub-national levels is crucial. Ensuring that all coordinators and partners understand the methodology and can apply it consistently will help maintain objectivity.

Practical considerations in implementing the tool in future processes include allowing space for comments within the tool. Sub-national coordinators noted that while they classified a risk on a scale of 1–5 at administrative level, they preferred to provide some nuance on this scoring at times but did not have the space to capture this information.

Next, further joint messaging, particularly from the global AoRs to the AoR coordinators, may help avoid any confusion on the risk prioritisation exercise, its use, and how all AoRs are integrated into each defined protection risk. It was observed that currently there seems to be an emphasis on risks that are deemed 'AoR specific', rather than on protection risks as a whole. Further capacity building on the protection risk list and definitions across the Protection Clusters and its partners as a whole can also broaden the understanding of the protection risk list and increase the risk prioritisation. **Capacity building and communication around the protection risks and their definitions are necessary to ensure a common understanding among all partners and AoRs, ensuring a holistic approach.**

The publication of the *Protection Cluster Approach to Joined-up Protection Analysis* is instrumental in clarifying the risk prioritisation process and how this ties into the HPC. **Further capacity building on this guidance as well as dissemination and communication to all Protection Clusters and AoRs will be needed continuously, to ensure a collective understanding to risk prioritisation, how this ties into severity ranking and people in need calculations for the HNO**, and implications for primary data collection efforts that should be structured according to protection risks.

Engage sub-national coordination teams and partners

Target audience:
Protection Cluster/AoR coordination teams
Protection Cluster partners

The PAF-DEEP project primarily engaged with national cluster coordination teams rather than directly with sub-national coordinators, although the latter are crucial for protection risk analysis at the local level. While messages on analysis, process and outputs have been disseminated through the Protection Cluster national meeting, Strategic Advisory Group and other meetings, this did not always include the sub-national coordinators.

Protection partners also have a role to play in mobilising sub-national colleagues to contribute to the analysis processes. The national cluster coordination team can centralise training and communication for sub-national coordinators, ensuring they are informed and capable of contributing effectively, while protection partners at national level can disseminate messages and ensure their colleagues are engaged at different levels.

The PAF-DEEP project supported the pilot of the protection risk prioritisation tool, which sub-national coordinators were responsible for filling out. However, it was observed that these **coordinators needed more time and engagement to understand the risk prioritisation tool and process fully**. Some struggled to complete the tool on time and often did so without partner engagement. Staffing challenges, with coordinators covering multiple regions and not solely dedicated to protection work, contributed to these issues. **Enhanced efforts to engage sub-national coordinators can strengthen the risk prioritisation process, making it more transparent and inclusive before national aggregation**.

Organise joint analysis workshops

Target audience:
Protection Cluster/AoR coordination teams
Protection Cluster partners

While joint analysis sometimes took place within the supported clusters, it was often unstructured, and done as a one-off ahead of the HNO. The GPC protection analysis guidance recommends joint analysis is done at least once a year. **This message should be communicated from the GPC and AoRs to all colleagues, ensuring representation from every protection sector (including but also beyond AoR sectors) in the workshop.**

Prior to any workshop, a risk prioritisation exercise needs to be done based on available data and expert judgment. During the workshop, discussions of the threats and their effects may lead participants to identify risks through joint analysis that differ from those prioritised using the tool. Within each workshop, there should be some space to revise the risk prioritisation based on the discussions, to ensure that this considers partners' operational and contextual knowledge and experience and any secondary data, as best as possible. Further, **in any workshop, the use of structured analytical techniques to mitigate biases and to help make internal analysis explicit for the purposes of joint discussion is recommended**. Within the workshops, some SATs were used, particularly to help make internal thought processes explicit – an example can be found in Annex 8. However, more emphasis could be placed on using SATs to mitigate bias – which necessitates slightly more time for workshop participants to document thoughts and discussions.

It is difficult to be prescriptive about the exact format in which joint analysis protection workshops should be held. Rather, pros and cons of different formats will be discussed below. In all formats, it remains important to establish the exact purpose of these analysis workshops: they are to inform cluster analysis and advocacy – which can be established within a limited number of days. However, specific response planning based on this analysis needs its own designated timeslot to come up with meaningful strategy based on the analysis and operational challenges. Additionally, to enrich discussions and outcomes, it is crucial to ensure that workshops include diverse participants from different backgrounds, including various geographic locations, protection-specific expertise, and legal/human rights knowledge.

