



PROTECTION POLICY



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Approval Statement

Policy Title: Protection Policy

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Statement of Approval:

The Board of Directors of Peace by Youth (PY) formally approves the adoption and implementation of the Protection Policy. This policy has been reviewed and endorsed as a vital framework for safeguarding the dignity, rights, and well-being of all individuals engaged with or affected by PY's programs and operations.

The Protection Policy establishes clear principles and guidelines to prevent harm, exploitation, and abuse while promoting a safe and inclusive environment for all stakeholders, including beneficiaries, staff, and partners. It reflects PY's commitment to ethical practices, respect for human rights, and accountability in achieving its mission of empowering youth, fostering peace, and advancing socio-economic development.

Implementation and Review:

This policy will be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders and applied across PY's activities and initiatives. It will undergo periodic review and updates to ensure alignment with evolving best practices, organizational priorities, and legal standards.

Signatures:

Chairperson, Board of Directors

Name:

Nisar Ahmed

Signature:

Date:

December 10, 2024.



Secretary, Board of Directors

Name:

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Date:

December 10, 2024.



1. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

1.1 PURPOSE

The **Protection Policy of Peace by Youth (PY)** is designed to establish a clear and comprehensive framework to safeguard the rights, dignity, and well-being of all individuals who interact with the organization. PY, through its various programs, engages with vulnerable populations, including but not limited to refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), women, children, people with disabilities (PWDs), and marginalized communities. This policy reflects PY's commitment to ensuring that all persons under its care are protected from harm, violence, exploitation, neglect, and abuse.

The **primary purpose** of this policy is to outline the principles, practices, and operational protocols that guide the protection of these vulnerable populations in PY's operations. Specifically, the policy aims to:

1. **Establish protection as a core component** of PY's mission and humanitarian efforts, ensuring that safeguarding vulnerable individuals is at the heart of every program and activity.
2. **Create a safe and secure environment** for all individuals, particularly vulnerable groups, where they can access PY's services without fear of harm or exploitation.
3. **Promote a culture of respect and accountability** among PY staff, volunteers, and partners, ensuring that all individuals are treated with dignity, regardless of their status, ethnicity, gender, or nationality.
4. **Prevent any form of harm, abuse, and exploitation**, particularly sexual exploitation, gender-based violence (GBV), child abuse, and neglect. This includes having clear reporting mechanisms, protection structures, and swift responses to incidents.
5. **Ensure compliance with international human rights standards**, including those enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention, UNHCR's protection guidelines, and other related international frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
6. **Strengthen PY's internal mechanisms** for identifying, reporting, and addressing protection issues. This includes training staff, establishing reporting lines, and ensuring that all individuals associated with PY are aware of the organization's protection protocols.
7. **Foster collaboration with local and international stakeholders**, such as government bodies, the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations (CBOs), to create a cohesive and coordinated protection response system.
8. **Empower vulnerable populations** by raising awareness about their rights, creating opportunities for their voices to be heard, and ensuring they are involved in the design and implementation of protection-related interventions.
9. **Integrate protection principles** into all stages of PY's project lifecycle, from the design and planning phases to implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This ensures that protection considerations are systematically and consistently applied across all PY programs.

The **Protection Policy** is not merely a set of procedures but a reflection of PY's core values, which prioritize human dignity, equality, and the safety of all people. By putting this policy into action, PY seeks to ensure that its efforts align with global best practices in protection, including promoting long-term resilience, self-reliance, and recovery among those affected by displacement, conflict, and other forms of vulnerability.

1.2 SCOPE

The **Protection Policy** is comprehensive and applies to all aspects of **Peace by Youth's** operations. It provides clear guidance and sets expectations for the behavior and responsibilities of everyone involved in PY's work, ensuring that protection is a priority in all circumstances. Specifically, the scope of the policy covers the following individuals and operational areas:

1.2.1 PY STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

This policy applies to all individuals employed by or volunteering with **Peace by Youth (PY)**, regardless of their role, location, or level of interaction with the affected populations. This includes:

- **Permanent and contract-based staff:** All employees of PY, whether working at the head office, in the field, or remotely, must adhere to the protection principles outlined in this policy.
- **Volunteers:** Individuals offering their time and expertise to assist PY in its programs are also bound by this policy. Volunteers, especially those working directly with beneficiaries, must undergo protection training and be familiar with the reporting mechanisms for protection concerns.
- **Consultants and contractors:** Individuals or organizations providing services or conducting evaluations or assessments on behalf of PY are required to uphold the same protection standards. PY ensures that any contract agreements include clauses related to protection and that contractors are trained on PY's protection framework.

1.2.2 PY PARTNERS AND SUBCONTRACTORS

This policy extends to **partner organizations** and **subcontractors** who collaborate with PY to deliver services or implement programs. These partners are essential to the effective delivery of protection services, and as such, PY requires them to adhere to the same high standards of protection as outlined in this policy.

- **Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) or service contracts** signed between PY and its partners will include explicit provisions requiring compliance with PY's protection principles.
- **Training and support** will be provided to partner organizations to ensure they have the capacity to implement protection measures and report protection-related concerns appropriately.

1.2.3 REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES

The **primary beneficiaries** of PY's protection interventions are **refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs)**, and members of **host communities**. The policy's scope encompasses all individuals receiving services or participating in programs organized by PY, particularly:

- **Refugees and displaced persons:** PY operates in communities where refugees and IDPs are often exposed to heightened risks of exploitation, violence, and abuse. This policy provides a framework for ensuring their protection from such harms while promoting their rights and dignity.
- **Host communities:** As PY also works with host communities where refugees reside, this policy applies to members of those communities who benefit from PY's programs. The aim is to prevent any tension, conflict, or protection risks between refugees and host communities, and to ensure a safe environment for all.

1.2.4 LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND GOVERNMENT BODIES

PY frequently collaborates with **local authorities** and **government agencies** to implement its protection programs. This policy guides how PY engages with these bodies to ensure that protection standards are maintained and that joint activities do not put vulnerable populations at risk.

- **Coordination mechanisms** between PY and government bodies will include protocols for addressing protection issues, especially concerning refugee registration, legal documentation, and access to services.
- PY will work with government actors to enhance **institutional capacity** in providing protection services, especially in areas affected by displacement or humanitarian crises.

1.2.5 INTERACTIONS WITH UNHCR AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Since PY partners with international bodies such as the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** and other humanitarian organizations, this policy serves as the foundation for maintaining protection standards that are in line with global humanitarian norms.

- All collaborative agreements with international partners will be based on this policy to ensure uniformity in the protection approaches used across all levels of program delivery.
- PY will ensure that its protection activities complement and strengthen the broader protection frameworks established by UNHCR, including in the areas of refugee registration, legal assistance, and durable solutions.

1.2.6 GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE

This policy applies to all geographical areas where PY operates, including but not limited to **Balochistan, Sindh**, and other regions where refugee or IDP populations are present. The policy ensures that:

- **Protection services are tailored** to the local context, addressing specific risks faced by refugees and vulnerable groups in each region.
- **Regional differences** in protection risks are acknowledged, and **localized solutions** are developed in coordination with local communities and stakeholders.

1.2.7 PROGRAMMATIC AREAS

The **Protection Policy** governs the implementation of all PY's **protection-related programs**, including:

- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV) prevention and response programs:** These programs focus on preventing GBV within refugee communities and offering survivor-centered support services to victims.
- **Child protection initiatives:** PY runs programs aimed at preventing child abuse, exploitation, and neglect in refugee camps and host communities.
- **Cash-based interventions:** Programs that provide financial assistance to refugees must ensure that cash transfers are safely and fairly distributed to avoid any exploitation or abuse.
- **Education and livelihood programs:** Protection principles are integrated into PY's education and livelihood programs to ensure that individuals participating in these programs are not exposed to any form of harm or exploitation.

1.2.8 CRISIS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSES

During humanitarian crises, the scope of this policy extends to **emergency response efforts**, ensuring that protection services are prioritized in the early stages of disaster or conflict interventions. PY's emergency response teams must integrate protection mechanisms to address immediate risks, such as sexual exploitation, trafficking, and abuse.

- **Rapid Protection Assessments** will be conducted during emergencies to identify protection risks and ensure immediate action.
- PY will work with local and international stakeholders to create **safe spaces** for women, children, and vulnerable individuals during crises.

2. KEY PRINCIPLES

The protection work of Peace by Youth (PY) is built upon a set of foundational principles that guide every aspect of the organization's engagement with vulnerable populations, particularly refugees and host communities. These **Key Principles** ensure that PY's work is aligned with international protection standards, promotes human dignity, and fosters a safe, respectful, and accountable environment for both beneficiaries and staff. Each principle underpins PY's commitment to uphold the rights and well-being of all individuals, particularly those at heightened risk of harm, exploitation, and abuse.

2.1 HUMAN DIGNITY AND RIGHTS

At the core of PY's protection policy is the principle of **Human Dignity and Rights**. PY recognizes that all individuals, regardless of their legal status, nationality, or background, are entitled to fundamental human rights as defined by international human rights law, refugee law, and humanitarian law.

Commitment to Upholding Human Rights

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**: PY is committed to upholding the UDHR, which states that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." This forms the foundation of PY's approach to protection, ensuring that all individuals under its care are treated with respect and afforded the dignity they deserve.
- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** and **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**: PY's protection efforts aim to ensure that refugees and displaced persons can access their civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights, including the right to freedom from persecution, access to education, healthcare, and a fair standard of living.
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** and **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**: In particular, PY's work with women and children emphasizes their protection and empowerment, ensuring they are free from violence, exploitation, and discrimination.

Ensuring Dignity in Service Delivery

- PY ensures that **dignity** is preserved at every level of its service delivery by treating all individuals with respect, listening to their concerns, and addressing their needs without judgment or prejudice.
- **Refugee and displaced persons' dignity** is central to all protection programming. Whether through the provision of basic services, legal assistance, or psychosocial support, PY's interventions are designed to promote **self-reliance** and **empowerment**, enabling individuals to make informed decisions about their lives and futures.
- PY ensures that the voices of refugees and host communities are heard and respected in the design and implementation of programs, recognizing that **participation** is a critical component of human dignity.

2.2 NON-DISCRIMINATION

Non-discrimination is a cornerstone of PY's protection efforts, ensuring that all individuals have equal access to services and support, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, nationality, or political affiliation. PY's commitment to non-discrimination aligns with international human rights law and UNHCR protection standards.

Equal Access to Protection Services

- PY ensures that **all individuals**, including refugees, IDPs, and host communities, are entitled to the same level of protection without bias or favoritism. This includes the right to access PY's services, such as legal aid, psychosocial support, and assistance with basic needs.
- PY actively works to **eliminate barriers** to service access for marginalized groups, such as women, children, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities (PWD), and the elderly. Special attention is paid to identifying and addressing the specific needs of these groups, ensuring they receive adequate and appropriate protection services.

Mainstreaming Gender Equality

- Gender is a central factor in PY's non-discrimination principle. Women and girls, in particular, often face greater vulnerabilities in displacement settings. PY ensures that its services are gender-sensitive and tailored to the unique needs of women and girls, providing them with **equal opportunities** to access education, healthcare, livelihoods, and protection services.
- PY's protection work includes **addressing gender-based violence (GBV)**, which disproportionately affects women and girls. PY's programs are designed to prevent GBV and provide survivors with the support they need, while also challenging harmful gender norms that perpetuate violence and discrimination.

Inclusion of People with Disabilities (PWD)

- People with disabilities are among the most marginalized and vulnerable in displacement settings. PY is committed to the **full inclusion** of PWD in all its protection programs. This includes ensuring that facilities are accessible, information is available in formats suitable for PWD, and staff are trained to meet the specific needs of individuals with disabilities.
- PY advocates for the **rights of PWD** and works with local partners to create inclusive communities where people with disabilities are respected and have access to the same rights and opportunities as others.

Protection of Ethnic and Religious Minorities

- Refugees and displaced persons from minority ethnic or religious groups often face additional risks of discrimination and violence. PY ensures that its protection programs are designed to **prevent discrimination** against these groups, promote **interfaith dialogue**, and foster **social cohesion** within host communities.

2.3 DO NO HARM

The principle of **Do No Harm** is integral to all of PY's protection interventions. This principle ensures that PY's programs and activities do not inadvertently cause harm or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities within the communities it serves.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation

- Before implementing any intervention, PY conducts a **thorough risk assessment** to identify potential risks to the safety and well-being of beneficiaries. This includes examining how the intervention could impact vulnerable groups, such as women, children, ethnic minorities, or PWD.
- PY develops **mitigation strategies** to minimize any identified risks and ensure that its activities do not contribute to harm. For example, when distributing cash assistance, PY ensures that the process is safe and confidential to prevent recipients from becoming targets of exploitation or violence.

Community Engagement and Informed Consent

- PY is committed to ensuring that all individuals who participate in its programs do so **voluntarily** and with full **informed consent**. This means that beneficiaries are provided with clear information about the program, its goals, and any potential risks, allowing them to make informed decisions about their participation.
- PY actively engages with **community leaders** and **beneficiaries** throughout the program cycle to ensure that interventions are culturally appropriate and do not unintentionally disrupt community dynamics or exacerbate existing conflicts.

Monitoring and Learning

- PY regularly **monitors** its interventions to ensure that the principle of Do No Harm is upheld throughout the project lifecycle. Any issues that arise are addressed immediately, and lessons learned are incorporated into future programming.
- PY also ensures that it continuously **learns from beneficiaries**, soliciting feedback to improve its protection efforts and ensure that interventions remain responsive to the needs of the communities it serves.

2.4 ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is a key principle that ensures PY remains answerable to the communities it serves, its donors, and relevant governing bodies. PY's accountability mechanisms are designed to ensure that its protection programs are transparent, responsive, and effective in safeguarding the rights and well-being of vulnerable populations.

Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)

- PY's protection work is guided by the principle of **Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)**, we call it **Accountability and Response System (ARS)** within PY, which emphasizes the importance of engaging with refugees, IDPs, and host communities at all stages of the project cycle. PY ensures that affected populations have a voice in the design, implementation, and evaluation of its programs.
- PY establishes **feedback and complaints mechanisms** to allow beneficiaries to raise concerns or report issues related to protection services. These mechanisms are designed to be accessible, confidential, and responsive, ensuring that beneficiaries can provide input without fear of retaliation.

Donor Accountability

- PY is committed to maintaining **transparency** and **fiscal accountability** in all of its operations. This includes adhering to donor requirements, providing accurate and timely reporting, and ensuring that funds are used effectively and in line with protection goals.
- PY regularly conducts **internal audits** and participates in external evaluations to ensure that its protection programs are delivering results in a cost-effective and impactful manner.

Organizational Accountability

- PY holds itself accountable to the highest standards of **ethical conduct** and **integrity**. All staff, volunteers, and partners are required to adhere to PY's **Code of Conduct**, which outlines the ethical principles that guide the organization's work, including the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).
- PY's leadership ensures that **protection policies and procedures** are implemented consistently across all programs and that staff are held accountable for their actions, particularly in cases involving protection concerns.

2.5 CONFIDENTIALITY

The principle of **Confidentiality** is critical in PY's protection work, particularly when handling sensitive information related to protection cases. PY is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of all beneficiaries' personal information and ensuring that this information is only shared when necessary and with the consent of the individual.

Confidential Case Management

- PY adopts a **survivor-centered approach** to case management, particularly in cases involving gender-based violence (GBV) or child protection. This means that all information related to protection cases is handled with the utmost confidentiality, and survivors have control over how and with whom their information is shared.
- Staff and volunteers are trained on **confidentiality protocols** and are required to sign confidentiality agreements as part of their employment or volunteer contracts.

Data Protection and Privacy

- PY implements **data protection measures** to ensure that beneficiaries' personal information is securely stored and only accessible to authorized personnel. This includes maintaining physical security of case files, using encrypted databases, and ensuring that electronic records are protected by password security.
- Beneficiaries are informed about how their personal data will be used and are given the option to **opt-out** of data collection or sharing, in line with international data protection standards.

Limits to Confidentiality

- While confidentiality is a key principle, there are certain situations where PY may be legally or ethically required to share information. This may include cases where there is an immediate risk to the safety of an individual or community, or when required by law. In

such cases, PY ensures that the individual is informed and involved in the decision-making process.

3. DEFINITIONS

In order to effectively implement the protection policy, it is important to establish clear and comprehensive definitions of the key terms and concepts that guide PY's protection efforts. These definitions serve as the foundation for understanding protection-related issues and ensuring consistency across all of PY's programs, staff, and partners. Below are the detailed definitions that provide a common framework for how PY approaches protection.

3.1 PROTECTION

Protection refers to all activities aimed at ensuring full respect for the rights of individuals, in accordance with international legal frameworks such as **human rights law**, **refugee law**, and **international humanitarian law**. The concept of protection encompasses the range of actions taken to ensure the safety, dignity, and well-being of individuals and communities, particularly those affected by conflict, displacement, persecution, or other humanitarian crises.

Key Elements of Protection

- **Rights-based approach:** Protection is fundamentally rooted in the recognition of individuals' inherent rights, as outlined in key international legal frameworks. PY's protection work is guided by the principles of international human rights, refugee, and humanitarian law, ensuring that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, and their rights are safeguarded.
- **Preventing harm:** Protection efforts are focused on preventing harm, exploitation, abuse, and violence against vulnerable individuals and groups. This includes taking proactive measures to identify risks and vulnerabilities, as well as responding to incidents of abuse when they occur.
- **Addressing vulnerabilities:** Protection involves identifying and addressing the specific vulnerabilities of individuals and communities. Vulnerability may arise from factors such as displacement, conflict, gender, disability, or age, and protection efforts must be tailored to meet the unique needs of different groups.
- **Ensuring access to services:** Effective protection includes ensuring that individuals have access to essential services such as legal assistance, healthcare, psychosocial support, and safe shelter. In displacement and refugee contexts, protection also involves advocating for refugees' rights to asylum, legal documentation, and safe return or resettlement options.

International Legal Frameworks Guiding Protection

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):** This foundational document of international human rights law affirms the inherent dignity and equal rights of all individuals, serving as a guiding principle for PY's protection efforts.
- **1951 Refugee Convention and 1967 Protocol:** These key instruments of international refugee law define the rights of refugees and the obligations of states to protect them. PY's work with refugees, particularly Afghan refugees and host communities, is grounded in the principles of these conventions.
- **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC):** PY's protection programs for children are based on the CRC, which outlines the rights of children to protection from harm, access to education, and participation in decisions affecting their lives.
- **International Humanitarian Law (IHL):** In conflict situations, PY adheres to IHL, particularly the Geneva Conventions, to ensure the protection of civilians and combatants who are no longer participating in hostilities. This includes safeguarding individuals from violence, abuse, and deprivation of their basic needs.

