



Tool

Accountability Capacity strengthening Community Protection Structures
Empowerment of women Evaluation Material support Monitoring and coaching
Roles and responsibilities Selection of volunteers Sustainability

📍 Lebanon

Terms of reference for protection focal points

By Oxfam's Protection team

Purpose

The objective of working with refugees – including women and men, girls and boys – through a community- and rights-based approach and structure, such as protection focal points (PFP), is to:

- enhance active engagement and meaningful participation of conflict-affected people in programme design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- promote accountability, open dialogue and cooperation; and
- enhance communities' ability to tackle broader concerns related to their safety and protection in a sustainable fashion.

Number of protection focal points

In every informal settlement (IS) with at least 10 tents, two PFPs should be selected.

Gender

Aim for an equal proportion of women and men as PFPs in each IS. Ensure that women enjoy meaningful participation in the selection process.

Inclusion

Different target groups – such as elderly people, people with disabilities and women heads of households – should participate in community discussions and decision-making related to the selection, assessment and responsibilities of PFPs.

Responsibilities

PFPs' work is based on the protection needs of the communities they serve. Therefore, their responsibilities should be determined by community members, with support from Oxfam and partner organizations. Although these responsibilities vary, they usually include the following:

- Participating in training sessions conducted by Oxfam and partners;
- Disseminating information (preferably in local languages) to residents in the IS;
- Referring survivors of abuse to Oxfam, partners or other specialized stakeholders as needed, respecting confidentiality and responsible data management;
- Communicating with local authorities and service providers as required for some referral cases;
- Preparing and informing the community about relevant activities, including distributions, awareness-raising sessions, and predefined visits to the site by Oxfam and partners;
- Reporting on protection concerns, especially referrals and information sessions, through a gender-sensitive lens and using the appropriate tools.

Selection criteria

The selection of PFPs should be based on criteria defined by community members. However, Oxfam and partner organizations may encourage the following:

- Be resident in the IS and know the context, language and culture of the community; *
- Have a good rapport and trust within the community;
- Have effective communication, dialogue and consensus-building skills;
- Be respectful of gender, inclusion and cultural diversity;
- Be willing and available to fulfil their responsibilities; *
- Be able to attend trainings and actively participate in meetings;
- Be able to cooperate and communicate with other refugees in the IS;*
- Not be a direct relative of Oxfam staff; *
- Not have decision-making powers within the camp or community.*

(*) Denotes important criteria that cannot be ignored.

Selection approach

In new areas of intervention that do not currently have PFPs, the selection process involves two steps.

Step 1: Community meeting to present the overall project

This meeting will consist of a presentation on the services that Oxfam will offer during the year, the activities that will be carried out and the centrality of community volunteers. The presentation will first explain the tasks that are expected of the PFPs. Then the team will explain that in case new volunteers need to be selected, this will be done on the basis of gender-sensitive criteria to be agreed by the community.

Following previous experiences, and in order to ensure the participation of the community, protection staff and partners will meet a group from the community representing most of the households, including elderly people, minorities, women-headed households and people with disabilities.

In sites where PFPs are already in place from a last project, Oxfam staff will explain the new project activities and ask the PFPs if they are willing to stay as volunteers. Then Oxfam staff will ask the community if there are any objections, which can be shared in plenary or bilaterally. If there are no withdrawals or complaints, the focal points will remain in their role.

In locations where there are no focal points, or in communities where focal points have dropped out or are asked by the community to change, the communities will be asked to select up to two individuals (one woman and one man). The selection method will be decided by the community itself – it may be an election by community members, appointment by Oxfam or reached by collective agreement. Oxfam will only intervene in the selection of volunteers if the community so requests. The selection method will nonetheless follow the aforementioned selection criteria and guidelines on gender balance and inclusion. The community will be given up to one week to decide on the new PFPs, if necessary.

Step 2: Confirmation of the selection criteria, gender balance and presentation of responsibilities and materials to support the volunteers work

A second meeting will be conducted with the selected individuals to make sure that the responsibilities and material support are well understood by them. If the newly appointed PFPs do not meet the criteria, this will be explained to them and the community, and a new selection process will have to take place.

Reselection

From the first meeting with the community, it should be clearly explained that, if any of the existing or newly selected PFPs are not fulfilling their responsibilities well, they will need to stop their role, and Oxfam will ask the community to select different people.