At the national level, the joint analysis workshops/sessions are best done within an analysis working group (see 3.2). The analysis working group meetings can be used to run analysis sessions over a longer period, which will allow for deeper analysis and discussion. The different aspects of the PAF can be discussed but may lack some granularity in the absence of sub-national-level partners. Hence, any protection partner needs to discuss inputs with sub-national colleagues prior to a joint analysis workshop.

At the sub-national level, joint analysis may be more localised, with more local partners present. This allows for deeper analysis on some aspects, particularly threat effects (who exactly within this region is affected, why, what are the different effects on different groups?), as well as capacities (what exactly are local communities doing in this region?). The nuance on these aspects tends to get lost more easily in a national-level workshop; however, it may be difficult to facilitate localised workshops consistently across all geographic levels because of staffing and capacity challenges, including the need to analyse primary and secondary data at each level. Depending on the purpose/output, for any national exercise (e.g. HRP), the analysis would still need to be aggregated to a national level, potentially adding an extra step to this process.

Suggestions as to what can be jointly analysed within the Protection Clusters at different levels are shown below in Table 4. As can be seen, most aspects of the PAF and subsequent joint analysis discussions can be held at various levels, largely dependent on the purpose/output from the joint analysis workshop.

Table 4: Joint analysis aspects at different levels

Pillar	Sub-Pillar	Coordination level	Comments
Context	Conflict and/or hazard history	National	The context generally needs to be covered at a national level, as this provides a better understanding of the country and dynamics at large.
	Political and socio-economic landscape		
	Institutional, legal and normative landscape		
Current threats to the population	Protection threats	Sub-national and national	Depending on the output of analysis, the joint analysis on all sub-pillars can be done at national or sub-national level, for purposes of programming (sub-national), advocacy and strategy.
	Main actors responsible		
	Origins		
Effect of threat on the population	Characteristics of affected population	Sub-national and national	Depending on the output of analysis, this can be done at national or sub-national level, for purposes of programming (sub-national), advocacy and strategy. However, at national level, discussions on specific characteristics of the affected population may be less nuanced (e.g. data on population groups at large, rather than more specificities), and there is little granularity on coping strategies. These aspects may be better discussed at sub-national level.
	Consequences of threat		
	Affected population coping strategies		

Existing capacities to address protection threats	Capacities of the affected population Local mechanisms, systems and actors Institutional, other mechanisms and response capacities	Sub-national and national	Depending on the output of analysis, this can be done at national or sub-national level, for purposes of programming (sub-national), advocacy and strategy. The capacities of the affected population and local mechanisms, systems and actors, may be better discussed at sub-national level in order to capture detailed information and granularities that may be lost at national level.
Recommendations		National	Recommendations for advocacy and strategy should be validated after joint analysis sessions, with some time for reflection on practical recommendations. This could be best achieved at the Strategic Advisory Group.

Annexes

Annexes are available by clicking the selected annex.
They must be uploaded as PDF files.

Annex 1. **Protection Monitoring (PROMO) Working Group - Terms of Reference & Working Document**

Annex 2. **Termes de Référence (TdR) Groupe de Coordination des Analyses de Protection (GCAP) du Cluster Protection**

Annex 3. **Secondary data for PAF pillars**

Annex 4. **Example of analytical summaries**

Annex 5. **Table with entries by pillar/sub-pillar/country/region**

Annex 6. **Risk prioritisation tool**

Annex 7. **Workshop agenda - Strengthening Joint Protection Analysis and Processes in Protection Clusters**

Annex 8. **Exercise from workshop**

Founded in 1956, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is Denmark's largest international NGO, with a specific expertise in forced displacement. DRC is present in close to 40 countries and employs 9,000 staff globally.

DRC advocates for the rights of and solutions for displacement-affected communities, and provides assistance during all stages of displacement: In acute crisis, in exile, when settling and integrating in a new place, or upon return. DRC supports displaced persons in becoming self-reliant and included in host communities. DRC works with civil society and responsible authorities to promote protection of rights and inclusion.

Our 7,500 volunteers in Denmark make an invaluable difference in integration activities throughout the country.

DRC's code of conduct sits at the core of our organizational mission, and DRC aims at the highest ethical and professional standards. DRC has been certified as meeting the highest quality standards according to the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability.

HRH Crown Princess Mary is DRC's patron.

To read more about what we do, see: www.drc.ngo

DRC DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL
· We are there

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