3.2 VULNERABLE GROUPS

Vulnerable Groups refer to populations or individuals who are at greater risk of experiencing harm, exploitation, abuse, or neglect due to specific circumstances or characteristics. These groups often face increased barriers to accessing services, participating in decision-making, or exercising their rights, making them more susceptible to violence and exploitation in situations of conflict, displacement, or humanitarian crises.

Key Categories of Vulnerable Groups

- **Women and Girls:** Women and girls often face heightened risks of violence, exploitation, and discrimination, particularly in displacement settings. Gender-based violence (GBV) disproportionately affects women and girls, making them one of the most vulnerable groups. PY's protection programs prioritize addressing the specific needs of women and girls, providing access to safe spaces, legal assistance, and psychosocial support.
- **Children and Adolescents:** Children, particularly unaccompanied minors, separated children, and adolescents, are highly vulnerable to exploitation, child labor, trafficking, and abuse in crisis situations. PY's child protection programs are designed to safeguard children from harm, ensure their access to education, and provide them with the necessary psychosocial support to cope with trauma and displacement.
- **Persons with Disabilities (PWD):** People with disabilities are often marginalized and face significant challenges in accessing essential services such as healthcare, education, and employment. In conflict and displacement contexts, PWD may face additional risks of exploitation, neglect, and violence. PY ensures that its programs are inclusive and accessible to PWD, and that their specific needs are addressed through tailored protection interventions.
- **Elderly Persons:** Elderly individuals may face increased vulnerabilities due to age-related factors such as reduced mobility, health issues, and dependence on others for care. In displacement situations, elderly persons may be left behind or neglected, making them more vulnerable to violence, exploitation, and isolation. PY's protection programs include measures to support elderly individuals, ensuring they have access to services and are included in community activities.
- **Ethnic, Religious, and Social Minorities:** Members of ethnic, religious, or social minority groups often face discrimination, persecution, and marginalization, particularly in conflict or post-conflict situations. PY's protection efforts prioritize the inclusion and safety of minority groups, ensuring that they are not further marginalized or excluded from services and decision-making processes.
- **Survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV):** Survivors of GBV, including sexual violence, domestic violence, and exploitation, are among the most vulnerable individuals in displacement settings. They may face stigma, trauma, and lack of access to justice or support services. PY is committed to addressing the specific protection needs of GBV survivors, offering survivor-centered services that include psychosocial support, legal aid, and medical care.
- **Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** IDPs are individuals who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, or disasters but have not crossed an international border. IDPs face similar risks to refugees, including lack of access to basic services, legal protection, and safe housing. PY's protection work extends to IDP populations, ensuring that their rights are protected and that they receive the necessary assistance to rebuild their lives.
- **Marginalized Groups:** Other marginalized groups, such as the **LGBTQ+ community** and individuals experiencing extreme poverty, may also face heightened vulnerabilities in conflict or displacement settings. PY works to ensure that all marginalized groups are included in protection programs and that their specific needs are addressed.

Addressing the Needs of Vulnerable Groups

- **Identification and assessment:** PY's protection programs begin with the identification of vulnerable groups within the affected population. This involves conducting vulnerability assessments to determine the specific risks and needs of each group.
- **Targeted interventions:** Once vulnerable groups are identified, PY designs targeted interventions that address their unique challenges. For example, women and girls may require safe spaces to report GBV, while PWD may need specialized services to access healthcare or education.
- **Inclusion and empowerment:** PY's approach to working with vulnerable groups emphasizes inclusion and empowerment. Vulnerable individuals are encouraged to participate in decision-making processes and community activities, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the programs and services that affect them.

3.3 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) refers to any harmful act that is perpetrated against an individual based on their gender. GBV includes a wide range of violations, such as sexual violence, domestic

violence, exploitation, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), and human trafficking. GBV disproportionately affects women and girls, although men and boys can also be victims of gender-based violence, particularly in conflict and displacement settings.

Forms of Gender-Based Violence

- **Sexual Violence:** This includes rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, and sexual harassment. Sexual violence is often used as a weapon of war in conflict situations and is a common form of abuse in displacement settings. Survivors of sexual violence often face significant physical, emotional, and psychological trauma, as well as stigma and ostracism from their communities.
- **Domestic Violence:** Domestic violence refers to any form of physical, emotional, psychological, or economic abuse perpetrated by a family member or intimate partner. Domestic violence is a widespread issue in both conflict and non-conflict settings and is often exacerbated by displacement, poverty, and social instability.
- **Forced Marriage and Early Marriage:** Forced marriage occurs when one or both parties are married without their consent, while early marriage refers to the marriage of children, typically girls, below the legal age of consent. Forced and early marriages are common in conflict and displacement settings, where families may resort to marrying off young girls as a coping mechanism in times of crisis.
- **Human Trafficking and Exploitation:** Trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation, and exploitation of individuals for purposes such as forced labor, sexual exploitation, or organ removal. Refugees, IDPs, and other vulnerable populations are at heightened risk of trafficking, particularly women and children who may be trafficked for sexual exploitation.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM):** FGM involves the partial or total removal of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is a harmful practice that violates the rights of women and girls and can have lifelong physical and psychological consequences. PY's protection efforts include advocacy against FGM and support for survivors of the practice.

Survivor-Centered Approach to GBV Response

- **Psychosocial support:** PY provides comprehensive psychosocial support to survivors of GBV, including counseling, trauma care, and peer support groups. This helps survivors process their trauma and begin their recovery journey.
- **Medical assistance:** Survivors of GBV often require urgent medical care, particularly in cases of sexual violence. PY ensures that survivors have access to safe, confidential medical services, including post-rape care, emergency contraception, and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- **Legal aid and justice:** Many survivors of GBV face significant barriers to accessing justice, including lack of legal representation, fear of retaliation, or stigma. PY provides legal aid services to help survivors pursue justice and holds perpetrators accountable.
- **Safe spaces:** PY establishes safe spaces for women and girls in displacement settings, where they can seek refuge from violence, access services, and participate in empowerment programs.

Prevention of GBV

- **Community education and awareness:** Preventing GBV requires changing attitudes and behaviors at the community level. PY engages with community leaders, men, women, and youth to raise awareness about the harmful impacts of GBV and promote gender equality.
- **Engaging men and boys:** PY's approach to GBV prevention includes working with men and boys as allies in the fight against gender-based violence. This involves challenging harmful gender norms, promoting positive masculinity, and encouraging men and boys to be advocates for gender equality.

4. LEGAL AND NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

The **Protection Policy of Peace by Youth (PY)** is grounded in internationally recognized legal frameworks and guidelines that ensure the protection and safeguarding of the rights and well-being of vulnerable populations, particularly refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other marginalized groups. PY's protection efforts are designed to align with international standards of human rights, refugee law, and humanitarian law, ensuring that all individuals under PY's care are treated with dignity and respect and that their rights are fully recognized and upheld. This section outlines the key international legal instruments and normative frameworks that guide PY's protection work, providing the foundation for all protection activities, programs, and policies.

4.1 INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS

PY's Protection Policy is primarily informed by the following key international legal instruments. These frameworks form the legal basis for the protection of refugees, displaced persons, and vulnerable populations, ensuring that PY's protection programs are legally sound and globally aligned.

4.1.1 THE 1951 REFUGEE CONVENTION AND ITS 1967 PROTOCOL

The **1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees**, commonly referred to as the **1951 Refugee Convention**, is the cornerstone of international refugee law. It defines who is considered a refugee, outlines the rights of individuals who are granted asylum, and sets out the responsibilities of states toward refugees. The **1967 Protocol** expanded the scope of the Convention by removing the geographic and temporal limitations that initially restricted its application.

- **Definition of a Refugee:** The 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution based on race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of their nationality and is unable or unwilling to return to it.
- **Key Principles of Refugee Protection:** The Convention establishes several fundamental principles of refugee protection, including:
 - **Non-refoulement:** This principle prohibits the return of refugees to a country where they may face persecution, ensuring that individuals are not forcibly returned to situations of danger.
 - **Access to Asylum:** Refugees have the right to seek asylum and to be protected from expulsion or return to territories where their life or freedom would be threatened.
 - **Rights of Refugees:** The Convention outlines specific rights to which refugees are entitled, including the right to work, education, freedom of movement, and access to public assistance.
- **PY's Commitment:** PY's protection efforts for refugees are aligned with the principles of the 1951 Refugee Convention, ensuring that all refugees under its care are afforded their fundamental rights and are not subject to refoulement. PY advocates for the legal protection of refugees, works to facilitate their access to asylum procedures, and ensures their safety and well-being throughout the displacement period.

4.1.2 UNHCR GUIDELINES ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION

The **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)** plays a central role in the protection of refugees and displaced persons globally. UNHCR's **Guidelines on International Protection** provide detailed interpretations of the legal principles enshrined in the 1951 Refugee Convention and other relevant international instruments. These guidelines help to clarify the application of refugee law in various contexts, including the assessment of asylum claims, the protection of vulnerable groups, and the determination of refugee status.

- **Gender Guidelines:** UNHCR has issued specific guidelines on the protection of refugee women and girls, addressing issues such as gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and access to reproductive health services. PY's programs for the protection of women and girls are informed by these guidelines, ensuring that gender-sensitive approaches are incorporated into all protection interventions.
- **Child Protection Guidelines:** UNHCR's guidelines on the protection of refugee children outline the rights and needs of children in displacement situations, with a focus on family

reunification, access to education, and the prevention of child labor and exploitation. PY follows these guidelines in its child protection programs, ensuring that refugee children receive the care and support they need to thrive.

- **Protection of LGBTI Refugees:** UNHCR's guidelines on the protection of refugees from the LGBTI community address the specific risks faced by individuals persecuted on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. PY's protection policy includes provisions for the protection of LGBTI refugees, ensuring their rights are respected and their safety is prioritized.

4.1.3 INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

International human rights law provides the overarching legal framework for PY's protection efforts. Human rights are universal and inalienable, applying to all individuals regardless of their nationality, legal status, or background. The key human rights instruments that inform PY's protection policy include:

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):** Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, the UDHR is the foundation of international human rights law. It sets out the fundamental rights and freedoms to which all human beings are entitled, including the right to life, liberty, security, education, and freedom from torture and inhumane treatment.
 - **Article 14** of the UDHR explicitly recognizes the right of individuals to seek asylum from persecution in other countries. PY ensures that refugees and displaced persons under its care have the opportunity to exercise this right and receive the protection they need.
- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):** The ICCPR is a multilateral treaty that commits its signatories to respect the civil and political rights of individuals, including the rights to freedom of speech, assembly, and religion. PY upholds the principles of the ICCPR in its protection work, advocating for the civil and political rights of refugees and displaced persons, particularly those facing persecution for their political beliefs or religious practices.
- **International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR):** The ICESCR guarantees the economic, social, and cultural rights of individuals, including the rights to education, healthcare, and an adequate standard of living. PY's protection programs are designed to ensure that refugees and displaced persons have access to essential services, including health, education, and livelihoods, in line with the principles of the ICESCR.

4.1.4 THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC)

The **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** is the primary international legal instrument governing the rights of children. Adopted in 1989, the CRC sets out the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children and emphasizes the responsibility of states to protect children from harm, abuse, and exploitation.

- **Best Interests of the Child:** A central principle of the CRC is that the **best interests of the child** must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children. PY adheres to this principle in its child protection programs, ensuring that the needs and rights of children are prioritized in all aspects of service delivery.
- **Protection from Exploitation and Abuse:** The CRC calls for the protection of children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury, abuse, neglect, maltreatment, and exploitation, including sexual exploitation and child labor. PY's child protection programs include measures to prevent and respond to cases of child abuse, exploitation, and neglect, particularly in refugee camps and displacement settings.
- **Right to Education:** The CRC recognizes the right of all children to access education, regardless of their circumstances. PY works to ensure that refugee children have access to quality education in a safe and supportive environment, helping to reduce the long-term impact of displacement on their development and future opportunities.

4.1.5 THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**, adopted in 1979, is the international legal instrument that addresses the rights of women and aims to eliminate discrimination against women in all forms. CEDAW outlines the measures that

states must take to ensure women's equality and full participation in society, including in areas such as education, employment, healthcare, and legal protections.

- **Elimination of Gender-Based Violence:** CEDAW emphasizes the need to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence, domestic violence, and trafficking. PY's gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response programs are grounded in the principles of CEDAW, ensuring that women and girls are protected from violence and exploitation.
- **Equality in Access to Services:** CEDAW calls for equal access to services such as education, healthcare, and employment for women and girls. PY ensures that its programs are gender-sensitive and designed to address the specific barriers that women and girls face in accessing essential services in displacement settings.
- **Participation in Decision-Making:** CEDAW promotes the full participation of women in decision-making processes, including at the community and national levels. PY works to empower women and girls within refugee and displaced communities, ensuring that they have a voice in shaping the programs and policies that affect their lives.

4.2 NORMATIVE FRAMEWORKS

In addition to the international legal instruments outlined above, PY's protection policy is guided by several normative frameworks that establish best practices and ethical standards for humanitarian organizations working with vulnerable populations.

4.2.1 THE SPHERE STANDARDS

The **Sphere Standards** are a set of minimum standards for humanitarian response, developed by the **Sphere Project** in collaboration with a wide range of humanitarian organizations. The standards are based on the principles of human rights and humanitarian law and are designed to ensure that humanitarian assistance is provided in a way that respects the dignity and rights of affected populations.

- **Protection Principles:** The Sphere Standards include specific protection principles that guide humanitarian actors in protecting individuals from harm, violence, exploitation, and abuse. PY incorporates these principles into its protection programs, ensuring that all interventions are designed to safeguard the rights and well-being of vulnerable populations.
- **Minimum Standards for Child Protection:** The Sphere Standards include detailed guidelines on child protection in humanitarian action, covering areas such as family reunification, prevention of child labor, and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse. PY follows these guidelines to ensure that children in displacement settings are protected from harm and have access to essential services.

4.2.2 INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE (IASC) GUIDELINES

The **Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)**, which includes UN agencies and other international organizations, has developed a series of guidelines to support humanitarian actors in providing effective protection and assistance to vulnerable populations.

- **IASC Guidelines on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Prevention and Response:** These guidelines provide a comprehensive framework for addressing GBV in humanitarian settings, including prevention, survivor-centered response, and accountability mechanisms. PY follows the IASC GBV guidelines to ensure that its programs are effective in preventing and responding to GBV in refugee camps and host communities.
- **IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support:** The IASC guidelines emphasize the importance of addressing the mental health and psychosocial needs of individuals affected by conflict, displacement, and other humanitarian crises. PY integrates mental health and psychosocial support services into its protection programs, ensuring that refugees and displaced persons receive the emotional and psychological care they need.

4.2.3 THE CORE HUMANITARIAN STANDARD (CHS)

The **Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS)** is a globally recognized framework that sets out nine commitments for humanitarian organizations to ensure that their programs are effective, accountable, and responsive to the needs of affected populations.

- **Commitment to Accountability:** The CHS emphasizes the importance of accountability to affected populations, including through transparent communication, participation in

decision-making, and the establishment of feedback mechanisms. PY is committed to upholding the CHS commitments in all its protection programs, ensuring that refugees and displaced persons have a voice in shaping the services they receive and that their concerns are addressed in a timely and transparent manner.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The successful implementation of Peace by Youth's (PY) **Protection Policy** depends on the commitment and collaboration of all individuals and entities involved in PY's operations. Clear roles and responsibilities are essential to ensure that the protection principles are fully integrated into all stages of PY's activities, from strategic decision-making to field-level interventions. This section outlines the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, ensuring accountability and effective implementation of the protection framework.

5.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The **Board of Directors** (BoD) plays a critical role in overseeing and ensuring the implementation of PY's Protection Policy. As the governing body, the Board is responsible for providing strategic leadership, ensuring that protection principles are integrated into PY's overall mission and vision, and holding the organization accountable to its protection commitments.

Key Responsibilities

- **Policy Approval and Oversight:** The Board is responsible for reviewing and approving the Protection Policy, ensuring that it aligns with PY's mission and international protection standards. The Board regularly reviews the policy to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to emerging protection challenges.
- **Strategic Leadership:** The Board provides strategic guidance to ensure that protection is embedded in PY's organizational strategy, program planning, and decision-making processes. This includes ensuring that protection goals are prioritized in all operational areas, particularly in programs serving vulnerable populations such as refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and host communities.
- **Accountability and Governance:** The Board holds the executive leadership and senior management accountable for the implementation of the Protection Policy. This includes ensuring that the necessary resources, systems, and structures are in place to support protection efforts at all levels of the organization.
- **Risk Management:** The Board oversees the identification and mitigation of protection risks, ensuring that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable populations and reduce the risk of harm, abuse, exploitation, or neglect in PY's programs.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** The Board ensures that monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to assess the effectiveness of PY's protection interventions. This includes reviewing reports on protection outcomes, identifying areas for improvement, and ensuring that corrective actions are taken when necessary.
- **Fostering Partnerships:** The Board plays a key role in fostering relationships with donors, partners, and stakeholders who support PY's protection work. The Board ensures that PY's protection commitments are communicated to external partners and that PY collaborates effectively with organizations that share similar protection goals.

5.2 PROGRAM MANAGERS

Program Managers are responsible for operationalizing the Protection Policy within their respective programs and ensuring that protection principles are integrated into all stages of project implementation. They serve as the primary link between PY's strategic protection goals and the day-to-day activities of field teams and project staff.

Key Responsibilities

- **Program Design and Planning:** Program Managers are responsible for ensuring that protection considerations are incorporated into the design and planning of all PY programs. This includes conducting protection risk assessments, identifying vulnerable groups, and designing interventions that address protection needs. Program Managers ensure that protection objectives are clearly articulated in project proposals, work plans, and budgets.
- **Staff Training and Capacity Building:** Program Managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff involved in program implementation receive the necessary training on protection principles, policies, and guidelines. This includes training on gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, child protection, safeguarding vulnerable groups, and reporting mechanisms for protection concerns. Program Managers ensure that staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to identify, respond to, and mitigate protection risks.

