



## GPC GLOBAL PROTECTION FORUM 2020

### Strategic partnerships with other clusters to strengthen protection outcomes - Health and Food Security

24 September 2020, 14:00-16:00 Geneva time

#### **Background**

In the current COVID-19 context, children are not the face of this pandemic but they risk being among its biggest victims. An estimated 42-66 million children could fall into extreme poverty as a result of the crisis this year, adding to the estimated 386 million children already in extreme poverty in 2019.<sup>1</sup> Rising malnutrition is expected as 368.5 million children across 143 countries who normally rely on school meals for a reliable source of daily nutrition must now look to other sources.<sup>2</sup> Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, food insecurity and hunger were increasing globally<sup>3</sup>. The socio-economic decline and looming food crisis will not only affect children's nutritional status, but could carry consequences beyond food insecurity, such as increased violence and neglect. Reduced household income will force poor families to cut back on essential health and food expenditures and increase their likelihood of adopting negative/harmful coping strategies, including early marriage<sup>4</sup>, child labour and withdrawing children from school. These strategies impair the children's ability to realize their potential, enjoy their rights and to break out of a cycle of vulnerability. The impact of COVID-19 threatens the significant progress and achievements made towards meeting several Sustainable Development Goals.

One way to mitigate this outcome is to capture the different dimensions of the pandemic, including those that affect the food security of children. In a joint endeavour spanning across the GPC, global Food Security Cluster, UNICEF, Plan international, Save the Children and War Child, the Child Protection AoR and WFP are leading an integrated approach to put more resourcing, analysis and solutions for an integrated approach across protection and food security.

The Child Protection and Food Security Reference Group works into building a solid foundation for knowledge management of best practices, along with generating evidence needed to capture specific linkages between child protection and food security that will build the platform for better collective outcomes. This will inform the development of protection responses to child protection and food insecurity, in areas where these are interlinked, either through complementary programmes or, where possible, through joint initiatives. Currently, the Reference Group is carrying out activities in CAR, DRC, Mali and South Sudan and expects to expand to other countries during this year.

In the same vein, individuals, groups, and communities affected by crises have the right to humanitarian assistance, including health and protection, regardless of their vulnerabilities or capacities. Ensuring that humanitarian response is adequate necessitates that clusters work closely with each other to better

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations, Policy Brief: Impact of COVID-19 on Children April 2020

<sup>2</sup> WFP, 2020

<sup>3</sup> [Global Report on Food Crises, 2018](#)

<sup>4</sup> <https://plan-international.org/food-crisis-increases-child-marriage-risk>.



understand populations at risk and help fulfil their rights under international legal frameworks and standards.

To ensure the Health and Protection Clusters remain “fit for purpose” for humanitarian and public health preparedness and emergencies, the Global Health Cluster and the Global Protection Cluster developed a joint operational framework which was guided by a Steering Committee (with members from Child Protection (CP), Gender-based Violence (GBV) and Mine Action (MA) Area of Responsibilities (AoRs), and Inter Agency Working Groups Reproductive Health in Crises and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS). This framework offers clear guidance and actions to inform an integrated approach to health and protection coordination and service delivery.

### ***Purpose of the session***

These initiatives are example of the added value of collective outcomes between food security, health and protection actors. The session provides an opportunity to learn, discuss and exchange on practices and experiences across Protection, Health and Food Security sectors to better understand, prevent, mitigate and respond to risks faced by affected populations in line with the key four actions identified in the IASC Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action (2016) and the IASC Light Guidance on Collective Outcomes (2020).

The session will illustrate how the, GPC, Health, CP AoR, WFP, gFSC and UNICEF work collectively on health, protection, food security and child protection integrated approaches on evidence generation and programmatic responses.

### ***Intended outcome***

- Capturing linkages between Health, food insecurity and protection risks
- Responding jointly to protection risks – evidence generation and programmatic responses

### ***Format***

The session will include a short presentation and a panel discussion showing the linkages between Health, food insecurity and protection risks - including the impact of COVID-19 - and the ongoing initiatives of the Health and Protection Steering Group as well as the child protection and food security Reference Group, followed by a plenary discussion.

Format Language: English

Time zone: Geneva

Platform: Zoom

### **Agenda for the Webinar**

The detailed session outline is as follows:

- 1) *Introduction and agenda.*
- 2) *Health & Food Insecurity as drivers for Protection & Child Protection Issues in the time of COVID-19.*
- 3) *Capturing linkages between food insecurity and protection risks – a view into child protection and food security analysis approach: the Reference Group model.*
- 4) *Strengthening Health & Protection Response: A Joint Operational Framework : Afghanistan Health Cluster*
- 5) *Panel discussion: Strategic partnerships with other clusters to strengthen protection outcomes.*



## 6) Q&A.

### **Speakers**

- Charles Apotheker- SDC
- Michael Copland – CP AoR
- Linda DOULL, Global Health Cluster Coordinator
- David Lai, Afghanistan Health Cluster
- Afghanistan Health Cluster country example
- Elspeth Chapman-Plan International

### **Background reading**

- Briefing paper: *Food Insecurity as a Driver of Child Protection Issues*
- *Understanding Child Protection and Food Security linkages: Mali Case Study*. WFP and CP AoR, 2019. (Available in English and French versions)
- *Joint Operational Framework: Health and Protection*