If community members are not satisfied with the work of the volunteers, they can raise their complaint to Oxfam's senior monitoring, evaluation and learning officer by phone, through a complaints box, or to the protection team as instructed in a one-page summary distributed to them. Please make sure that everyone is made aware of the complaint's mechanisms in community, especially women and girls.

Other reasons for reselection can be:

- A PFP leaves the IS;
- A PFP does not wish to remain in their role;
- Repeated complaints, gender bias and/or lack of trust raised by the community;
- Misconduct, abuse of power, fraud or any other behaviour against Oxfam's principles, policies and code of conduct.

Training and sessions for protection focal points

Oxfam's protection team in collaboration with KAFA and the Lebanese Center for Human Rights (CLDH), select two focal points and train them in:

- the relevant legal framework;
- gender-based violence (GBV);
- safe programming and the 'do no harm' approach;

- gender and protection risk analysis, including protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA); and other protection-related topics.

The selected PFPs also attend generic trainings about communication, including how to conduct information sessions. After the training sessions, PFPs are invited to decide if they are more interested in being trained in detention and/or GBV prevention and mitigation, in addition to other topics.

Throughout the project's implementation, PFPs receive training in:

- the safe identification and referral of individuals at risk, including responsible data management and confidentiality; and how to use monitoring and tracking tools.

Material support from Oxfam to volunteers

Oxfam and partners agree that no cash will be given as incentives to any of the volunteers, in order to maintain the voluntary nature of their engagement.

On the other hand, all volunteers will be provided with some standard tools that they need to be able to carry out their tasks, without recourse to using their own resources:

- Phone cards and top-ups will be provided to ensure volunteers are able to communicate with Oxfam and carry out referral and information-sharing activities;
- Information materials and guidance notes will be provided to support information-sharing activities. The content of these materials will be coordinated with specialized partners depending on the topic addressed.
- Refreshments during activities will be provided.

Monitoring and coaching

Oxfam teams and partners will follow up and coach the PFPs on a weekly basis, or as needed. Oxfam will also organize and lead monthly meetings (see [Annex 1](#)) with PFPs and other community structures to:

- discuss issues of concern and potential solutions;
- provide blank analysis and reporting tools, and collect the ones from the previous month;
- cross-check information;
- discuss the progress of activities; and
- collect and/or address complaints.

The findings of each monthly meeting can be tracked in the Monthly meetings database ([Annex 2](#)).

The work of the PFPs – as with that of other community protection structures (CPS) – will be monitored through the CPS evaluation tool ([Annex 3](#)). The tool includes specific questions to assess the representativeness (including gender sensitivity, diversity and inclusion), accountability, ownership and sustainability of each CPS.

Annex 1: Community structure monthly meeting guidelines

Purpose and objective

As part of Oxfam's community engagement approach, the humanitarian programme team conducts community structure monthly meetings with PFPs to discuss challenges, capacity building needs and mitigation measures. The meeting creates the space needed in the IS for communities to engage with each other and Oxfam's protection team. The guidelines below are regularly revised to include questions and themes that might change over time in order to fit the context. During the meeting, PFPs are expected to raise the concerns and needs of the entire community, particularly vulnerable and marginalized groups, rather than their own individual concerns.¹ This meeting could potentially include community health volunteers (CHVs) and community technical volunteers (CTVs).

Introduction

Meetings must always start with introductions of both Oxfam staff and community members. Even though community structures and focal points are familiar with Oxfam's team members and objectives, these introductions serve to refresh their memories, set expectations, introduce any new PFPs and/or Oxfam staff, and raise the meeting points that will be discussed.

Explain that a colleague will be taking some notes, but clarify that they will not include any names or other personally identifiable information mentioned during the meeting. Notes of meetings from several areas will be compiled together, to ensure that Oxfam is aware of any new development, emerging or existing needs, or any topics for capacity building.

Questions

For regular monthly meetings, Oxfam team uses sets of questions to guide discussions with PFPs. Although the themes are generally the same over time, the questions can be modified and adapted based on changes in context. For example, the questions below have been recently adapted to include considerations specific to COVID-19.

How are the PFPs doing this month?

This is a free/open conversation to see what organically comes from the community PFPs.