- **Protection Mainstreaming:** Program Managers ensure that protection is mainstreamed across all sectors of PY's programs, including education, health, livelihoods, and cash assistance. This means that protection considerations are integrated into all aspects of service delivery, from program design to monitoring and evaluation. Program Managers work closely with sectoral teams to ensure that protection issues are addressed holistically.
- **Coordination with Field Teams:** Program Managers maintain regular communication with field teams to monitor protection issues and ensure that field staff are following protection protocols. They provide technical support to field teams in identifying and addressing protection concerns, and they ensure that protection responses are timely, appropriate, and survivor-centered.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** Program Managers are responsible for monitoring protection outcomes within their programs and reporting on progress to senior management and donors. This includes tracking key protection indicators, documenting protection cases, and ensuring that lessons learned are incorporated into future programming.
- **Collaboration with External Partners:** Program Managers collaborate with external stakeholders, including government agencies, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to ensure coordinated protection responses. This includes participating in protection cluster meetings, sharing protection data, and ensuring that PY's programs align with broader protection strategies in the region.

5.3 FIELD TEAMS

Field Teams are on the front lines of PY's protection efforts and play a critical role in identifying, reporting, and responding to protection concerns in the communities they serve. Field teams are responsible for ensuring that protection principles are upheld in all interactions with beneficiaries and that PY's protection guidelines are followed in the field.

Key Responsibilities

- **Identification of Protection Concerns:** Field teams are responsible for identifying protection risks and concerns in the communities they serve. This includes recognizing signs of abuse, exploitation, neglect, and other forms of harm, particularly among vulnerable groups such as women, children, persons with disabilities (PWD), and ethnic minorities. Field teams use vulnerability assessments and protection monitoring tools to gather information on protection risks.
- **Referral of Protection Cases:** Field teams are trained to refer protection cases to appropriate services and support systems. This includes referring survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), child abuse, or trafficking to legal, medical, and psychosocial services. Field teams ensure that referrals are made in a timely manner and that survivors receive the support they need in a safe and confidential environment.
- **Community Engagement and Awareness:** Field teams work closely with local communities to raise awareness about protection issues and promote the rights of vulnerable groups. This includes conducting community-based protection activities, such as training on GBV prevention, child protection, and the rights of refugees and displaced persons. Field teams also engage with community leaders to foster a protective environment for all individuals.
- **Adherence to Protection Protocols:** Field teams are responsible for adhering to PY's protection protocols, including maintaining confidentiality, ensuring informed consent, and following the "Do No Harm" principle in all interactions with beneficiaries. Field teams are trained to respect the dignity and rights of all individuals and to ensure that their actions do not cause harm or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.
- **Documentation and Reporting:** Field teams are responsible for documenting protection incidents and concerns in a systematic and confidential manner. They report protection cases to Program Managers and protection focal points, ensuring that cases are handled in accordance with PY's protection protocols. Field teams also contribute to regular protection monitoring reports, providing critical information on emerging protection trends and challenges.
- **Building Trust with Beneficiaries:** One of the core responsibilities of field teams is to build trust with the communities they serve. This involves creating safe spaces where beneficiaries feel comfortable reporting protection concerns and seeking assistance.

Field teams are trained to listen to beneficiaries' concerns with empathy and to take appropriate actions to address their protection needs.

5.4 PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

In many cases, PY works in collaboration with **partner organizations** to deliver protection services and implement programs. These partners may include local NGOs, international organizations, government agencies, and community-based organizations. PY ensures that all partner organizations adhere to similar protection principles and standards, ensuring consistency and accountability across all joint projects.

Key Responsibilities of Partner Organizations

- **Adherence to PY's Protection Principles:** Partner organizations are required to uphold PY's protection principles in all collaborative projects. This includes following PY's protection guidelines, protocols, and policies to ensure that beneficiaries are protected from harm, exploitation, and abuse. PY includes protection clauses in all partnership agreements, ensuring that partners are aware of and committed to the organization's protection standards.
- **Capacity Building:** PY provides training and capacity-building support to partner organizations to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to implement protection programs effectively. This includes training on gender-based violence (GBV) prevention, child protection, safeguarding vulnerable groups, and protection monitoring. PY works with partners to strengthen their capacity to identify and respond to protection risks in the field.
- **Coordination and Collaboration:** PY collaborates with partner organizations to ensure a coordinated response to protection challenges. This includes joint planning, implementation, and monitoring of protection programs, as well as sharing data on protection cases and outcomes. PY encourages partners to participate in protection cluster meetings and to engage with other stakeholders in the protection sector.
- **Accountability and Reporting:** Partner organizations are accountable for ensuring that protection activities are implemented in line with PY's standards. This includes submitting regular reports on protection outcomes, documenting protection cases, and participating in monitoring and evaluation activities. PY works with partners to ensure that any protection concerns are addressed in a timely and appropriate manner.
- **Referral Mechanisms:** Partner organizations play a key role in establishing and maintaining referral mechanisms for protection cases. This includes referring survivors of GBV, child abuse, trafficking, and other protection issues to appropriate services and support systems. PY ensures that partners are trained in referral procedures and that they follow PY's guidelines for safe and confidential referrals.

5.5 SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

The **Senior Management Team (SMT)**, which includes the Executive Director and other senior leaders, is responsible for overseeing the operational implementation of the Protection Policy and ensuring that all levels of the organization are aligned with PY's protection goals.

Key Responsibilities

- **Operational Leadership:** The SMT provides leadership and direction to ensure that protection is a core component of all PY operations. This includes ensuring that protection goals are integrated into annual work plans, budgets, and performance evaluations.
- **Resource Allocation:** The SMT ensures that sufficient resources—both financial and human—are allocated to support PY's protection efforts. This includes securing funding for protection programs, hiring qualified protection staff, and ensuring that field teams have the tools and materials they need to carry out protection activities.
- **Policy Compliance:** The SMT is responsible for ensuring that all PY staff, volunteers, and partners comply with the Protection Policy. This includes monitoring adherence to protection guidelines, investigating protection incidents, and ensuring that corrective actions are taken when necessary.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The SMT engages with external stakeholders, including donors, government agencies, and international organizations, to advocate for PY's protection goals and to secure support for protection programs. The SMT ensures that PY's

protection commitments are communicated to external partners and that PY remains accountable to its donors and beneficiaries.

6. PROTECTION MECHANISMS

Peace by Youth (PY) employs a range of protection mechanisms to safeguard the rights, dignity, and well-being of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other vulnerable populations. These mechanisms are designed to ensure the early identification of protection risks, prevent exploitation and abuse, and respond swiftly and appropriately to protection concerns. The implementation of these mechanisms ensures that PY's protection programs are effective, inclusive, and aligned with international standards.

6.1 PROTECTION ASSESSMENTS

Protection assessments are a key component of PY's protection efforts, providing essential information on the needs and vulnerabilities of affected populations. These assessments help PY design appropriate interventions, allocate resources effectively, and prioritize individuals who are at the greatest risk of harm. Through the use of rapid needs assessments and vulnerability screenings, PY ensures that protection concerns are identified early and addressed in a timely manner.

6.1.1 CONDUCTING RAPID NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

Rapid needs assessments are conducted during the planning and implementation phases of all PY projects to identify protection risks and determine the specific needs of vulnerable populations. These assessments are essential in emergency settings, where time is of the essence, and protection concerns must be identified quickly to prevent further harm.

- **Purpose of Rapid Needs Assessments:** The primary purpose of rapid needs assessments is to gather information on the protection risks faced by refugees, IDPs, and host communities. This includes assessing the prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV), child protection concerns, and the specific vulnerabilities of groups such as persons with disabilities (PWD), elderly individuals, and minority populations.
- **Methodology:** PY uses a combination of **qualitative and quantitative data collection methods** during rapid needs assessments. This includes conducting interviews with key informants, focus group discussions with affected communities, and surveys to gather data on protection risks. PY's field teams are trained to use protection assessment tools that are aligned with international standards, ensuring that assessments are comprehensive and reliable.
- **Community Involvement:** PY's approach to protection assessments is community-centered. This means that affected populations, including refugees and host communities, are actively involved in the assessment process. Community members provide valuable insights into the specific protection risks they face and help PY design interventions that are responsive to their needs.
- **Outcome of Assessments:** The findings of rapid needs assessments are used to inform the design of protection programs and interventions. These assessments help PY prioritize the most urgent protection needs and allocate resources effectively. They also serve as a baseline for monitoring the impact of protection programs and identifying areas for improvement.

6.1.2 IMPLEMENTING VULNERABILITY SCREENING

Vulnerability screening is a critical tool used by PY to identify and prioritize individuals who are at heightened risk of harm, exploitation, or abuse. Vulnerability screening ensures that PY's protection efforts are targeted toward those who need it most, particularly women, children, PWD, elderly individuals, and survivors of GBV.

- **Criteria for Vulnerability Screening:** PY's vulnerability screening process is based on a set of predefined criteria that reflect the specific risks faced by different groups. These criteria include factors such as age, gender, disability status, displacement status, and exposure to violence or exploitation. For example, unaccompanied minors, single mothers, and individuals with severe disabilities may be classified as high-risk and prioritized for protection interventions.
- **Screening Process:** Vulnerability screening is conducted at various stages of program implementation, including during initial registration, at health or social service points, and during home visits by field teams. PY staff use standardized screening tools to assess the vulnerability of individuals and families, ensuring that protection services are delivered equitably and without bias.

- **Referral Mechanisms:** Once vulnerable individuals are identified, PY ensures that they are referred to appropriate services, such as legal aid, psychosocial support, or healthcare. Vulnerability screening is linked to PY's referral pathways, ensuring that high-risk individuals receive timely and specialized support.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** Vulnerability screening is an ongoing process, with regular updates to individuals' vulnerability status based on changes in their circumstances. This ensures that protection interventions remain responsive to evolving needs and risks.

6.2 PREVENTION OF EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Preventing exploitation and abuse is one of the most critical components of PY's protection strategy. PY adopts a **zero-tolerance policy** for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and works to create a safe environment for all individuals under its care. This includes establishing robust reporting mechanisms for victims and survivors and ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and partners are held accountable for maintaining high ethical standards.

6.2.1 ESTABLISHING AND ENFORCING A ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE (SEA)

PY is committed to creating a **zero-tolerance culture** for SEA, ensuring that no form of sexual exploitation, abuse, or harassment is tolerated within the organization or its programs. The zero-tolerance policy applies to all staff, volunteers, partners, and contractors, and includes strict guidelines for the prevention, reporting, and response to SEA cases.

- **Definition of SEA:** Sexual exploitation refers to any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Sexual abuse refers to the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. PY recognizes that SEA disproportionately affects women and girls and takes a survivor-centered approach to addressing such cases.
- **Training and Awareness:** All PY staff, volunteers, and partners are required to participate in training on the prevention of SEA. This training covers topics such as power dynamics, consent, the rights of beneficiaries, and the consequences of SEA. PY's training programs are designed to raise awareness of SEA risks and ensure that all individuals associated with the organization understand their responsibility to prevent and report SEA.
- **Code of Conduct:** PY has developed a **Code of Conduct** that outlines the organization's zero-tolerance policy for SEA. The Code of Conduct is signed by all staff and volunteers as a condition of their employment or engagement with PY. Violations of the Code of Conduct, including any form of SEA, result in immediate disciplinary action, including termination of employment and legal action if necessary.

6.2.2 CREATING SAFE REPORTING MECHANISMS FOR VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS

PY is committed to ensuring that victims and survivors of exploitation and abuse have access to safe and confidential reporting mechanisms. These mechanisms are designed to empower survivors to come forward without fear of retaliation, stigma, or further harm.

- **Anonymous Reporting:** PY offers multiple reporting channels for survivors of SEA, including anonymous hotlines, complaint boxes, and community focal points. These reporting mechanisms are accessible to all individuals, including those in remote or hard-to-reach areas, ensuring that survivors can report incidents confidentially and safely.
- **Confidentiality:** PY ensures that all reports of SEA are handled with the highest level of confidentiality. Only authorized personnel involved in the investigation and response process have access to the details of the case. PY's confidentiality protocols are designed to protect the identity and safety of survivors while ensuring that appropriate action is taken to address the issue.
- **Survivor-Centered Approach:** PY adopts a **survivor-centered approach** to handling reports of SEA. This means that the survivor's needs, rights, and preferences are prioritized throughout the reporting and response process. Survivors are provided with information about their options, and their consent is obtained before any action is taken. Survivors are also given access to psychosocial support, legal assistance, and medical care as needed.
- **Whistleblower Protection:** PY has established **whistleblower protection policies** to ensure that individuals who report SEA or other forms of abuse are protected from retaliation.

This includes protecting staff members, volunteers, and community members who raise concerns from any form of reprisal, including job loss, harassment, or discrimination.

6.3 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a serious violation of human rights that disproportionately affects women and girls in displacement settings. PY is committed to preventing and responding to GBV through **survivor-centered approaches**, community engagement, and specialized staff training. PY's GBV programs are designed to ensure that survivors receive the support they need to recover and that communities are actively engaged in preventing harmful practices.

6.3.1 ESTABLISHING SURVIVOR-CENTERED APPROACHES TO GBV RESPONSE

PY adopts a **survivor-centered approach** to GBV response, ensuring that survivors are treated with dignity, respect, and empathy. This approach prioritizes the safety, confidentiality, and informed consent of survivors and ensures that they have access to comprehensive support services.

- **Psychosocial Support:** PY provides psychosocial support to survivors of GBV, including counseling and trauma care. Trained counselors work with survivors to help them process their experiences and begin their recovery journey. PY's psychosocial support services are designed to be culturally sensitive and trauma-informed, ensuring that survivors feel safe and supported.
- **Legal Support:** Survivors of GBV often face barriers to accessing justice, including fear of retaliation, stigma, and lack of legal representation. PY works to remove these barriers by providing survivors with access to legal aid services. This includes support in filing police reports, seeking restraining orders, and pursuing legal action against perpetrators.
- **Medical Care:** Survivors of GBV often require urgent medical care, particularly in cases of sexual violence. PY ensures that survivors have access to safe and confidential medical services, including post-rape care, emergency contraception, and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). PY's medical partners are trained to provide survivor-centered care that respects the dignity and rights of survivors.

6.3.2 ENGAGING COMMUNITY LEADERS TO RAISE AWARENESS AND PREVENT HARMFUL PRACTICES

Community engagement is a key component of PY's GBV prevention strategy. By working with community leaders, religious leaders, and other influencers, PY promotes positive attitudes and behaviors that help to prevent GBV and protect vulnerable individuals.

- **Community-Based Awareness Campaigns:** PY conducts community-based awareness campaigns to educate individuals about GBV, its consequences, and the importance of preventing violence. These campaigns are designed to challenge harmful gender norms, promote gender equality, and encourage community members to take action against GBV.
- **Engaging Men and Boys:** PY recognizes that men and boys play a critical role in preventing GBV. PY's programs engage men and boys as allies in the fight against GBV, encouraging them to challenge harmful behaviors, promote respect for women and girls, and support survivors of violence.
- **Religious and Cultural Leaders:** In many communities, religious and cultural leaders are influential figures who can shape attitudes and behaviors. PY works closely with these leaders to raise awareness about the harmful impacts of GBV and to promote practices that protect women and girls from violence. By engaging religious and cultural leaders, PY fosters community-wide support for GBV prevention efforts.

6.3.3 PROVIDING SPECIALIZED TRAINING FOR STAFF TO RECOGNIZE AND RESPOND TO GBV CASES

PY ensures that all staff, volunteers, and partners are trained to recognize and respond to GBV cases. This training equips staff with the skills and knowledge to identify signs of GBV, provide appropriate support to survivors, and refer cases to specialized services.

- **GBV Identification and Reporting:** PY's training programs cover the identification and reporting of GBV cases, ensuring that all staff understand how to recognize signs of abuse and exploitation. This includes training on how to interact with survivors in a

sensitive and respectful manner and how to report GBV cases through PY's protection mechanisms.

- **Survivor-Centered Care:** All PY staff are trained in providing survivor-centered care, ensuring that survivors' rights, preferences, and dignity are respected throughout the response process. Staff are taught to prioritize the safety and confidentiality of survivors and to seek their informed consent before taking any action.

6.4 CHILD PROTECTION

Children are among the most vulnerable in displacement settings and face heightened risks of exploitation, abuse, trafficking, and labor. PY is committed to ensuring that all children under its care are protected from harm and that child-friendly environments are created in refugee centers and areas of intervention. PY's child protection programs are designed to provide age-appropriate counseling, support, and services to children affected by displacement.

6.4.1 ENSURING CHILD-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS IN REFUGEE CENTERS AND AREAS OF INTERVENTION

Creating **child-friendly environments** is a key component of PY's child protection strategy. These environments are designed to provide safe spaces where children can play, learn, and receive support in a secure and nurturing setting.

- **Child-Friendly Spaces:** PY establishes **child-friendly spaces (CFS)** in refugee camps, host communities, and areas of intervention. These spaces provide children with a safe and structured environment where they can participate in recreational activities, receive psychosocial support, and access educational services. PY's child-friendly spaces are staffed by trained professionals who ensure that children are protected from harm and have access to age-appropriate services.
- **Safe Schools Initiative:** PY works to ensure that schools in refugee camps and host communities are safe environments for children. This includes training teachers on child protection, preventing bullying and violence, and ensuring that schools are free from exploitation and abuse. PY's Safe Schools Initiative also includes the provision of school supplies, educational materials, and psychosocial support for children affected by displacement.

6.4.2 IMPLEMENTING AGE-APPROPRIATE COUNSELING AND SUPPORT SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Children affected by displacement often experience trauma, separation from family members, and loss of stability. PY provides age-appropriate counseling and support services to help children cope with the emotional and psychological impact of displacement.

- **Psychosocial Support for Children:** PY's child protection programs include psychosocial support services that are tailored to the needs of children of different age groups. Trained counselors work with children to help them express their emotions, process their experiences, and build resilience. PY's psychosocial support services are delivered in a culturally sensitive manner, ensuring that children feel safe and supported.
- **Family Reunification:** For children who have been separated from their families during displacement, PY works with partners to facilitate family reunification. This includes tracing efforts to locate missing family members and providing support to children and families during the reunification process.

6.4.3 MONITORING AND PREVENTING CHILD LABOR, TRAFFICKING, AND EXPLOITATION

Children in displacement settings are at high risk of being forced into child labor, trafficking, and other forms of exploitation. PY is committed to monitoring and preventing these risks through its child protection programs.

