

**INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE
PRINCIPALS MEETING**

7 April 2005

9:30 – 13:00 hrs

Room I, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Concept Paper

International Protection Standby Capacity (PROCAP)

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An initial proposal for the establishment of a Protection Standby Capacity was discussed by the IASC Principals in March 2004. At that meeting, the Principals:

- Requested the Senior Network and IDP Unit to further develop the practical aspects related to the proposed PSC, taking into consideration the comments made in the meeting.
- Noted that the PSC would be used only as “a last resort” and should not minimize the importance of the protection functions of UN agencies.

Is there a need for an increased protection capacity?

The *IASC Policy Package on IDPs* outlines a road map for planning and responding to situations of internal displacement, including both the provision of assistance and protection¹. Yet, the experience in Darfur, Northern Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as other emergencies, reveal practical challenges to mounting an effective protection response among country teams. These include fielding qualified protection staff quickly, identifying staff with the requisite seniority to lead teams and ensuring coherent and coordinated approaches to protection. Many of these challenges will be highlighted in the Humanitarian Response Review.

In view of the need to improve response, especially in protection crises, this proposal is intended to make available a limited protection capacity on a short-term, global emergency basis. In order to improve the UN system’s longer term approach and protection capacity, an equal effort will be required by agencies to increase recruitment of protection officers and ensure effective coordinated strategies with clear objectives and a division of labour.

Clearly increased protection capacity alone among UN agencies and NGOs cannot address all the challenges in protection. According to international law and as outlined by the Guiding Principles and IASC policy, national authorities are not only part of the collaborative response but have the foremost responsibility for the protecting the rights of their citizens. Agencies can and should do more, but it is important to recognize that the most coordinated and resourced protection efforts may still fall

¹ The *IASC Policy Package* defines protection as “all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual in accordance with the letter and the spirit of the relevant bodies of law (i.e. international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and refugee law).”

short of expectations in contexts where the host government is uncooperative and basic security is not ensured.

Objective

To develop a centrally managed capacity of up to 100 qualified protection staff for deployment to new or rapidly evolving humanitarian emergencies, particularly involving situations of internal displacement, for up to six months in order to:

- (a) Support the UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator in planning for and coordinating the protection response; and/or
- (b) Assist protection mandated agencies fill key protection staffing gaps until operational capacity is sufficiently resourced.

How will the protection capacity be staffed?

PROCAP will supplement existing staffing resources within agencies and among NGO standby partners. It will be comprised of two tiers:

TIER 1: 10-person senior core team

A full-time core team of 10 senior protection officers (at the P4 and P5 level) will be available for immediate deployment primarily to support UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinators as senior advisors and coordinators. It is envisaged that the main task of core team members will be to (a) support the creation and maintenance of a country-wide protection response, including development of a protection strategy and appropriate protection mechanisms and (b) work with partners to define the capacities and resources required to mount the best possible protection response. The core team could also be deployed to specific agencies, based upon a decision of the HC/RC.

Team members would be recruited as full-time surge capacity on permanent rotation in the field. Qualified staff or former staff from the UN, Red Cross, NGOs and governments would be encouraged to apply. For practical purposes, staff would be centrally administered by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). Contracts would be at UN salary levels and additional incentives to attract high quality staff would be provided.

TIER 2: 90-person standby roster

A standby roster of 90 staff (P3-P5 level) protection/human rights officers will be developed in collaboration with all interested standby partners. These staff would be deployed to perform operational protection and human rights functions with field agencies and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as requested to work in the Office of the UN RC/HC to support coordination of protection response, if needed.

In order to fill the second tier roster, all standby partners would be encouraged to actively recruit and allocate staff with protection/human rights backgrounds. In addition, to targeted recruitment, standby partners would be encouraged to identify currently rostered staff who have the necessary background and potential to develop a protection/human rights profile. All staff on the roster would undergo intensive interagency training (see below).

How will the protection capacity staff be trained?

Training will be an integral part of developing the skills and preparedness of all PROCAP staff for deployment within the UN. IDD will work with IASC partners to develop an intensive training programme. The aim will be to provide four trainings per year, each with 25 people selected from among standby partners. The training would also be an opportunity for the UN to screen potential staff and understand better their relative strengths and skill sets to ensure that they are matched appropriately with requests from the field.

How will the protection capacity be managed?

Broadly speaking it is proposed that OCHA provides overall management of the protection standby capacity, in close cooperation with NRC, which has long experience in this area.

Personnel administration (contracts, salary, benefits etc) for the Core Team will be outsourced to the NRC. For second tier secondments, personnel administration will remain with participating standby partners.

Within OCHA, management will be part of a coherent approach to service the needs of the field incorporating other surge and standby rosters. IDD will play an active role in designing and contributing substantively to PROCAP and its execution.

Participating UN agencies will be invited to form a Steering Group to assist with training, deployment and provide overview and accountability.

How will Staff be Supervised and Supported at the Field Level?

Supervision and support in the field to PROCAP will be provided by the receiving agency or the HC/OCHA. As part of the request process, receiving agencies will need to ensure they have the necessary infrastructural support (office, vehicles, translators etc) for PROCAP staff to be operationally effective. Core team members will be provided with the necessary mobile equipment such as computers, phones etc

As the primary role of PROCAP is to support HC/RCs and UN country teams in the planning and implementation of a protection response, the decision to deploy PROCAP should be part of development of a protection strategy, as outlined in the IASC policy on responding to situations of internal displacement.

How will the protection capacity be funded?

The protection capacity will be funded from a special trust fund established in response to the PROCAP project proposal by OCHA. It is estimated to require approximately \$5 million for initial start up costs.

Prepared by: IDD, April 2005