Prompts:

- What have they been doing?
- How have they been interacting with the community?
- Have they managed to disseminate information and refer cases to services providers? (Check the plan for the month on the topics to be disseminated).
- Are there any challenges with information dissemination? Any new needed topics? Any challenges related to complaints and referrals? Any particular challenges affecting a specific vulnerable or marginalized group?
- Were CTVs able to prepare the bill of quantities for maintenance? Did they face any challenges? What do PFPs propose to overcome the challenges? What support do they need?
- What have PFPs found challenging or positive?

¹ PFPs can raise individual concerns bilaterally with Oxfam staff, as needed. The Oxfam team follow up on such concerns on an individual basis.

How is the IS community doing?

This an open conversation to see what organically comes from the community.

Prompts:

- Are there any changes to the community's daily lives? Think about:
 - **Work:** Consider working hours, type of work and working conditions. Are refugees treated fairly by their employers? Are they paid their agreed-upon wages accurately and on time? If mistreated or not paid fully, what is their usual recourse?
 - **Schooling:** Are children going to school? If not, why? How can this be addressed?
 - **Access to information and services:** Are families, particularly women and girls, able to access information and health services in case of a member's sickness? Are there any self-imposed, municipality-dictated or religion-based restrictions on their movement? If yes, how do they solve them with gender sensitive lens?
- Are there new developments from the previous month? Are any of these developments affecting a specific vulnerable or marginalized group?
- Do the PFPs anticipate any new developments in the coming month(s)? For example, these could include winter flooding; water shortages; harassment at a new checkpoint; new statements, laws or regulations etc.

Encourage PFPs to discuss each new development (and potential solutions) together, in a participatory, democratic, gender-inclusive and culturally sensitive way

For each of the new developments, understand whether PFPs or other community members did something to improve the situation; if not, then understand why not. Ask whether they have ideas of how they or other community members can help the IS community. If the challenge is something that can be addressed by them and their community but has not been done, try to prompt them to think about solutions together. Be propositional, suggesting simple solutions (e.g. borrowing tools, collecting contributions to help a family, mobilizing the community to clean or build something, etc.)

If the challenge is something that cannot be addressed by PFPs and their community, then remind them to make a referral to Oxfam or another service provider. Also remember to always raise specific problems internally, if solutions can be supported by Oxfam; however, do not mention this to the community in order not to create expectations.

Be propositional if they are not able to think of ideas. Do not tell them what to do, but give them prompts – ask them, involve them and take their suggestions first as it is important and useful. However, if the problem is beyond their control, decide whether it is something that Oxfam can help with.

Do not make promises that you are not sure of. Instead, mention that you would need to report back to them on Oxfam's ability to assist.

Follow-up questions

Make sure to ask follow-up questions and/or gather more details whenever relevant to clarify any specific concerns the community has.

Prompts:

(Note: any of the questions below can be ignored if the team believes it is a sensitive subject and/or the participants would not be comfortable to answer.)

- Are there any newly arrived families? Are there any women-headed households among them? How did they settle in? Do they need support for information and services? Did PFPs refer/self-refer them to services providers (e.g. UNHCR for recording)? Have PFPs checked in on them

recently? Are they informed of the protection and WASH-related information and services/actors?

- Are there families leaving the site? Why did they leave or want to leave?
- How are the relationships between community members and their landlords? Is anyone facing any kind of concern/issue/threat (e.g. eviction; rent increases; being forced to work for their landlords; mistreatment, harassment or exploitation; or being asked for 'sexual favours'; etc.)? Are there any cases of positive interactions and support?
- How is the relationship between community members and municipal authorities, local authorities and/or the host communities? Have there been any cases of harassment? Are there any new demands and constraints/security measures imposed on them (e.g. curfew, raids, detention, eviction, new checkpoints, etc.)? Are there any cases of positive interactions?
 - Were any residency renewals successfully completed or blocked? Any concerns or challenges? Are women able to renew residency?
- How is the health situation in the IS? Have any new behaviours been observed that could lead to health problems for particular groups within the community? How is access to health services for all groups in the community?
 - Are there any issues concerning mobility and lighting, the use of latrines at night, or other incidents due to darkness? Have any coping mechanisms been observed? Provide space for open discussion on access to WASH.
 - Are the services provided adequate to meet people's diverse needs?
 - Are there any households or groups being neglected or excluded, e.g., because of their special requirements?