- **Monitoring Child Labor:** PY's field teams monitor refugee camps and host communities for signs of child labor, ensuring that children are not exploited for economic gain. This includes working with local authorities to enforce labor laws and ensure that children are not engaged in hazardous or exploitative work.
- **Preventing Trafficking:** PY works to prevent the trafficking of children through awareness campaigns, community engagement, and partnerships with law enforcement agencies. PY's trafficking prevention efforts include training staff and community members to recognize the signs of trafficking and providing safe spaces where children can report concerns.

- **Referral and Response:** When cases of child labor, trafficking, or exploitation are identified, PY ensures that children are referred to appropriate services, including legal aid, medical care, and psychosocial support. PY works with local authorities to ensure that perpetrators are held accountable and that children are protected from further harm.

7. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING PROTECTION CASES

Peace by Youth (PY) is committed to ensuring that all protection cases, including those related to abuse, exploitation, violence, and other violations, are handled with the highest level of care, confidentiality, and professionalism. PY has developed standardized procedures for handling protection cases to ensure that individuals affected by protection issues receive appropriate support and that their rights, dignity, and safety are protected. These procedures encompass a range of actions, including establishing accessible reporting mechanisms, implementing a comprehensive case management system, and ensuring timely follow-up and referral to specialized services.

7.1 REPORTING MECHANISMS

A cornerstone of PY's protection framework is the establishment of **confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms** that enable individuals to safely report protection issues. PY recognizes that survivors of abuse, exploitation, and violence often face significant barriers to reporting these incidents, including fear of retaliation, stigma, and lack of trust in formal systems. To address these challenges, PY has developed multiple channels for reporting protection concerns, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their circumstances, can access the reporting process.

7.1.1 ESTABLISHING CONFIDENTIAL AND ACCESSIBLE REPORTING CHANNELS

To create an environment where individuals feel safe and empowered to report protection issues, PY has implemented a variety of **confidential and accessible reporting channels**. These channels are designed to cater to different needs and preferences, ensuring that individuals can choose the method that feels most comfortable and secure for them.

- **Confidential Reporting Channels:** PY prioritizes the confidentiality of individuals who report protection issues. All reporting mechanisms are designed to protect the identity of the survivor or whistleblower, ensuring that information is shared only with authorized personnel who are directly involved in addressing the case.
 - **Anonymous Reporting:** PY offers anonymous reporting options for individuals who may not feel comfortable revealing their identity. This allows survivors and witnesses to report incidents of abuse, exploitation, or violence without fear of being identified or retaliated against. Anonymous reporting can be done through online forms, complaint boxes, or phone hotlines.
 - **Private Interviews:** For individuals who prefer face-to-face reporting, PY staff are trained to conduct **private interviews** in safe and confidential environments. These interviews are conducted by trained protection officers or community liaison officers who are sensitive to the needs of survivors and adhere to PY's confidentiality protocols.
- **Accessible Reporting Channels:** To ensure that all individuals, including those with disabilities or language barriers, can report protection issues, PY has developed reporting mechanisms that are accessible to diverse populations.
 - **Multiple Languages:** PY ensures that all reporting channels, including hotlines, forms, and community liaison officers, are available in the languages spoken by the affected population. This includes providing interpretation services for individuals who speak minority languages or who are not fluent in the primary language of communication.
 - **Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities (PWD):** PY has taken steps to ensure that individuals with disabilities can access reporting channels without difficulty. This includes making complaint boxes and reporting forms available in **Braille** for individuals with visual impairments and ensuring that hotlines are accessible to individuals with hearing or speech disabilities through the use of **text-based communication** systems.
 - **Mobile and Remote Access:** Recognizing that some individuals may not have access to PY's offices or field staff, PY has established **mobile reporting options**. These include phone hotlines, mobile applications, and online reporting forms that can be accessed from remote locations. These options provide greater flexibility for individuals who are unable to physically visit a reporting center.

7.1.2 CREATING HOTLINES, COMPLAINT BOXES, AND COMMUNITY LIAISON OFFICERS

In addition to offering multiple reporting channels, PY has developed specific mechanisms to ensure that protection issues can be reported safely and conveniently.

- **Hotlines:** PY has established **dedicated hotlines** that allow individuals to report protection issues by phone. These hotlines are staffed by trained personnel who are equipped to handle sensitive cases of abuse, exploitation, and violence. Hotlines operate 24/7 to ensure that individuals can report incidents at any time, including outside of regular office hours. In areas with limited access to telecommunications, PY partners with local service providers to ensure that hotline services are accessible through affordable or free calling options.
- **Complaint Boxes:** PY has installed **complaint boxes** in key locations, including refugee camps, community centers, and service delivery points. These boxes provide individuals with a discreet and anonymous way to report protection issues. Complaint boxes are regularly checked by PY's protection officers, who are responsible for following up on the complaints and ensuring that appropriate action is taken.
- **Community Liaison Officers:** PY has appointed **community liaison officers (CLOs)** who serve as trusted points of contact within the communities where PY operates. CLOs are trained to identify and respond to protection concerns, and they provide individuals with information about how to report issues confidentially. CLOs also act as intermediaries between the community and PY, facilitating the reporting process for individuals who may be hesitant to approach formal reporting channels.

7.1.3 PROMOTING AWARENESS OF REPORTING MECHANISMS

For reporting mechanisms to be effective, individuals must be aware of their existence and understand how to use them. PY conducts **awareness campaigns** to inform beneficiaries, staff, and community members about the available reporting channels and the importance of reporting protection issues.

- **Community Education:** PY conducts **community education sessions** in refugee camps, host communities, and other areas of intervention to raise awareness about protection risks and the reporting mechanisms available to address them. These sessions are tailored to the needs of different populations, including women, children, and persons with disabilities.
- **Information Materials:** PY distributes **information materials**, such as brochures, posters, and flyers, that explain how to report protection issues and where to access support services. These materials are available in multiple languages and are displayed in public areas where beneficiaries can easily access them.
- **Engaging Community Leaders:** PY works closely with **community leaders** and other influential figures to promote the use of reporting mechanisms. By engaging community leaders in protection efforts, PY builds trust within the community and encourages individuals to report protection issues without fear of stigma or retaliation.

7.2 CASE MANAGEMENT

Once a protection issue is reported, PY follows a **standardized case management system** to ensure that the case is handled in a timely, comprehensive, and survivor-centered manner. The case management process is designed to protect the safety, privacy, and dignity of individuals who report protection concerns, while also ensuring that they receive appropriate support and referrals to specialized services.

7.2.1 STANDARDIZED CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

PY's case management system is based on **international best practices** for handling protection cases, ensuring that all individuals affected by abuse, exploitation, or violence receive the care and support they need.

- **Intake and Assessment:** When a protection issue is reported, the first step in the case management process is **intake and assessment**. During this stage, PY's protection officers conduct an initial assessment of the case to determine the nature of the protection issue and the level of risk faced by the survivor. This assessment includes gathering basic information about the individual's needs, vulnerabilities, and preferences.
 - **Safety Assessment:** The safety of the individual is the top priority during the intake process. If the individual is in immediate danger, PY takes urgent measures to

ensure their safety, such as providing temporary shelter, arranging transportation to a safe location, or contacting law enforcement if necessary.

- **Informed Consent:** PY operates on the principle of **informed consent**, meaning that individuals must provide their consent before any action is taken on their case. Survivors are informed about the available options for support and are given the opportunity to make decisions about their own care. PY staff ensure that survivors understand their rights and the potential outcomes of any actions taken on their behalf.
- **Case Documentation:** All protection cases are carefully documented in **secure and confidential case files**. These files contain detailed information about the case, including the initial report, the results of the assessment, and any actions taken to address the protection concern. PY ensures that case files are stored in a secure location and are accessible only to authorized personnel who are directly involved in managing the case.

7.2.2 PROVIDING REFERRAL SERVICES TO SPECIALIZED PROTECTION AGENCIES

PY recognizes that many protection cases require specialized services beyond what the organization can provide directly. As part of its case management system, PY maintains a **network of referral pathways** to ensure that individuals affected by protection issues receive the specialized care they need.

- **Referral to Legal Services:** In cases where legal action is necessary, such as cases of gender-based violence (GBV), trafficking, or child abuse, PY refers survivors to **legal aid organizations** and law enforcement agencies that can provide legal representation and assistance. PY works closely with legal partners to ensure that survivors are supported throughout the legal process, including filing complaints, seeking restraining orders, and pursuing criminal charges against perpetrators.
- **Referral to Medical Services:** Survivors of violence, especially sexual violence, often require urgent medical care. PY has established partnerships with **healthcare providers** who specialize in treating survivors of GBV, providing services such as post-rape care, emergency contraception, and treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). PY ensures that all referrals to medical services are handled confidentially and that survivors receive the care they need without delay.
- **Referral to Psychosocial Support:** Many survivors of protection violations experience trauma and emotional distress. PY refers individuals to **psychosocial support services**, including counseling, trauma care, and peer support groups. These services help survivors process their experiences and begin their recovery journey. PY's psychosocial partners are trained to provide survivor-centered care that is sensitive to the cultural and emotional needs of individuals affected by violence and exploitation.
- **Referral to Child Protection Services:** In cases involving children, PY works with **child protection agencies** and organizations that specialize in providing support to vulnerable children. This includes referring children to safe shelters, family reunification services, and educational programs that help protect them from further harm. PY ensures that all child protection cases are handled in accordance with international child protection standards, prioritizing the best interests of the child at every stage of the process.

7.2.3 DESIGNING A CASE FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM

To ensure that all protection issues are addressed in a timely and comprehensive manner, PY has developed a **case follow-up mechanism** that tracks the progress of each case from intake to resolution. This mechanism ensures that survivors receive ongoing support and that their protection needs are met over time.

- **Follow-Up Assessments:** PY conducts **regular follow-up assessments** with individuals affected by protection issues to ensure that their needs are being met and that they are receiving the necessary support. These assessments are conducted by trained protection officers who check on the individual's safety, well-being, and access to services. Follow-up assessments are particularly important for individuals who may be at continued risk of harm, such as survivors of domestic violence or trafficking.
- **Adjusting Case Plans:** Based on the results of follow-up assessments, PY may adjust the **case plan** to address any new or evolving needs. This could involve making additional referrals, providing emergency support, or coordinating with other organizations to ensure that the individual's protection needs are fully met.
- **Monitoring and Closure of Cases:** PY's case management system includes a process for **monitoring and closing cases** once the individual's protection needs have been

addressed. Before closing a case, PY ensures that the individual is no longer at risk and that they have access to long-term support services if needed. Cases are only closed with the consent of the survivor, and PY ensures that all documentation is securely stored for future reference.

- **Feedback and Complaints:** As part of the follow-up process, PY provides individuals with the opportunity to provide feedback on the services they received and to raise any concerns or complaints about the handling of their case. PY takes all feedback seriously and uses it to improve the quality and effectiveness of its protection programs.

8. CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING

Capacity building and training are central to the effective implementation of Peace by Youth's (PY) Protection Policy. To ensure that PY's staff, volunteers, stakeholders, and community members have the knowledge and skills necessary to uphold protection standards, PY provides regular and comprehensive training programs. These programs are designed to build the capacity of individuals and communities to prevent, identify, and respond to protection concerns, with a particular focus on gender-based violence (GBV), child protection, and accountability mechanisms. By investing in capacity building, PY ensures that protection principles are integrated into all levels of its operations and that community-based protection mechanisms are strengthened.

8.1 PROVIDING REGULAR TRAINING FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND STAKEHOLDERS

A core component of PY's capacity building strategy is providing **regular training** to all staff, volunteers, and stakeholders involved in its programs. These training sessions ensure that everyone working with PY is equipped to uphold protection standards and respond effectively to protection concerns in the field.

8.1.1 PROTECTION PRINCIPLES AND FRAMEWORKS

All PY staff, volunteers, and stakeholders are trained on the fundamental principles of protection, including human rights, international refugee law, and humanitarian law. This ensures that everyone working with PY has a shared understanding of protection standards and can apply them consistently in their work.

- **Human Rights:** Staff and volunteers are trained on the key principles of **human rights law**, including the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, which outlines the basic rights and freedoms to which all individuals are entitled. PY's training programs emphasize the importance of respecting the dignity, rights, and equality of all individuals, regardless of their legal status or background.
- **Refugee Law and Rights:** Training includes an overview of **international refugee law**, particularly the **1951 Refugee Convention** and its **1967 Protocol**. Staff and volunteers are trained on the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), including their right to seek asylum, protection from refoulement, and access to basic services. Training covers PY's role in advocating for and safeguarding the rights of refugees and displaced persons.
- **Do No Harm Principle:** PY ensures that staff are trained on the **Do No Harm principle**, which requires that all humanitarian interventions minimize harm and avoid exacerbating existing vulnerabilities or conflicts. This principle is integrated into all stages of PY's program planning, implementation, and evaluation, ensuring that staff understand how to identify and mitigate potential risks.

8.1.2 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is a priority for PY's protection efforts. PY provides specialized training on GBV prevention and response, ensuring that staff and volunteers are equipped to recognize, respond to, and support survivors of GBV.

- **Understanding GBV:** PY's GBV training programs provide an in-depth understanding of the different forms of gender-based violence, including **sexual violence, domestic violence, trafficking, and harmful traditional practices**. Training covers the root causes of GBV, such as gender inequality and harmful gender norms, and emphasizes the importance of addressing these root causes in PY's protection programs.
- **Survivor-Centered Approach:** PY adopts a **survivor-centered approach** to GBV response, which prioritizes the safety, confidentiality, and dignity of survivors. Training ensures that staff understand the principles of survivor-centered care, including obtaining informed consent, respecting survivors' choices, and ensuring that survivors have access to comprehensive support services.
- **GBV Case Management:** Staff and volunteers are trained on GBV case management, including how to conduct risk assessments, develop safety plans, and refer survivors to specialized services such as legal aid, medical care, and psychosocial support. Training also covers PY's protocols for ensuring the confidentiality and safety of survivors throughout the case management process.

- **Referral Pathways:** PY ensures that staff and volunteers are trained on how to use **referral pathways** for GBV cases, ensuring that survivors are connected to the appropriate services in a timely and confidential manner. This includes understanding the roles of different service providers, such as healthcare facilities, legal aid organizations, and psychosocial support centers, and how to facilitate safe and effective referrals.

8.1.3 CHILD PROTECTION

Protecting children from abuse, exploitation, and neglect is a key component of PY's protection strategy. PY provides specialized training on child protection principles and practices, ensuring that staff, volunteers, and stakeholders understand their responsibilities to safeguard children.

- **Understanding Child Protection:** Training covers the basic principles of **child protection**, including the rights of children as outlined in the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**. Staff and volunteers are trained on the importance of creating safe and supportive environments for children, where their rights are respected, and their well-being is prioritized.
- **Recognizing Child Abuse and Exploitation:** PY ensures that staff are trained to recognize the signs of child abuse, exploitation, and neglect, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. Training also covers the specific risks faced by children in displacement settings, such as child labor, trafficking, and early marriage. Staff are trained on how to identify these risks and take appropriate action to protect children from harm.
- **Child-Friendly Approaches:** PY's training programs emphasize the importance of using **child-friendly approaches** in all interactions with children. This includes ensuring that communication is age-appropriate, that children's voices are heard and respected, and that children are involved in decisions that affect their lives. Staff are trained on how to create **child-friendly spaces** where children feel safe and supported.
- **Child Protection Case Management:** Staff and volunteers are trained on **child protection case management**, including how to conduct child protection assessments, develop care plans, and refer children to specialized services such as child welfare agencies and psychosocial support programs. PY's training also covers the importance of involving families and caregivers in the case management process and ensuring that the best interests of the child are always prioritized.

8.1.4 ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

PY places a strong emphasis on **accountability to affected populations (AAP)**, ensuring that individuals and communities have a voice in the protection programs that affect them. Staff, volunteers, and stakeholders are trained on PY's accountability mechanisms, including how to engage with communities, collect feedback, and address complaints.

- **Community Participation:** PY's training programs emphasize the importance of involving communities in all stages of program planning and implementation. Staff are trained on how to facilitate community consultations, gather input from diverse groups, and ensure that the perspectives of vulnerable populations, including women, children, and persons with disabilities, are taken into account.
- **Feedback and Complaints Mechanisms:** Training includes an overview of PY's **feedback and complaints mechanisms**, including how to handle complaints confidentially, how to respond to feedback in a timely manner, and how to ensure that individuals feel empowered to raise concerns without fear of retaliation. Staff are trained on how to collect feedback through surveys, community meetings, and other channels, and how to use this feedback to improve protection programs.
- **Transparency and Communication:** PY ensures that staff understand the importance of transparency in all interactions with beneficiaries. Training covers how to communicate program goals, objectives, and processes to communities in a clear and accessible manner, ensuring that beneficiaries are fully informed about their rights and the services available to them.

8.2 TRAINING LOCAL COMMUNITIES ON HUMAN RIGHTS, PROTECTION PRINCIPLES, AND REFUGEE RIGHTS

In addition to training staff and volunteers, PY is committed to building the capacity of local communities to uphold human rights and protect vulnerable populations. By training community members on protection principles, human rights, and refugee rights, PY fosters **community-**

based protection mechanisms that empower individuals to take an active role in safeguarding their own communities.

8.2.1 HUMAN RIGHTS AND PROTECTION PRINCIPLES

PY provides training to local communities on the basic principles of **human rights** and **protection**. This training is designed to raise awareness about the rights of all individuals, including refugees, displaced persons, women, children, and persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for these rights within the community.

- **Human Rights Education:** PY's training programs provide community members with a foundational understanding of human rights, including the rights to life, liberty, education, healthcare, and protection from violence and exploitation. Training emphasizes the universality of human rights and the importance of upholding these rights in all circumstances.
- **Preventing Harmful Practices:** PY works with community leaders and members to raise awareness about harmful practices that violate human rights, such as gender-based violence, child marriage, and discrimination against marginalized groups. Through training and dialogue, PY encourages communities to adopt practices that promote gender equality, protect children, and ensure the dignity and safety of all individuals.

8.2.2 REFUGEE RIGHTS AND LEGAL PROTECTIONS

In communities hosting refugees and displaced persons, PY provides training on **refugee rights** and the legal protections available to refugees under international law. This training is designed to foster understanding and solidarity between host communities and refugees and to ensure that refugees are treated with dignity and respect.

- **Understanding Refugee Status:** PY's training programs cover the legal definition of **refugee status** as outlined in the **1951 Refugee Convention** and its **1967 Protocol**. Community members are educated about the rights of refugees, including their right to seek asylum, protection from refoulement, and access to basic services. Training also covers the responsibilities of host communities to provide a safe and supportive environment for refugees.
- **Addressing Refugee-Host Tensions:** In some contexts, tensions may arise between refugees and host communities due to competition for resources or cultural differences. PY provides training on how to address these tensions through dialogue, cooperation, and mutual respect. Community members are encouraged to engage in activities that promote social cohesion and build positive relationships between refugees and host communities.
- **Supporting Refugee Integration:** PY works with host communities to support the integration of refugees into local societies. This includes training on how to facilitate access to education, healthcare, and livelihoods for refugees, and how to promote inclusive practices that benefit both refugees and host communities.

8.2.3 PROMOTING COMMUNITY-BASED PROTECTION MECHANISMS

PY believes that communities play a vital role in protecting vulnerable individuals and preventing harm. By training local communities on protection principles and human rights, PY fosters **community-based protection mechanisms** that empower individuals to take action when they witness abuse, exploitation, or violence.

- **Engaging Community Leaders:** PY works closely with community leaders, religious leaders, and other influential figures to build their capacity as **protection champions**. These leaders are trained to identify protection risks, provide guidance to community members, and serve as points of contact for reporting protection concerns. PY's training programs emphasize the importance of engaging community leaders in efforts to prevent GBV, child abuse, and other forms of violence.
- **Strengthening Community-Based Protection Networks:** PY helps communities establish **protection committees** or **community-based protection networks** that are responsible for monitoring protection issues, raising awareness, and responding to protection concerns. These networks play a key role in identifying vulnerable individuals, referring them to services, and advocating for their rights within the community.
- **Awareness-Raising Campaigns:** PY supports community-led **awareness-raising campaigns** that promote human rights and protection principles. These campaigns use a variety of methods, including public meetings, radio broadcasts, and cultural events, to educate community members about their rights and responsibilities. By involving

community members in these campaigns, PY ensures that protection messages are disseminated widely and effectively.

8.3 DEVELOPING PROTECTION FOCAL POINTS WITHIN THE TEAM

To strengthen PY's ability to monitor and address protection concerns on the ground, PY develops **protection focal points** within its teams. These focal points are responsible for overseeing protection activities, identifying risks, and ensuring that protection principles are upheld in all PY programs.

8.3.1 ROLE OF PROTECTION FOCAL POINTS

Protection focal points serve as the primary point of contact for protection issues within PY's field teams. They are responsible for coordinating protection activities, providing technical guidance to staff and volunteers, and ensuring that protection standards are consistently applied.

- **Monitoring Protection Risks:** Protection focal points are tasked with **monitoring protection risks** in the areas where PY operates. This includes conducting regular assessments of protection issues, such as GBV, child protection, and trafficking, and identifying individuals or groups who may be at heightened risk. Protection focal points work closely with field teams to ensure that protection risks are addressed in a timely and comprehensive manner.
- **Providing Technical Support:** Protection focal points provide **technical support** to field staff, ensuring that they have the knowledge and skills to implement protection programs effectively. This includes providing guidance on how to conduct protection assessments, manage protection cases, and refer individuals to specialized services. Protection focal points also serve as a resource for staff who encounter complex protection issues and need additional support.
- **Liaising with External Partners:** Protection focal points are responsible for liaising with **external partners**, including government agencies, UN agencies, and NGOs, to coordinate protection responses. This includes participating in protection cluster meetings, sharing data on protection issues, and ensuring that PY's protection programs are aligned with broader protection strategies in the region.

8.3.2 TRAINING PROTECTION FOCAL POINTS

To ensure that protection focal points are equipped to fulfill their responsibilities, PY provides them with **specialized training** on protection principles, case management, and referral pathways. This training ensures that protection focal points have the technical expertise to oversee protection activities and provide guidance to other team members.

- **Advanced Protection Training:** Protection focal points receive advanced training on **protection case management**, including how to conduct risk assessments, develop case plans, and follow up on protection cases. They are also trained on how to ensure that protection programs are survivor-centered and responsive to the needs of vulnerable individuals.
- **Coordination and Advocacy:** Training for protection focal points includes an emphasis on **coordination and advocacy**. Protection focal points are trained on how to advocate for the rights of vulnerable populations, engage with external stakeholders, and promote PY's protection goals within the broader humanitarian community.

9. COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Coordination and partnerships are fundamental to the success of **Peace by Youth's (PY)** protection programs. To ensure that protection efforts are effective, holistic, and responsive to the needs of vulnerable populations, PY works closely with a wide range of actors, including the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, government bodies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and community-based organizations. By fostering strong partnerships, establishing formal agreements, and actively participating in protection clusters, PY ensures that its protection efforts are well-coordinated and aligned with national and international protection strategies. PY's approach to coordination and partnerships is based on the principles of **collaboration**, **complementarity**, and **shared responsibility** in delivering protection services.

9.1 COORDINATION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS

PY recognizes that effective protection programming requires close coordination with key stakeholders, including UN agencies, government bodies, NGOs, and community organizations. By collaborating with these stakeholders, PY ensures that its protection efforts are aligned with broader protection strategies, avoid duplication of services, and leverage the strengths of multiple actors to provide comprehensive support to vulnerable populations.

9.1.1 COORDINATION WITH UNHCR

UNHCR plays a central role in the protection of refugees and displaced persons globally, and PY's protection efforts are closely coordinated with UNHCR to ensure alignment with international protection standards and frameworks. PY's collaboration with UNHCR focuses on ensuring that refugees and asylum-seekers have access to the protection services they need, including legal assistance, safe shelter, and access to health and education.

- **Shared Protection Objectives:** PY works with UNHCR to achieve shared protection objectives, including the protection of refugee rights, prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), and ensuring the safety and well-being of vulnerable populations. PY ensures that its programs complement UNHCR's mandate and priorities, particularly in areas related to refugee status determination, legal protection, and resettlement.
- **Data Sharing and Reporting:** PY regularly shares data and reports on protection activities with UNHCR, ensuring that both organizations have a comprehensive understanding of the protection landscape in the areas where they operate. This includes sharing information on protection cases, trends in GBV, child protection issues, and any emerging protection risks. Data sharing is done in accordance with PY's confidentiality protocols and in alignment with international data protection standards.
- **Joint Advocacy:** PY collaborates with UNHCR on **advocacy efforts** aimed at raising awareness of refugee rights, influencing policy, and promoting the inclusion of refugees in national and local protection frameworks. PY and UNHCR work together to advocate for the rights of refugees in key areas such as access to legal documentation, the right to work, and access to basic services such as healthcare and education.

9.1.2 COLLABORATION WITH GOVERNMENT BODIES

Government bodies play a crucial role in ensuring the legal and policy frameworks that support the protection of refugees, displaced persons, and vulnerable populations. PY actively collaborates with local, regional, and national government agencies to ensure that protection efforts are integrated into broader government strategies and that refugees and displaced persons can access government services.

- **Coordination with Government Authorities:** PY engages with government authorities to facilitate access to services such as legal documentation, healthcare, and education for refugees and displaced persons. PY ensures that its protection programs align with government policies and regulations and supports the government in fulfilling its responsibilities under international refugee law and human rights law.
- **Supporting Legal and Policy Frameworks:** PY advocates for the development and implementation of legal and policy frameworks that protect the rights of refugees, displaced persons, and vulnerable populations. This includes advocating for policies that prevent refoulement, ensure access to asylum procedures, and provide legal protections for survivors of GBV and other forms of violence. PY works with government officials to promote the adoption of protection policies that are consistent with international legal

standards, such as the **1951 Refugee Convention** and **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**.

- **Capacity Building for Government Staff:** In some contexts, government officials may lack the capacity or resources to implement protection policies effectively. PY provides **capacity-building support** to government staff, including training on refugee law, human rights, and child protection. PY's training programs are designed to strengthen the government's ability to respond to protection cases and ensure that vulnerable populations receive the support they need.

9.1.3 PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER NGOS AND COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

PY recognizes that a collaborative approach with other NGOs and **community-based organizations (CBOs)** is essential for delivering comprehensive protection services. By partnering with organizations that have complementary expertise and resources, PY ensures that protection interventions are holistic and address the full spectrum of protection needs.

- **Complementarity of Services:** PY works with other NGOs to ensure that its protection efforts complement the services provided by other organizations. This includes coordinating on key issues such as GBV prevention and response, child protection, and psychosocial support. PY ensures that there is no duplication of services and that protection interventions are delivered in a coordinated manner to maximize impact.
- **Referral Networks:** PY is part of a **referral network** of NGOs and CBOs that provide specialized services to vulnerable populations. This includes referring protection cases to organizations that provide legal aid, medical care, psychosocial support, and shelter services. PY ensures that all referrals are handled in a confidential and timely manner, and that individuals receive the appropriate care and support.
- **Joint Training and Capacity Building:** PY collaborates with other NGOs and CBOs to provide joint training and capacity-building programs. This includes training on protection principles, case management, and the prevention of GBV. By working together, PY and its partners ensure that all organizations involved in protection efforts are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to respond to protection cases effectively.

9.2 ESTABLISHING MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING (MOUS) WITH LOCAL LEGAL AND MEDICAL SERVICES

To ensure that survivors of abuse, exploitation, and violence have access to specialized services, PY establishes **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** with local legal and medical service providers. These formal agreements help to streamline the referral process for protection cases and ensure that individuals receive the comprehensive support they need.

9.2.1 LEGAL SERVICES FOR PROTECTION CASES

Legal assistance is a critical component of protection, particularly for survivors of GBV, trafficking, and other forms of violence who may need to pursue legal action against perpetrators or seek asylum in host countries. PY works with legal aid organizations and human rights groups to provide survivors with access to legal services.

- **Access to Legal Aid:** PY's MoUs with legal service providers ensure that survivors of protection violations have access to **free or low-cost legal representation**. This includes support in filing police reports, seeking protection orders, and navigating the asylum process. PY's legal partners also provide survivors with information on their legal rights and the legal processes available to them.
- **Legal Advocacy and Representation:** PY collaborates with legal aid organizations to advocate for the rights of survivors in court and ensure that perpetrators of violence and abuse are held accountable. This includes working on **gender-based violence (GBV)** cases, child protection issues, and refugee status determination. PY's legal partners provide representation in cases that involve complex legal challenges, such as asylum claims and human trafficking cases.

9.2.2 MEDICAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Survivors of violence and exploitation often require medical care and psychosocial support to recover from the physical and emotional trauma they have experienced. PY partners with local health clinics, hospitals, and psychosocial support centers to provide survivors with access to the services they need.

- **Medical Care for Survivors:** PY's MoUs with medical service providers ensure that survivors of GBV and other protection violations receive timely and confidential medical care. This includes access to **post-rape care, emergency contraception, treatment for sexually transmitted infections (STIs)**, and other forms of medical support. PY's medical partners are trained to provide survivor-centered care that respects the dignity and privacy of survivors.
- **Psychosocial Support:** In addition to medical care, PY partners with psychosocial support organizations to provide survivors with **counseling services, trauma care, and mental health support**. PY's psychosocial partners are trained to provide care that is trauma-informed and culturally sensitive, ensuring that survivors receive the emotional and psychological support they need to recover from their experiences.
- **Safe Referrals:** PY ensures that all referrals to legal, medical, and psychosocial services are handled confidentially and with the consent of the survivor. PY's referral system is designed to prioritize the safety and dignity of survivors, ensuring that they receive the care they need in a manner that respects their autonomy and privacy.

9.3 PARTICIPATION IN PROTECTION CLUSTER MEETINGS

PY actively participates in **protection cluster meetings** to ensure that its voice is heard in shaping protection strategies for refugees and other vulnerable populations. Protection clusters are coordination platforms led by UN agencies, government bodies, and NGOs that work together to address protection challenges in humanitarian settings. By participating in these meetings, PY contributes to the development of protection policies and ensures that its programs are aligned with national and international protection frameworks.

9.3.1 CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL AND REGIONAL PROTECTION STRATEGIES

PY's participation in protection cluster meetings allows it to contribute to the development of **national and regional protection strategies**. These strategies are essential for ensuring that protection efforts are coordinated across multiple actors and that the needs of vulnerable populations are met comprehensively.

- **Policy Development:** PY works with other cluster members to develop policies on key protection issues, such as GBV prevention, child protection, and the rights of refugees. PY's expertise in community-based protection and its experience working with vulnerable populations allow it to provide valuable input into the development of these policies.
- **Advocacy for Refugee Rights:** PY uses its participation in protection clusters to advocate for the rights of refugees and displaced persons. This includes advocating for policies that promote the inclusion of refugees in national legal frameworks, ensure access to services, and prevent refoulement. PY's advocacy efforts are informed by its field experience and its commitment to upholding the rights of all individuals, regardless of their legal status.

9.3.2 COORDINATION OF PROTECTION EFFORTS

Protection clusters serve as a platform for **coordinating protection efforts** among multiple actors, ensuring that protection interventions are complementary and that resources are used efficiently. PY's participation in protection cluster meetings ensures that its protection programs are aligned with the efforts of other organizations and that there is no duplication of services.

- **Harmonization of Services:** PY works with other cluster members to harmonize protection services, ensuring that all organizations are working towards the same protection goals and that services are delivered in a coordinated manner. This includes coordinating on referral pathways, sharing data on protection cases, and ensuring that protection interventions are delivered to all individuals in need.
- **Joint Monitoring and Evaluation:** PY participates in joint monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities with other protection cluster members to assess the effectiveness of protection programs and identify areas for improvement. By working together, cluster members are able to share lessons learned, identify best practices, and ensure that protection interventions are continuously improved.

9.3.3 SHAPING PROTECTION STRATEGIES FOR REFUGEE COMMUNITIES

PY uses its participation in protection cluster meetings to ensure that the voices of refugee communities are heard in the development of protection strategies. PY advocates for a

community-based approach to protection, which emphasizes the importance of engaging refugees and displaced persons in the design and implementation of protection programs.

- **Engaging Refugee Voices:** PY ensures that refugees and displaced persons are actively involved in the protection planning process. This includes conducting consultations with refugee communities, gathering feedback on protection programs, and ensuring that their perspectives are reflected in the development of protection strategies. PY advocates for protection strategies that are responsive to the specific needs and priorities of refugee communities.
- **Promoting Inclusive Protection Policies:** PY works with protection cluster members to promote inclusive protection policies that address the needs of all individuals, including women, children, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups. PY ensures that protection strategies are gender-sensitive, age-appropriate, and inclusive of all vulnerable populations.

10. MONITORING, EVALUATION, AND LEARNING (MEL)

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) are essential components of Peace by Youth's (PY) **Protection Policy**. MEL ensures that protection interventions are effective, responsive to the needs of beneficiaries, and aligned with international protection standards. Through the use of clearly defined indicators, regular reviews, and feedback mechanisms, PY continually assesses the impact of its protection programs and incorporates lessons learned into future programming. This systematic approach to MEL enhances the quality and accountability of PY's protection efforts, helping to create sustainable protection outcomes for vulnerable populations, including refugees, displaced persons, and host communities.

10.1 DEVELOPING INDICATORS FOR MEASURING PROTECTION OUTCOMES

To ensure the effectiveness of its protection interventions, PY has developed a set of **indicators** that are used to measure protection outcomes. These indicators help PY track progress, assess the impact of protection programs, and identify areas where improvements are needed. The indicators are aligned with PY's protection objectives and are designed to capture key aspects of protection, such as the reduction in gender-based violence (GBV) cases, access to child protection services, and community participation in protection initiatives.

10.1.1 INDICATORS FOR GBV PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

PY places a strong emphasis on the prevention and response to **gender-based violence (GBV)**. To measure the effectiveness of GBV prevention and response efforts, PY uses a range of indicators that assess changes in the prevalence of GBV, the availability of support services for survivors, and the capacity of staff and communities to respond to GBV cases.

- **Reduction in GBV Cases:** One of the primary indicators used to measure the success of PY's GBV programs is the **reduction in reported GBV cases**. This indicator tracks the number of GBV cases reported to PY and its partners over time. A reduction in the number of cases can indicate that prevention efforts, such as community education and awareness-raising, are having a positive impact. However, it is important to interpret this indicator carefully, as an increase in reported cases may also reflect improved access to reporting mechanisms and greater trust in PY's services.
- **Access to GBV Support Services:** PY also tracks the number of **survivors accessing GBV support services**, including medical care, psychosocial support, and legal aid. This indicator helps PY assess the availability and accessibility of services for GBV survivors and identify any barriers that may be preventing survivors from seeking help.
- **Capacity of Staff and Volunteers:** PY measures the **capacity of staff and volunteers** to respond to GBV cases through regular assessments and evaluations. This includes tracking the number of staff and volunteers who have received training on GBV prevention and response, as well as evaluating their ability to apply this training in the field. Indicators may include the percentage of staff trained on GBV protocols and the number of GBV cases successfully managed according to PY's survivor-centered approach.

10.1.2 INDICATORS FOR CHILD PROTECTION

PY's child protection programs are designed to safeguard children from abuse, exploitation, and neglect, particularly in displacement settings. PY has developed indicators to measure the effectiveness of these programs, focusing on improvements in access to child protection services, the reduction of child labor and trafficking, and the creation of child-friendly environments.

- **Access to Child Protection Services:** PY tracks the number of children who are referred to and receive **child protection services**, such as counseling, family reunification, and legal assistance. This indicator helps PY assess the effectiveness of its child protection referral systems and ensure that vulnerable children are connected to the services they need.
- **Reduction in Child Labor and Trafficking:** PY monitors the prevalence of **child labor and trafficking** in the areas where it operates. Indicators include the number of children identified as being involved in child labor or trafficking, as well as the number of cases

successfully referred to law enforcement and child welfare agencies. A reduction in these numbers can indicate that PY's prevention efforts are making a positive impact.

- **Creation of Child-Friendly Spaces:** PY assesses the effectiveness of its child-friendly spaces (CFS) by tracking the number of children who participate in activities within these spaces and the outcomes of these activities. Indicators may include the number of children attending CFS programs, the satisfaction of children and caregivers with the services provided, and the observed improvements in children's emotional well-being and social skills.

10.1.3 INDICATORS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PROTECTION

Community participation is a key aspect of PY's protection strategy, as it ensures that protection efforts are locally owned and sustainable. PY has developed indicators to measure the level of community involvement in protection programs and the impact of community-based protection initiatives.