Adaptations (COVID-19 situation)

In March 2020, a state of general mobilization was announced in Lebanon followed by lockdown measures in order to contain the spread of COVID-19. The lockdown has since been lifted and reapplied several times. To limit community gathering and ensure that staff and communities are safe, Oxfam has adapted all non-essential activities to take place either remotely or face-to-face with strict COVID-19 measures in place. The questions for the monthly PFP meetings were adapted to highlight the changes in the context. Meetings were conducted by phone or in very small gatherings (maximum of five people) with a limited number of PFPs in an open, well-ventilated location, with personal protective equipment provided. The main themes of discussion remained the same as above, but questions were adapted on a monthly basis to highlight changes in context.

Additional or adapted questions

- Have PFPs managed to disseminate information (including COVID-19 awareness and prevention information) and refer cases to services providers? If not, why?
- What kind of support do PFPs need to share information (including on COVID-19)?
- How are the relationships between community members and municipal authorities, local authorities and/or the host communities now that the lockdown measures have eased? Have there been any cases of harassment? Are there any new demands and constraints/security measures imposed on them (e.g. curfews, raids, detention, evictions, new checkpoints, etc.)? Are there any cases of positive interactions?
- Are PFPs and other people in the community facing any challenges in accessing WASH services after Oxfam stopped its WASH activities here (if applicable)? If yes, what are these challenges? What can we do to support?

- Has the situation in your area shifted since the start of COVID-19, and since lockdown measures changed?
- Do you need any support from the protection team to be able to fulfil your role as a focal point in the current situation?
- Are you interested in any training either remotely or in very small groups?
- Services provided by NGOs and UNHCR are free of charge, and no fees should be requested in return for services. Are you hearing any concerns in that regard in the community recently?² Please raise this in communities and report on this issue whenever it happens.

Follow-up

Following the monthly meetings, minutes are compiled by the team and action plans are identified for follow-up internally in Oxfam, with the community, or with other actors (including duty bearers, service providers, humanitarian actors and women's rights organizations) as needed. Follow up may also entail capacity-building activities for the communities on specific issues.

Follow up must be initiated no later than two weeks after the meeting – or one week for urgent issues. In extreme cases, such as the eviction of an entire IS, follow up may be required within 24 hours. However, follow ups on capacity-building needs may be delayed longer, due to required time to plan and organize the activities.

² This question was added because, with COVID-19, there was an increase in cases of fraud reported by communities.

Annex 2: Community structure monthly meeting database (Template)

Date	Location	Number of attendees				Date of identification	Date of revision	Action taken	Updates	Newly arrived families	Departed families
		Type of structure	Male	Female	Total						

Annex 3: Community Protection Structure (CPS) evaluation tool

Community Protection Structure (CPS) evaluation tool	
Facilitator	
Notetaker	
Date	
Location	
P-Code	

CPS details	Name		Community Protection Structure 1
		Male	
CPS details	Number of CPS members	Female	
		Total	
Representativeness	1. Are the chosen members representing all the community?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	2. Are the chosen members representing women and girls, elderly and young people?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	3. Is there a reselection system to replace any CPS member who might leave?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
Accountability	4. Does the CPS communicate regularly with the rest of the community to inform them about their work and to collect their inputs and views?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	5. Are the roles for every member in the CPS clear?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	

Accountability	6. Has the participation of women in community decision-making processes improved?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	7. Is there a mechanism in the community to resolve disagreements?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
Accountability	8. Are we (Oxfam) following up with the CPS on regular basis?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	9. Are you satisfied with our (Oxfam) follow-up? If 'no' or 'somewhat', please explain what we could do differently.	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
Ownership and sustainability	10. During the discussions when issues appear, who is taking decisions on how to move forward with the work, about possible solutions, and on how to prioritise?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	11. Is the CPS in contact with service providers or other stakeholders to discuss and address needs and issues affecting the community?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	12. Has the CPS started to contact the local authorities or other service providers to discuss their needs and concerns?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
	13. Is the CPS meeting to discuss their needs or address their problems without Oxfam?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
Ownership and sustainability	14. Is the CPS updating the plans and needs, and implementing planned activities, on their own?	Answer (Yes/No/Somewhat)	
		Explain	
Ownership and sustainability	15. Where do CPS members see themselves as a group after Oxfam? (Exit strategy: will they continue working together or will the group disappear)?	Answer	
	15. a. What support would they need?	Answer	