- **Community Participation in Protection Committees:** PY tracks the number of **community members participating in protection committees** or community-based protection networks. This indicator helps assess the extent to which communities are taking an active role in identifying and addressing protection concerns.
- **Community Awareness of Protection Issues:** PY measures the effectiveness of its **awareness-raising campaigns** by assessing changes in community knowledge and attitudes toward protection issues, such as GBV, child protection, and the rights of refugees. Indicators may include the percentage of community members who can identify key protection risks and the percentage who report taking action to prevent or respond to protection violations.
- **Satisfaction with Protection Programs:** PY collects feedback from community members to assess their **satisfaction with protection programs**. This indicator helps PY ensure that its programs are meeting the needs of the communities it serves and that beneficiaries feel empowered to participate in protection efforts.

10.2 CONDUCTING PERIODIC REVIEWS OF THE PROTECTION POLICY

To ensure that PY's Protection Policy remains relevant and effective, PY conducts **periodic reviews** of the policy. These reviews are designed to assess the policy's alignment with current protection challenges, international standards, and the evolving needs of vulnerable populations. By regularly reviewing the Protection Policy, PY ensures that it remains a living document that can be adapted to changing contexts and emerging protection risks.

10.2.1 ANNUAL POLICY REVIEWS

PY conducts an **annual review** of its Protection Policy to assess its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. The review process involves input from staff, volunteers, community members, and external partners, ensuring that a wide range of perspectives are considered.

- **Internal Review Process:** PY's internal review process involves consultations with protection staff and program managers to assess the implementation of the Protection Policy. This includes reviewing protection case management systems, referral pathways, and the outcomes of protection interventions. The internal review also examines the capacity of staff and volunteers to apply the Protection Policy in their day-to-day work.
- **Consultation with External Partners:** PY engages with **external partners**, including UNHCR, government bodies, and NGOs, to gather feedback on the effectiveness of its Protection Policy. This includes assessing how well PY's protection efforts are coordinated with other actors and whether the policy is aligned with national and international protection frameworks.
- **Adapting the Policy to Emerging Risks:** The annual review process allows PY to **adapt its Protection Policy** to address emerging protection risks, such as new forms of exploitation, changes in displacement patterns, or shifts in legal frameworks. By staying responsive to these changes, PY ensures that its protection programs remain relevant and effective.

10.2.2 MID-TERM AND POST-PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

In addition to annual reviews, PY conducts **mid-term and post-program evaluations** of its protection programs to assess the impact of the Protection Policy on specific interventions.

These evaluations provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of protection strategies and help PY identify best practices and areas for improvement.

- **Mid-Term Evaluations:** Mid-term evaluations are conducted during the implementation of protection programs to assess progress toward protection goals and identify any challenges or barriers to success. These evaluations help PY make **course corrections** if necessary, ensuring that programs remain on track and responsive to the needs of beneficiaries.
- **Post-Program Evaluations:** At the conclusion of protection programs, PY conducts post-program evaluations to assess the overall **impact and sustainability** of protection interventions. These evaluations focus on the long-term outcomes of protection programs, such as reductions in GBV cases, improvements in child protection systems, and increased community capacity to respond to protection issues.

10.2.3 POLICY UPDATES AND REVISIONS

Based on the findings of the periodic reviews and evaluations, PY makes **updates and revisions** to its Protection Policy as needed. These updates ensure that the policy remains aligned with best practices, international standards, and the specific protection needs of the populations PY serves.

- **Incorporating Lessons Learned:** PY uses the findings from its reviews and evaluations to incorporate **lessons learned** into the updated Protection Policy. This ensures that the policy reflects the most effective protection strategies and addresses any gaps or weaknesses identified during the review process.
- **Alignment with International Standards:** PY ensures that any updates to the Protection Policy are aligned with **international protection standards**, including those set by UNHCR, the **Sphere Standards**, and the **Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)**. This ensures that PY's protection efforts remain consistent with global best practices and that the organization continues to meet its obligations under international law.

10.3 ESTABLISHING FEEDBACK LOOPS FROM BENEFICIARIES

To ensure that protection programs are responsive to the needs of beneficiaries, PY has established **feedback loops** that allow individuals and communities to provide input on protection interventions. These feedback mechanisms are designed to promote **learning** and **continuous improvement**, ensuring that protection programs are informed by the experiences and perspectives of the people they serve.

10.3.1 COLLECTING FEEDBACK FROM BENEFICIARIES

PY uses a variety of methods to collect **feedback from beneficiaries**, including surveys, focus group discussions, and community meetings. These methods ensure that beneficiaries have multiple opportunities to provide input on protection programs and that their feedback is incorporated into program planning and implementation.

- **Anonymous Feedback Mechanisms:** PY provides **anonymous feedback mechanisms**, such as suggestion boxes and online forms, to allow beneficiaries to share their views without fear of reprisal. These mechanisms are particularly important for collecting feedback on sensitive protection issues, such as GBV and child protection, where individuals may be hesitant to speak openly.
- **Focus Group Discussions:** PY conducts **focus group discussions** with specific groups, such as women, children, and persons with disabilities, to gather in-depth feedback on protection programs. These discussions provide an opportunity for beneficiaries to share their experiences, identify challenges, and suggest improvements to protection interventions.

10.3.2 USING FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE PROTECTION INTERVENTIONS

PY actively uses the feedback it receives from beneficiaries to **improve protection interventions** and ensure that programs are responsive to the needs of the communities they serve. Feedback is analyzed and used to inform program adjustments, enhance service delivery, and address any gaps in protection efforts.

- **Program Adjustments:** PY uses feedback from beneficiaries to make **real-time adjustments** to protection programs. This includes adapting services to better meet the needs of specific groups, addressing barriers to accessing protection services, and improving communication between beneficiaries and PY staff.

- **Continuous Improvement:** PY's feedback mechanisms are an essential part of its **continuous improvement** process. By regularly gathering and analyzing feedback, PY ensures that its protection programs are dynamic and responsive, evolving in response to the needs and priorities of the populations it serves.

10.3.3 PROMOTING LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

PY is committed to fostering a **learning culture** within the organization and sharing knowledge with external partners. PY uses the insights gained from feedback loops, reviews, and evaluations to **promote learning** both within the organization and among its partners.

- **Internal Learning Sessions:** PY holds **internal learning sessions** where staff and volunteers can share their experiences, discuss challenges, and identify solutions to improve protection programming. These sessions help to build the capacity of staff and ensure that lessons learned are integrated into future protection efforts.
- **Knowledge Sharing with Partners:** PY also shares **lessons learned** and best practices with external partners, including UNHCR, government bodies, and NGOs. By promoting knowledge sharing, PY contributes to the broader protection community and ensures that its experiences can inform and enhance protection efforts in other contexts.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is a crucial component of Peace by Youth's (PY) Protection Policy, designed to ensure that all protection interventions are carried out in a way that minimizes potential harm and effectively mitigates risks to both beneficiaries and staff. In humanitarian and protection work, PY operates in complex environments where challenges such as violence, exploitation, political instability, and natural disasters may impact the safety and well-being of vulnerable populations. Therefore, PY takes a proactive approach to identifying, assessing, and managing risks to ensure that its protection programs are delivered safely, ethically, and effectively.

This section outlines PY's approach to **identifying potential protection risks**, conducting **regular risk assessments**, and establishing **security protocols** to safeguard staff and beneficiaries in high-risk areas.

11.1 IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL PROTECTION RISKS

Effective risk management begins with the identification of potential protection risks in all project areas. PY takes a systematic approach to identifying risks that could affect the safety, security, and well-being of the individuals and communities it serves. This process involves understanding the specific context of each project location, analyzing the vulnerabilities of target populations, and considering the operational risks associated with delivering protection services.

11.1.1 CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF PROJECT AREAS

PY conducts a **contextual analysis** of all project areas to understand the specific protection risks faced by vulnerable populations, including refugees, displaced persons, women, children, and persons with disabilities. This analysis takes into account the social, political, economic, and environmental factors that may influence protection risks.

- **Conflict and Violence:** In areas affected by armed conflict, political instability, or inter-communal violence, PY identifies the risks associated with violence, including attacks on civilians, sexual and gender-based violence (GBV), forced recruitment of children, and displacement. PY assesses the likelihood of violence occurring and its potential impact on beneficiaries and staff.
- **Exploitation and Trafficking:** PY also identifies risks related to exploitation, human trafficking, and abuse, particularly in areas where there are high levels of poverty, economic instability, or weak governance. Vulnerable populations, such as unaccompanied children, women, and displaced persons, are at heightened risk of exploitation in these contexts.
- **Environmental and Natural Disasters:** In areas prone to natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes, or droughts, PY assesses the potential risks to protection programming. Natural disasters can exacerbate vulnerabilities, disrupt access to services, and increase the risk of exploitation and abuse. PY identifies the specific risks posed by environmental factors and incorporates them into its risk management strategies.

11.1.2 VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT OF TARGET POPULATIONS

In addition to conducting a contextual analysis, PY performs **vulnerability assessments** to identify the specific risks faced by different groups within the target population. Vulnerability assessments help PY understand which individuals or groups are most at risk of harm and require targeted protection interventions.

- **Women and Girls:** Women and girls are often at greater risk of GBV, exploitation, and discrimination, particularly in displacement settings. PY identifies the specific risks faced by women and girls in each project area, including the prevalence of sexual violence, forced marriage, and trafficking. This helps PY design targeted interventions to mitigate these risks and provide support to survivors.
- **Children:** Children, especially unaccompanied minors and separated children, face unique protection risks, including child labor, trafficking, recruitment into armed groups, and exploitation. PY conducts assessments to identify the specific vulnerabilities of children in each context and designs child protection programs accordingly.
- **Persons with Disabilities (PWD):** PWD often face significant barriers to accessing protection services and are more vulnerable to neglect, abuse, and exploitation. PY assesses the risks faced by PWD in each project area and ensures that its protection programs are inclusive and accessible to individuals with disabilities.

- **Marginalized Groups:** In many contexts, marginalized groups, such as ethnic or religious minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and indigenous populations, face increased risks of discrimination, violence, and exclusion. PY identifies these risks and works to ensure that its protection programs are inclusive and address the specific needs of marginalized communities.

11.1.3 OPERATIONAL AND SECURITY RISKS

In addition to protection risks faced by beneficiaries, PY also identifies **operational and security risks** that could affect its ability to deliver protection services safely and effectively. This includes risks to staff safety, the security of facilities, and the ability to access project locations.

- **Staff Safety:** PY assesses the risks to staff working in high-risk areas, including the threat of violence, kidnapping, harassment, and exposure to dangerous environments. This analysis informs the development of security protocols and staff training programs to mitigate risks.
- **Access to Services:** PY evaluates the risks related to access to services, including transportation challenges, restrictions on movement due to conflict or political instability, and logistical difficulties in reaching remote or hard-to-access areas. PY develops contingency plans to address these access challenges and ensure continuity of services.

11.2 CONDUCTING REGULAR RISK ASSESSMENTS

To ensure that risks are continuously monitored and managed, PY conducts **regular risk assessments** throughout the life cycle of its protection programs. These assessments help PY identify new risks, evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures, and adjust its risk management strategies as needed. Risk assessments are conducted at the outset of each project, during program implementation, and as part of program evaluations.

11.2.1 INITIAL RISK ASSESSMENTS

At the start of each project, PY conducts an **initial risk assessment** to identify potential protection risks and develop mitigation strategies. This assessment is based on the contextual analysis and vulnerability assessments described above and serves as the foundation for PY's risk management plan.

- **Risk Mapping:** During the initial risk assessment, PY creates a **risk map** that identifies the key risks associated with the project. This map includes an analysis of the likelihood of each risk occurring, the potential impact on beneficiaries and staff, and the measures that will be taken to mitigate each risk.
- **Mitigation Strategies:** PY develops **mitigation strategies** to address each identified risk. These strategies may include adjusting program activities to reduce exposure to risk, strengthening security measures for staff and beneficiaries, and establishing contingency plans for responding to emergencies.

11.2.2 ONGOING RISK MONITORING

Once a project is underway, PY conducts **ongoing risk monitoring** to ensure that no unintended harm occurs as a result of its interventions. Risk monitoring is integrated into PY's regular program monitoring and evaluation processes and involves continuous assessment of the protection environment.

- **Risk Tracking:** PY tracks protection risks through regular field visits, reports from staff and beneficiaries, and collaboration with local partners and authorities. This allows PY to identify any emerging risks and adjust its protection programs as needed.
- **Adapting Interventions:** If new risks are identified or existing risks change, PY adapts its protection interventions to mitigate these risks. For example, if there is an increase in GBV cases in a particular area, PY may scale up its GBV prevention programs, increase community awareness campaigns, or strengthen referral pathways for survivors.

11.2.3 POST-PROGRAM RISK EVALUATIONS

At the conclusion of each project, PY conducts a **post-program risk evaluation** to assess the overall effectiveness of its risk management strategies and identify any lessons learned. This evaluation helps PY improve its risk management practices for future projects and ensures that any remaining risks are addressed.

- **Impact on Beneficiaries:** PY evaluates the impact of its protection programs on beneficiaries, particularly in relation to the risks identified at the outset of the project. This

includes assessing whether the protection programs successfully mitigated the identified risks and whether any unintended harm occurred.

- **Lessons Learned:** The post-program evaluation also identifies **lessons learned** from the risk management process, including what worked well and what could be improved. These lessons are incorporated into PY's risk management framework to strengthen future protection programs.

11.3 ESTABLISHING SECURITY PROTOCOLS FOR STAFF AND BENEFICIARIES

In high-risk areas, ensuring the **security of staff and beneficiaries** is a top priority for PY. PY has developed comprehensive security protocols to safeguard the safety and well-being of its staff, volunteers, and the communities it serves. These protocols are regularly reviewed and updated based on the results of risk assessments and the evolving security environment.

11.3.1 SECURITY PROTOCOLS FOR STAFF

PY's security protocols for staff are designed to minimize risks and ensure that staff can carry out their duties safely, even in high-risk environments. These protocols are tailored to the specific risks associated with each project area and are aligned with international humanitarian security standards.

- **Security Briefings and Training:** All PY staff and volunteers receive **security briefings and training** before being deployed to high-risk areas. This training covers key topics such as personal safety, situational awareness, communication protocols, and how to respond in case of an emergency. Staff are also trained on how to minimize risks during field visits, including the importance of traveling in groups, avoiding high-risk areas, and maintaining regular communication with headquarters.
- **Emergency Evacuation Plans:** PY has developed **emergency evacuation plans** for staff working in high-risk areas. These plans outline the procedures for evacuating staff in case of an emergency, such as an outbreak of violence, a natural disaster, or a security threat. PY ensures that staff are familiar with the evacuation plans and have access to the necessary resources, such as transportation and communication equipment, to execute the plan if needed.
- **Incident Reporting:** PY has established an **incident reporting system** that allows staff to report security incidents, including threats, violence, or harassment, in real time. This system enables PY to respond quickly to security incidents and take appropriate action to protect staff and beneficiaries.

11.3.2 SECURITY PROTOCOLS FOR BENEFICIARIES

In addition to protecting its staff, PY is committed to ensuring the safety and security of the beneficiaries it serves. PY has developed security protocols that prioritize the safety of beneficiaries, particularly in high-risk areas where protection concerns are most acute.

- **Safe Access to Services:** PY ensures that beneficiaries have **safe access to protection services**, including legal aid, medical care, and psychosocial support. In high-risk areas, PY works with local authorities and community leaders to establish safe spaces where beneficiaries can access services without fear of violence, harassment, or exploitation.
- **Community-Based Protection Networks:** PY engages with **community-based protection networks** to strengthen the security of beneficiaries in high-risk areas. These networks include community leaders, local organizations, and protection focal points who work together to monitor security risks and provide early warning of potential threats. PY supports these networks by providing training on security protocols, communication strategies, and emergency response planning.
- **Safe Reporting Mechanisms:** PY provides beneficiaries with **safe and confidential reporting mechanisms** for raising security concerns. These mechanisms include hotlines, complaint boxes, and community liaison officers who can receive reports of violence, abuse, or other security risks. PY ensures that all reports are handled confidentially and that appropriate actions are taken to address the security concerns raised by beneficiaries.

11.3.3 COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND SECURITY FORCES

In high-risk areas, PY collaborates with **local authorities and security forces** to ensure the safety of staff and beneficiaries. This collaboration includes sharing information on security risks,

coordinating responses to security incidents, and advocating for the protection of vulnerable populations.

- **Information Sharing:** PY regularly shares information with local authorities about security risks and protection concerns in the areas where it operates. This helps local authorities and security forces understand the specific risks faced by refugees, displaced persons, and other vulnerable populations and allows them to take appropriate action to protect these groups.
- **Security Coordination:** PY participates in **security coordination meetings** with local authorities, UN agencies, and other NGOs to ensure that its security protocols are aligned with broader security strategies in the region. These meetings provide a forum for sharing information, coordinating responses to security incidents, and developing joint strategies for managing security risks.

12. SAFEGUARDING CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

The safeguarding of **confidentiality and privacy** is a fundamental principle in Peace by Youth's (PY) Protection Policy. PY is committed to ensuring that the personal information and case details of beneficiaries, including refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and other vulnerable populations, are securely protected. This commitment is essential to maintaining trust with beneficiaries and ensuring their dignity, safety, and rights are respected. By establishing robust data protection protocols and ensuring that all staff adhere to strict confidentiality guidelines, PY aims to prevent the misuse or exposure of sensitive information, thereby protecting beneficiaries from harm, exploitation, or further vulnerabilities.

This section outlines PY's approach to safeguarding confidentiality and privacy, including **secure storage of case files and personal data**, the development of **data protection protocols**, and compliance with **international data protection standards**.

12.1 ENSURING SECURE STORAGE OF CASE FILES AND PERSONAL INFORMATION

Confidentiality and privacy begin with the secure management and storage of case files and personal information. PY takes rigorous steps to ensure that all data related to beneficiaries is handled responsibly, with access restricted to authorized personnel only. This includes physical security measures for hard copies of case files, as well as digital security for electronic records.

12.1.1 SECURE PHYSICAL STORAGE OF CASE FILES

For case files that are stored in **physical form**, PY has established protocols to ensure their security and confidentiality. These protocols are designed to prevent unauthorized access and to safeguard sensitive information from theft, damage, or misuse.

- **Locked Filing Systems:** All physical case files are stored in **locked filing cabinets** or secure rooms, with access limited to authorized personnel. Only staff members who are directly involved in case management or protection activities have access to these files. The keys or access codes to these cabinets are strictly controlled and monitored by designated staff.
- **Access Control Logs:** PY maintains **access control logs** to record when case files are accessed and by whom. This system ensures accountability and helps PY track any unauthorized or suspicious access attempts. Staff members are required to sign in and out when accessing sensitive case files, and regular audits are conducted to ensure compliance with access protocols.
- **Confidential Disposal of Documents:** When physical case files are no longer needed, PY ensures they are disposed of securely to prevent any misuse of sensitive information. This involves the **shredding of documents** or other secure methods of destruction. PY follows international best practices for document disposal, ensuring that beneficiary data is not left vulnerable.

12.1.2 DIGITAL SECURITY FOR ELECTRONIC CASE FILES

In addition to physical case files, PY stores beneficiary information in **electronic formats**. Digital security is a critical component of PY's confidentiality protocols, ensuring that sensitive data is protected from unauthorized access, hacking, or data breaches.

- **Password-Protected Systems:** All electronic case files are stored on **password-protected systems** that require multi-factor authentication (MFA) to access. Only authorized personnel, such as case managers, protection officers, and senior staff, are granted access to these systems. Passwords are regularly updated to ensure security, and staff are trained on the importance of maintaining strong and unique passwords.
- **Encryption of Data:** PY uses **data encryption** to protect electronic records from unauthorized access. This ensures that even if electronic data is intercepted or accessed without authorization, the information remains unreadable and secure. Both data at rest (stored data) and data in transit (being transferred) are encrypted using internationally recognized encryption standards.
- **Regular Backups and Data Recovery:** To protect against data loss due to hardware failures, cyber-attacks, or natural disasters, PY implements regular **data backups**. Backup

files are stored in secure, off-site locations, and data recovery protocols are in place to ensure that case files can be restored quickly in the event of a system failure or breach. PY's IT team conducts regular tests of the data recovery system to ensure its effectiveness.

- **Firewalls and Anti-Malware Software:** PY employs **firewalls, anti-malware software**, and other cybersecurity measures to protect its digital systems from external threats, such as hackers and viruses. These systems are regularly updated and monitored by IT specialists to ensure that PY's electronic records remain secure.

12.1.3 RESTRICTING ACCESS TO AUTHORIZED PERSONNEL

A key element of safeguarding confidentiality is ensuring that only **authorized personnel** have access to sensitive beneficiary information. PY employs strict access control measures to limit the number of individuals who can view or handle personal data.

- **Role-Based Access Control (RBAC):** PY uses **role-based access control (RBAC)** systems to ensure that only staff members with specific roles and responsibilities can access certain types of data. For example, only case managers and protection officers directly involved in a beneficiary's case have access to that individual's information. This minimizes the risk of data breaches and ensures that personal information is only accessed when necessary.
- **Confidentiality Agreements:** All staff, volunteers, and partners who have access to beneficiary information are required to sign **confidentiality agreements**. These agreements outline their obligations to protect sensitive data and the consequences of breaching confidentiality. Staff are regularly reminded of their confidentiality obligations during training sessions and staff meetings.

12.2 DEVELOPING DATA PROTECTION PROTOCOLS IN COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

PY is committed to ensuring that all data protection protocols comply with **international standards** for privacy and data security. These standards provide a framework for managing personal information responsibly and preventing the misuse or exposure of sensitive data. PY's data protection protocols are aligned with key international frameworks, including the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** and the **UNHCR's Data Protection Policy**.

12.2.1 COMPLIANCE WITH THE GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR)

The **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)** is a comprehensive data protection law that sets out key principles for safeguarding personal data, including the rights of individuals over their personal information. PY's data protection protocols are designed to comply with the principles of GDPR, particularly when working with beneficiaries from countries where GDPR is applicable.

- **Lawful Data Collection:** Under GDPR, personal data can only be collected for specific, legitimate purposes, and individuals must provide **informed consent** before their data is collected. PY ensures that all beneficiaries are fully informed about how their personal information will be used and stored, and consent is obtained before any data is collected. In situations where beneficiaries cannot provide consent (e.g., unaccompanied minors), PY works with legal guardians or authorities to ensure that data collection is lawful.
- **Data Minimization:** PY adheres to the principle of **data minimization**, which means that only the information necessary for providing protection services is collected and stored. Unnecessary data collection is avoided to reduce the risk of misuse or exposure of personal information. For example, PY only collects information that is directly relevant to a beneficiary's protection needs, such as their legal status, health conditions, or case history.
- **Right to Access and Erasure:** Under GDPR, individuals have the **right to access** their personal data and request its deletion if it is no longer needed. PY has established procedures to ensure that beneficiaries can access their information upon request and that data is deleted when it is no longer required for protection purposes. PY ensures that beneficiaries are aware of these rights and provides clear instructions on how to exercise them.

12.2.2 ALIGNMENT WITH UNHCR'S DATA PROTECTION POLICY

As a partner organization working with refugees and displaced persons, PY aligns its data protection protocols with the **UNHCR Data Protection Policy**. This policy sets out specific

guidelines for the protection of refugee data and ensures that sensitive information is handled with the highest level of confidentiality.

- **Do No Harm Principle:** PY follows the **Do No Harm principle** in its data protection practices, ensuring that the collection, storage, and use of personal data do not expose beneficiaries to additional risks. For example, when handling data related to refugees' legal status or asylum claims, PY ensures that this information is not shared with unauthorized parties who could use it to harm or persecute the individuals involved.
- **Data Sharing Agreements:** PY has established **data sharing agreements** with external partners, such as UNHCR, government agencies, and other NGOs. These agreements outline the conditions under which personal data can be shared and ensure that all parties adhere to strict confidentiality standards. Data sharing is only done when necessary for the protection of beneficiaries, and PY ensures that the minimum amount of data is shared to meet these objectives.
- **Informed Consent for Data Sharing:** When personal data is shared with external partners, PY ensures that beneficiaries are fully informed and provide their **informed consent** for data sharing. Beneficiaries are informed about which organizations will have access to their data, the purpose of data sharing, and their rights to refuse or withdraw consent at any time.

12.2.3 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (DPIAS)

To ensure that its data protection protocols are effective and in compliance with international standards, PY conducts **Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)** for all projects involving the collection and processing of personal data. DPIAs help PY identify potential risks to data security and develop mitigation strategies to address these risks.

- **Risk Identification and Mitigation:** During the DPIA process, PY identifies potential risks to the confidentiality and security of personal data, such as the risk of data breaches, unauthorized access, or misuse of information. PY then develops strategies to mitigate these risks, such as strengthening digital security measures, providing additional staff training, or limiting data collection to the minimum necessary.
- **Review of Data Protection Practices:** DPIAs also provide an opportunity for PY to review its data protection practices and ensure they remain up to date with evolving international standards. Any weaknesses or gaps identified during the DPIA process are addressed promptly, and PY updates its data protection protocols as needed to ensure ongoing compliance with international standards.

12.3 MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY IN PROTECTION CASES

In protection work, maintaining confidentiality is critical to ensuring the safety and dignity of beneficiaries, especially when dealing with sensitive cases such as GBV, trafficking, and asylum claims. PY has established specific protocols to ensure that confidentiality is maintained throughout the case management process, from the initial intake to the final resolution of the case.

12.3.1 CONFIDENTIALITY IN GBV AND CHILD PROTECTION CASES

GBV and child protection cases involve particularly sensitive information that, if exposed, could put survivors at further risk of harm. PY has established strict confidentiality protocols for handling these cases to ensure that survivors' information is protected at all times.

- **Survivor-Centered Approach:** PY follows a **survivor-centered approach** in its handling of GBV cases, ensuring that survivors are in control of how their information is used and shared. Survivors are informed about their rights to confidentiality, and their consent is obtained before any information is shared with external partners or service providers. Survivors are also given the option to remain anonymous if they choose.
- **Confidential Child Protection Procedures:** PY ensures that information related to child protection cases is handled with the highest level of confidentiality, especially when dealing with unaccompanied minors or cases of child trafficking. Case managers are trained on how to protect children's privacy, and any information related to the child's identity or legal status is kept strictly confidential.

12.3.2 ANONYMOUS REPORTING AND DATA COLLECTION

In cases where beneficiaries are hesitant to share personal information due to concerns about their safety or privacy, PY offers the option of **anonymous reporting**. This allows beneficiaries to

report protection concerns or access services without revealing their identity. PY ensures that anonymous data is collected and stored in a way that does not compromise the security of beneficiaries.

- **Aggregate Data Reporting:** When sharing data with external partners or for reporting purposes, PY uses **aggregate data** that does not include personally identifiable information (PII). This ensures that beneficiaries' identities are protected while still allowing PY to share valuable insights on protection trends, such as the number of GBV cases or the prevalence of trafficking.

13. COMPLAINT AND FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

Establishing effective **complaint and feedback mechanisms** is essential for Peace by Youth (PY) to ensure accountability and improve the quality of its protection programs. PY is committed to creating safe, accessible, and confidential channels through which refugees, displaced persons, host communities, and other beneficiaries can express their concerns or complaints regarding protection issues. These mechanisms allow individuals to voice their concerns about potential misconduct, exploitation, abuse, or service delivery gaps without fear of reprisal, and they ensure that the feedback is used to make meaningful improvements to PY's protection interventions. This section outlines PY's approach to designing, implementing, and managing complaint and feedback mechanisms, ensuring that they are transparent, responsive, and integrated into the continuous improvement of protection programs.

13.1 IMPLEMENTING FEEDBACK MECHANISMS FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES

An effective complaint and feedback mechanism ensures that the voices of refugees, host communities, and other vulnerable populations are heard and taken into consideration in protection programming. PY is committed to implementing multiple **safe and accessible feedback mechanisms** that enable beneficiaries to report concerns, provide feedback on services, and suggest improvements to the protection programs.

13.1.1 Multiple Channels for Reporting Complaints and Feedback

PY recognizes that different groups of beneficiaries may have varying preferences and needs when it comes to reporting complaints or providing feedback. To accommodate these needs, PY implements multiple channels for submitting complaints and feedback, ensuring that these mechanisms are accessible to all individuals, regardless of their background, location, or abilities.

- **Complaint Boxes:** PY places **complaint boxes** in strategic locations, such as community centers, refugee camps, and service delivery points. These boxes provide beneficiaries with a discreet and anonymous way to submit written complaints or suggestions. Complaint boxes are regularly checked by designated PY staff to ensure that all feedback is collected and addressed promptly.
- **Hotlines:** PY operates **confidential telephone hotlines** that allow beneficiaries to report complaints or provide feedback. The hotlines are staffed by trained personnel who are equipped to handle sensitive protection concerns, such as gender-based violence (GBV), child protection issues, or cases of exploitation. Hotlines are available in multiple languages and operate outside of regular office hours to accommodate the needs of all beneficiaries.
- **Online Platforms:** For beneficiaries with access to the internet, PY offers **online feedback platforms**, such as websites or mobile applications, where individuals can submit complaints or feedback. These platforms provide a convenient and confidential way to communicate concerns, and they allow for real-time interaction with PY's protection staff.
- **Community Liaison Officers (CLOs):** PY employs **Community Liaison Officers (CLOs)** who serve as trusted points of contact within the community. CLOs are trained to collect complaints and feedback from beneficiaries through face-to-face interactions, ensuring that individuals who may not be comfortable with written or electronic reporting still have a way to voice their concerns. CLOs also provide beneficiaries with information about the available feedback mechanisms and how they can be used.
- **Focus Group Discussions:** PY holds regular **focus group discussions (FGDs)** with beneficiaries to gather feedback on the effectiveness of protection programs and to identify any concerns or gaps in service delivery. FGDs provide an opportunity for beneficiaries to discuss protection issues in a group setting, allowing PY to gather diverse perspectives and insights.

13.1.2 Ensuring Accessibility for All Beneficiaries

PY is committed to ensuring that feedback mechanisms are accessible to all beneficiaries, including those with disabilities, individuals with limited literacy, and individuals who speak

minority languages. Special accommodations are made to ensure that no individual is excluded from the complaint process.

- **Multiple Languages:** PY's complaint and feedback mechanisms are available in **multiple languages**, including the languages spoken by refugees and host communities in the project areas. Translation services are provided to ensure that individuals who speak minority languages can submit complaints and feedback without language barriers.
- **Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities (PWD):** PY ensures that its feedback mechanisms are accessible to **persons with disabilities (PWD)**. For example, complaint boxes are placed in locations that are physically accessible to individuals with mobility impairments, and alternative reporting methods, such as text-based or sign language communication, are available for individuals with hearing or visual impairments.
- **Alternative Reporting Methods:** For beneficiaries with limited literacy, PY offers **alternative reporting methods**, such as verbal reporting through CLOs or hotlines. These methods ensure that individuals who cannot write or read still have the ability to express their concerns and provide feedback on protection services.

13.1.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity in the Complaint Process

PY understands that beneficiaries may be reluctant to report complaints, particularly in cases involving sensitive protection issues such as GBV or exploitation. To encourage individuals to come forward, PY ensures that all complaints are handled with the highest level of **confidentiality** and offers **anonymous reporting options** for those who prefer not to disclose their identity.

- **Confidential Handling of Complaints:** All complaints, regardless of how they are submitted, are treated with **strict confidentiality**. Only authorized personnel involved in managing the complaint are allowed access to the details of the case. Confidentiality protocols ensure that the identity of the complainant is protected at all times, and no information is shared without the individual's consent.
- **Anonymous Reporting:** PY offers beneficiaries the option to submit complaints **anonymously** through complaint boxes or online platforms. This allows individuals to report concerns without fear of retaliation or stigmatization. PY ensures that anonymous complaints are taken as seriously as identified complaints and are thoroughly investigated.

13.2 ENSURING TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

Transparency and accountability are key principles in PY's approach to handling complaints and feedback. PY is committed to ensuring that beneficiaries understand how the complaint process works, that their complaints are addressed promptly and fairly, and that feedback is integrated into the continuous improvement of protection programs.

13.2.1 Transparent Complaint Handling Procedures

PY has developed **transparent complaint handling procedures** that are clearly communicated to beneficiaries. These procedures outline how complaints are received, how they are investigated, and what actions are taken in response to complaints.

- **Complaint Acknowledgment:** PY ensures that all complaints are **acknowledged** in a timely manner. When a complaint is received, the individual is informed that their complaint has been logged and is being reviewed. If the complaint was submitted anonymously, PY provides updates through community meetings, public announcements, or online platforms to ensure that anonymous complainants are aware that their concerns are being addressed.
- **Investigation and Resolution:** Each complaint is subject to a thorough **investigation** to determine its validity and identify the appropriate response. PY has established a team of trained protection officers who are responsible for investigating complaints and ensuring that they are resolved in accordance with PY's protection policies and ethical standards. The investigation process is transparent, and complainants are regularly updated on the status of their complaint, unless they have chosen to remain anonymous.
- **Fair and Impartial Response:** PY is committed to ensuring that all complaints are handled fairly and impartially. PY does not tolerate any form of retaliation or discrimination against individuals who file complaints. If a complaint is found to be valid, PY takes appropriate action to address the issue, which may include disciplinary measures for staff involved, referral to legal or medical services, or adjustments to the protection program.

13.2.2 Feedback Integration into Program Improvement

Feedback from beneficiaries plays a critical role in improving PY's protection programs. PY ensures that all feedback, whether positive or negative, is integrated into the **program improvement process**, allowing PY to adapt its protection interventions to better meet the needs of the communities it serves.

- **Regular Review of Feedback:** PY conducts regular reviews of the feedback and complaints it receives from beneficiaries. This review process involves analyzing trends in the types of complaints submitted, identifying any recurring issues, and assessing the effectiveness of the current protection programs. PY uses this information to identify areas for improvement and to develop strategies for enhancing service delivery.
- **Program Adaptation:** Based on the feedback received from beneficiaries, PY makes **adjustments to its protection programs** to address gaps or challenges. For example, if feedback indicates that beneficiaries are experiencing difficulties accessing GBV services, PY may adjust its referral pathways, increase outreach efforts, or provide additional training for staff. Program adaptations are communicated back to the community to ensure transparency and to demonstrate PY's commitment to responding to beneficiary concerns.
- **Monitoring the Impact of Feedback:** PY monitors the impact of the changes made to its protection programs based on beneficiary feedback. This includes assessing whether the changes have improved service delivery, reduced complaints, or increased beneficiary satisfaction. PY uses these monitoring results to refine its feedback mechanisms and ensure that they continue to be effective.

13.2.3 Encouraging a Culture of Accountability

PY fosters a **culture of accountability** by encouraging staff, volunteers, and partners to take responsibility for the quality of the protection services they provide. This includes promoting open communication between staff and beneficiaries, ensuring that complaints are taken seriously, and holding individuals accountable for addressing protection concerns.

- **Staff Training on Accountability:** PY provides regular training for staff on the importance of accountability and the role that feedback plays in improving protection programs. Staff are trained on how to handle complaints professionally, how to communicate with beneficiaries about the complaint process, and how to integrate feedback into their day-to-day work.
- **Leadership Accountability:** PY's leadership team plays a key role in fostering a culture of accountability by ensuring that all complaints are reviewed and addressed at the highest levels of the organization. Senior management regularly reviews complaint data, monitors the effectiveness of the feedback mechanisms, and ensures that corrective actions are implemented in response to valid complaints.

14. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Cross-cutting issues are integral to Peace by Youth's (PY) protection programs, ensuring that protection services are inclusive, equitable, and responsive to the diverse needs of all individuals, especially those from marginalized or vulnerable groups. Addressing these cross-cutting issues—**inclusion and diversity**, **gender equality**, and **psycho-social support**—is essential to delivering comprehensive protection interventions that promote dignity, respect, and well-being. PY is committed to mainstreaming these issues throughout its protection efforts to create programs that are accessible, gender-sensitive, and supportive of the mental health needs of affected individuals and communities.

This section outlines PY's approach to addressing cross-cutting issues within its protection programming, with a focus on **inclusion and diversity**, **gender equality**, and **psycho-social support**.

14.1 INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Inclusion and diversity are central to PY's protection efforts, ensuring that services are accessible to all individuals, regardless of their **ethnicity**, **disability status**, **age**, **gender**, **religion**, or **socioeconomic background**. PY recognizes that certain groups—such as persons with disabilities (PWD), ethnic and religious minorities, the elderly, and LGBTQ+ individuals—face unique barriers to accessing protection services and are at greater risk of harm or exclusion. To address these challenges, PY designs its programs to be inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of the populations it serves.

14.1.1 Ensuring Accessibility for Marginalized Groups

PY is committed to ensuring that **protection services are accessible** to all individuals, particularly those from marginalized or vulnerable groups. This includes making adjustments to service delivery, providing specialized support, and ensuring that protection interventions are inclusive of all individuals.

- **Persons with Disabilities (PWD):** PY ensures that its protection services are accessible to **persons with disabilities** by removing physical, communication, and attitudinal barriers that may prevent their participation. For example, PY provides accessible facilities, such as wheelchair ramps and accessible restrooms, in refugee camps and community centers. Additionally, PY offers alternative communication methods, such as sign language interpretation and braille materials, to ensure that PWD can access protection services without difficulty.
- **Ethnic and Religious Minorities:** PY is committed to providing protection services that are culturally sensitive and inclusive of **ethnic and religious minorities**. This includes ensuring that services are delivered in the languages spoken by minority groups and that cultural practices and beliefs are respected. PY also works to prevent and address discrimination or marginalization that may occur within refugee camps or host communities, advocating for the rights and inclusion of minority groups.
- **The Elderly:** Older individuals may face unique challenges in accessing protection services due to mobility issues, health conditions, or social isolation. PY ensures that **elderly persons** have access to protection services by providing age-appropriate support, such as transportation to service delivery points, medical assistance, and social activities that promote inclusion and well-being.

14.1.2 Promoting Diversity in Program Design and Implementation

PY recognizes that diversity is a strength and aims to **promote diversity** in the design and implementation of its protection programs. This involves engaging with diverse community members, fostering inclusive decision-making processes, and ensuring that the voices of marginalized groups are heard.

- **Inclusive Community Engagement:** PY engages with diverse groups of refugees, displaced persons, and host communities to ensure that protection programs are designed with input from all segments of the population. This includes holding consultations with PWD, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and other marginalized groups to understand their specific needs and challenges. PY ensures that these groups are actively involved in decision-making processes related to protection programming.

- **Culturally Appropriate Interventions:** PY designs **culturally appropriate protection interventions** that respect the values, traditions, and beliefs of different cultural groups. This includes providing services in local languages, offering culturally relevant psychosocial support, and ensuring that service providers are trained in cultural competency. By promoting cultural diversity in its programming, PY ensures that protection interventions are respectful and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.
- **Anti-Discrimination Policies:** PY implements **anti-discrimination policies** that prohibit any form of discrimination based on ethnicity, disability, religion, age, gender, or sexual orientation. These policies apply to all PY staff, volunteers, and partners, ensuring that protection services are delivered fairly and without bias.

14.2 GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality is a fundamental principle in PY's protection programming. PY is committed to promoting equal access to protection services for all individuals, regardless of their gender, and to ensuring that gender considerations are mainstreamed throughout its protection programs. PY recognizes that women and girls, as well as men and boys, experience protection risks differently, and it is essential to address these risks in a way that promotes equality, empowerment, and the protection of human rights.

14.2.1 Promoting Equal Access to Protection Services

PY ensures that **women, men, boys, and girls** have equal access to protection services by addressing the specific needs and vulnerabilities of each group. This includes designing programs that are gender-sensitive and ensuring that protection interventions are responsive to the different ways in which gender shapes individuals' experiences of violence, displacement, and marginalization.

- **Protection Services for Women and Girls:** PY recognizes that **women and girls** face heightened risks of gender-based violence (GBV), exploitation, and discrimination, particularly in displacement settings. To address these risks, PY provides specialized protection services for women and girls, including access to GBV prevention programs, legal aid for survivors of violence, and safe spaces where women and girls can access counseling and support. PY also ensures that women and girls have access to health services, education, and livelihoods programs that promote their empowerment and reduce their vulnerability to harm.
- **Protection Services for Men and Boys:** While women and girls are often the focus of protection programs, PY also recognizes the importance of addressing the protection needs of **men and boys**, particularly in conflict and post-conflict settings. Men and boys may experience protection risks related to forced recruitment, detention, or sexual violence, and they may face social stigmas that prevent them from seeking help. PY designs protection programs that address the unique vulnerabilities of men and boys, providing them with access to counseling, legal aid, and psychosocial support.

14.2.2 Mainstreaming Gender Considerations in Protection Programs

PY is committed to **mainstreaming gender considerations** across all of its protection programs to ensure that gender equality is prioritized in every aspect of service delivery. This involves integrating gender analysis into program planning, addressing power imbalances between genders, and promoting gender-sensitive policies and practices.

- **Gender Analysis in Program Design:** PY conducts **gender analysis** as part of its program planning process to identify the different ways in which gender influences protection risks and needs. This analysis informs the design of protection interventions, ensuring that programs are tailored to address the specific vulnerabilities and capacities of women, men, boys, and girls. Gender analysis also helps PY identify opportunities to promote gender equality and challenge harmful gender norms.
- **Gender-Sensitive Service Delivery:** PY ensures that all protection services are delivered in a **gender-sensitive** manner. This includes providing gender-segregated facilities, such as separate shelters or restrooms for women and men, and ensuring that services are delivered by staff who are trained in gender-sensitive approaches. PY also works to ensure that women and men have equal access to decision-making processes within protection programs, including leadership roles in community protection committees.

- **Challenging Harmful Gender Norms:** PY actively works to **challenge harmful gender norms** that contribute to violence, discrimination, and exclusion. This includes conducting awareness-raising campaigns that promote gender equality, educating communities about the harmful effects of GBV and child marriage, and engaging men and boys as allies in the fight against gender-based violence. PY also supports initiatives that empower women and girls to advocate for their rights and participate fully in social, economic, and political life.

14.3 PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

Psycho-social support is a critical component of PY's protection programs, ensuring that individuals and families affected by violence, displacement, and trauma receive the emotional and psychological care they need. PY recognizes that mental health is a key factor in an individual's ability to recover from adversity, and that providing access to psycho-social support is essential for promoting resilience, well-being, and long-term recovery.

14.3.1 Ensuring Access to Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support Services

PY is committed to ensuring that **mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS)** services are available and accessible to all individuals affected by displacement, violence, or trauma. These services are integrated into PY's protection programs and are delivered by trained professionals who are sensitive to the cultural and emotional needs of beneficiaries.

- **Counseling and Psychosocial Support:** PY provides **counseling services** and **psychosocial support** to individuals and families who have experienced trauma, loss, or violence. These services are offered in safe and confidential environments, ensuring that beneficiaries feel comfortable sharing their experiences. PY's counselors are trained in trauma-informed care and work to help individuals process their emotions, develop coping strategies, and rebuild their sense of safety and well-being.
- **Support for Survivors of GBV and Violence:** Survivors of GBV, trafficking, and other forms of violence often experience significant psychological and emotional distress. PY provides specialized **psycho-social support for survivors**, ensuring that they have access to the care and support they need to recover. This includes individual counseling, group therapy sessions, and peer support groups, where survivors can connect with others who have had similar experiences.
- **Community-Based Support Networks:** PY works to strengthen **community-based support networks** that provide psychosocial support to individuals and families. These networks include trained community leaders, social workers, and health professionals who offer emotional support, guidance, and referrals to professional mental health services. PY also engages with religious and cultural leaders to provide culturally appropriate support for individuals dealing with trauma and loss.

14.3.2 Addressing the Psycho-Social Needs of Children

Children who have experienced displacement, violence, or trauma require specialized **psycho-social support** to help them cope with the emotional and psychological impact of their experiences. PY provides age-appropriate support services that promote children's emotional well-being, resilience, and social development.

- **Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS):** PY operates **child-friendly spaces (CFS)** in refugee camps and host communities, where children can participate in recreational activities, receive psychosocial support, and access educational services in a safe and supportive environment. These spaces provide children with opportunities to play, express their emotions, and build positive relationships with their peers.
- **Trauma-Informed Care for Children:** PY ensures that all child protection services are delivered using a **trauma-informed approach** that takes into account the specific psychological needs of children who have experienced violence or displacement. PY's counselors and social workers are trained in child-centered care, ensuring that children receive the emotional support they need to heal and thrive.
- **Family Support Services:** PY provides **family support services** to help parents and caregivers provide emotional support to their children. This includes counseling for parents who are dealing with their own trauma, as well as guidance on how to support children who have experienced distressing events. PY's family support programs help strengthen family bonds and promote resilience within the household.

15. POLICY REVIEW AND UPDATES

To ensure that Peace by Youth (PY)'s **Protection Policy** remains relevant, effective, and in alignment with evolving best practices, international standards, and legal frameworks, PY is committed to regularly reviewing and updating the policy. The dynamic nature of humanitarian protection work, combined with changing global protection challenges, necessitates a flexible and proactive approach to policy management. This section outlines PY's procedures for the periodic review and update of the Protection Policy, ensuring that all staff, volunteers, and partners are informed of any changes and that updates are reflected in PY's operational plans and activities.

15.1 REGULAR REVIEW AND UPDATE CYCLE

PY recognizes that the context in which it operates is constantly changing due to new protection challenges, evolving legal frameworks, and the adoption of new best practices. To maintain the relevance and effectiveness of its Protection Policy, PY conducts a **comprehensive review** every two years. However, PY also acknowledges that certain events or operational changes may necessitate more frequent updates. In such cases, the policy will be reviewed and updated accordingly to ensure that PY's protection interventions remain effective and compliant with legal obligations.

15.1.1 BIENNIAL POLICY REVIEW

The primary mechanism for maintaining the Protection Policy's alignment with best practices and operational realities is a **biennial review**. This review process allows PY to assess the effectiveness of its protection strategies, evaluate the outcomes of protection interventions, and incorporate lessons learned from program implementation.

- **Purpose of the Biennial Review:** The biennial review aims to ensure that PY's Protection Policy continues to reflect the latest developments in protection work and remains consistent with international standards, including those set by the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)**, the **Sphere Standards**, and the **Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)**. The review also considers updates to relevant national and international legal frameworks, such as refugee law, human rights law, and child protection regulations.
- **Stakeholder Involvement in the Review Process:** PY's biennial review process is inclusive and participatory, involving input from a range of stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, local partners, and external protection experts. This ensures that the policy is informed by the experiences and insights of those directly involved in implementing and benefiting from PY's protection programs.
 - **Staff and Volunteer Feedback:** PY actively solicits feedback from staff and volunteers who work on the frontlines of protection programming. These individuals provide valuable insights into the practical challenges of implementing the Protection Policy and offer suggestions for improving the policy's relevance and applicability.
 - **Beneficiary and Community Input:** PY believes in the importance of **beneficiary participation** in shaping protection policies. During the review process, PY conducts consultations with refugees, displaced persons, and host communities to gather their feedback on how well the Protection Policy addresses their needs. This feedback is crucial for identifying gaps in protection services and ensuring that the policy remains responsive to the evolving needs of vulnerable populations.
 - **Consultation with External Experts:** PY engages with external protection experts, including representatives from UNHCR, local government agencies, and other NGOs, to ensure that the policy reflects current global protection standards. These experts provide guidance on legal and technical aspects of the policy, ensuring that it remains legally compliant and operationally effective.

15.1.2 AD HOC REVIEWS IN RESPONSE TO MAJOR CHANGES

While the biennial review is the standard review cycle for PY's Protection Policy, certain circumstances may require the policy to be reviewed and updated more frequently. PY commits to conducting **ad hoc reviews** in response to significant operational changes or emerging protection challenges that necessitate immediate policy adjustments.

- **Operational Changes:** PY may undergo operational changes that impact its protection programming, such as expanding into new geographical areas, forming new partnerships, or launching new initiatives. In such cases, the Protection Policy may need to be updated to reflect the new context and ensure that PY's protection efforts are adapted to the specific needs of new target populations.
- **Emerging Protection Challenges:** The protection landscape is constantly evolving, and new challenges, such as increased displacement due to climate change, shifts in migration patterns, or new forms of exploitation and violence, may arise. When such challenges emerge, PY conducts an **ad hoc review** of the Protection Policy to ensure that it addresses these new risks effectively.
- **Changes in Legal Frameworks:** National and international laws related to refugee protection, child rights, and human rights are subject to change. PY monitors developments in legal frameworks and updates its Protection Policy when necessary to ensure full compliance with legal obligations. This includes adapting to changes in asylum procedures, refugee status determination processes, and child protection regulations.
- **Lessons Learned from Program Evaluations:** PY conducts regular evaluations of its protection programs, and the findings from these evaluations may identify areas where the Protection Policy needs to be strengthened or refined. PY uses these **lessons learned** to update the policy and improve its protection interventions.

15.2 THE POLICY UPDATE PROCESS

The process of updating PY's Protection Policy is systematic and transparent, ensuring that all changes are carefully considered and communicated to relevant stakeholders. PY follows a structured process for policy updates to ensure that the policy remains comprehensive, coherent, and aligned with PY's overall mission and values.

15.2.1 STEPS IN THE POLICY UPDATE PROCESS

When updating the Protection Policy, PY follows a series of steps to ensure that the update process is thorough and inclusive:

1. **Initial Review and Assessment:** PY's protection team conducts an initial assessment of the need for updates to the Protection Policy. This assessment is based on feedback from staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, and external partners, as well as any operational, legal, or contextual changes that have been identified.
2. **Consultation with Key Stakeholders:** PY consults with a broad range of stakeholders during the policy update process. This includes gathering input from beneficiaries through community consultations, seeking feedback from staff and volunteers, and consulting with external protection experts. These consultations help ensure that the updated policy reflects the realities of protection programming on the ground.
3. **Drafting the Updated Policy:** Based on the findings of the review and consultations, PY's protection team drafts the updated version of the Protection Policy. The draft includes revisions to existing sections of the policy as well as any new sections that address emerging protection challenges or operational changes.
4. **Review and Approval by Leadership:** The draft of the updated Protection Policy is submitted to PY's senior leadership team for review and approval. This ensures that the policy aligns with PY's organizational goals and strategic priorities. PY's Board of Directors also plays a role in approving the updated policy to ensure governance oversight.
5. **Finalization and Dissemination:** Once approved, the updated Protection Policy is finalized and disseminated to all relevant stakeholders, including staff, volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries. PY ensures that the updated policy is accessible to all individuals involved in its protection programs and that it is communicated clearly and transparently.

15.2.2 INCORPORATING BEST PRACTICES AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

When updating the Protection Policy, PY ensures that the policy incorporates **best practices** and aligns with **international standards** for protection. This includes integrating guidance from the **Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS)**, the **UNHCR's Guidelines on International Protection**, and the **Sphere Standards**. PY also stays informed of developments in protection-related research and evidence-based practices, ensuring that its policy reflects the latest knowledge and innovations in the field of protection.

- **Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS):** The CHS provides a framework for delivering high-quality, accountable, and people-centered protection services. PY ensures that its Protection Policy reflects the key commitments of the CHS, including promoting accountability to affected populations, ensuring that protection services are responsive to beneficiary needs, and maintaining high ethical standards in protection work.
- **UNHCR Guidelines on International Protection:** PY's Protection Policy is aligned with the **UNHCR's Guidelines on International Protection**, which provide specific guidance on refugee law, refugee status determination, and the protection of vulnerable populations. PY updates its policy to reflect any changes or updates to these guidelines, ensuring that its protection programs are legally compliant and in line with UNHCR's global protection mandate.
- **Sphere Standards:** PY integrates the **Sphere Standards** into its Protection Policy to ensure that its protection interventions meet the minimum standards for humanitarian response. This includes adhering to the Sphere Standards related to protection, psychosocial support, and the prevention of gender-based violence (GBV). PY also updates its policy to reflect any revisions to the Sphere Standards that may impact its protection programming.

15.3 COMMUNICATING POLICY UPDATES TO STAKEHOLDERS

Once the Protection Policy has been reviewed and updated, PY is committed to ensuring that **all stakeholders are informed** of the changes and that the updated policy is fully integrated into PY's operational plans. This includes communicating updates to staff, volunteers, partners, and beneficiaries in a clear and accessible manner.

15.3.1 COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND PARTNERS

PY ensures that all staff, volunteers, and partners are **fully informed** of any updates to the Protection Policy. This includes providing training on the updated policy, sharing written materials, and ensuring that staff have access to the full text of the policy in both digital and physical formats.

- **Training on Policy Updates:** PY conducts **training sessions** for staff and volunteers to familiarize them with the updated Protection Policy. These sessions cover key changes to the policy, including new procedures, updated protection standards, and revised roles and responsibilities. PY ensures that staff understand how to implement the updated policy in their day-to-day work and that they are equipped to address any protection challenges that arise.
- **Distribution of Written Materials:** PY distributes copies of the updated Protection Policy to all staff and volunteers, ensuring that they have easy access to the policy at all times. This includes providing both digital and printed copies of the policy, as well as translating the policy into local languages where necessary.
- **Partner Engagement:** PY communicates updates to the Protection Policy to all **partner organizations**, including local NGOs, government agencies, and international partners. PY ensures that partners are aware of any changes to the policy that may impact joint protection programs or collaborative activities. PY also offers training and support to partners to help them implement the updated policy in their own operations.

15.3.2 COMMUNICATING UPDATES TO BENEFICIARIES

PY believes in ensuring that **beneficiaries** are fully aware of the policies that guide its protection programs. PY communicates updates to the Protection Policy to beneficiaries through community meetings, focus group discussions, and written materials. Beneficiaries are informed of how the updated policy impacts the protection services they receive, and they are encouraged to provide feedback on the policy's implementation.

- **Community Meetings and Focus Groups:** PY holds **community meetings** and **focus group discussions** with refugees, displaced persons, and host communities to explain any updates to the Protection Policy. These meetings provide beneficiaries with an opportunity to ask questions, provide feedback, and understand how the updated policy affects their access to protection services.
- **Written Materials for Beneficiaries:** PY provides **written materials** summarizing the key updates to the Protection Policy, ensuring that beneficiaries have access to this information in an easy-to-understand format. These materials are distributed in local

languages and are made available in refugee camps, community centers, and other service delivery points.

15.3.3 INTEGRATION OF POLICY UPDATES INTO OPERATIONAL PLANS

Once the Protection Policy has been updated, PY ensures that the changes are fully **integrated into its operational plans**. This includes updating standard operating procedures (SOPs), case management systems, and protection workflows to reflect the updated policy. PY also monitors the implementation of the updated policy to ensure that staff and volunteers are applying it consistently and effectively.

- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs):** PY updates its **SOPs** to align with the revised Protection Policy, ensuring that all operational procedures reflect the latest protection standards. This includes updating protocols for case management, referral pathways, and risk assessments.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** PY's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are updated to reflect the changes to the Protection Policy, ensuring that the effectiveness of the updated policy is assessed regularly. PY uses feedback from staff, beneficiaries, and partners to monitor how well the updated policy is being implemented and to identify any areas where further adjustments are needed.