

# Learning and Development Strategy

Child Protection Area of Responsibility

2023 - 2026



Child Protection  
Area of Responsibility  
Global Protection Cluster

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# STRATEGY SYNTHESIS

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## Aim

The aim of the Learning and Development Strategy is to enable the Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) to provide structured and strategic support in order to strengthen the current and future capacity and competence of child protection coordination teams to effectively coordinate quality child protection in humanitarian action efforts at national and sub-national level. The Strategy also presents a framework that will structure learning and development opportunities for Child Protection Coordinators and Information Management Officers (IMOs).

## Goal

Strengthened child protection coordination and information management competencies and capacities at country and global level.

## Objectives

1. Child protection coordination teams demonstrate increased coordination and information management competencies,
2. The Global CP AoR provides learning support to encourage recruitment, retention and career progression of Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMOs to increase capacity in Child Protection Coordination Groups,
3. The Global CP AoR provides effective capacity strengthening support that is based on identified needs and informed by evidence of effectiveness and impact.

## Approaches

- Adopt a holistic approach to capacity strengthening ensuring support to the full coordination ecosystem with an emphasis on coordination teams,
- Focus on strengthening competencies for child protection coordination and information management,
- Provide effective learning and development opportunities that offer structured, recognized and valued pathways,
- Work in partnership and collaboration with relevant entities, experts, colleagues and teams to ensure complementarity and maximize the impact of learning opportunities,
- Offer evidence-based and needs-based learning and development opportunities informed by a robust monitoring and evaluation framework.

# OVERVIEW

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## The Purpose of the Learning and Development Strategy

The purpose of the Global CP AoR Learning and Development Strategy is to provide strategic direction for the Global CP AoR's capacity strengthening activities. These activities are part of UNICEF's responsibilities as Cluster Lead Agency (CLA) and are articulated in the current Global CP AoR Strategy for 2020 – 2024 under Goal 2: *Enhance the coordination of child protection responses through the provision of flexible, timely and appropriate operational support, both remote and in-country*. Specifically, the Learning and Development Strategy will contribute to the effective implementation of objective 2.4 of the Global CP AoR Strategy: *Build child protection coordination and information management capacity at country and global level*.

Capacity strengthening for child protection coordination and information management is a core responsibility and component of the work of the Global CP AoR. There are currently multiple ways in which this support is provided unilaterally and in partnership with other stakeholders. The Learning and Development Strategy will facilitate the consolidation of previous initiatives and existing resources and the introduction of new interventions based on evidence of learning needs. This will ensure the Global CP AoR can maximize the impact of capacity strengthening activities on the competence and capacity of Child Protection Coordination Groups.

As such, the aim of the Learning and Development Strategy is to enable the Global CP AoR to provide structured and strategic support in order to strengthen the current and future capacity and competence of child protection coordination teams to effectively coordinate quality child protection in humanitarian action efforts at national and sub-national level.

## Background and Context

The Learning and Development Strategy was developed based on a consultative assessment undertaken between July and October 2022. The Capacity Assessment Report comprised a review of documentation; analysis of existing data on child protection coordination team capacity; and consultation with people working in child protection coordination teams, people supporting coordination teams in supervisory roles and people working at a global level with relevant knowledge and expertise.

The Global CP AoR Learning and Development Strategy is informed by the findings of the assessment in three key areas: **the child protection coordination team capacity landscape, child protection coordination and information management competencies and the existing learning landscape.**

Key findings concerning the child protection coordination team capacity landscape highlight that coordination team capacity is complex, diverse and dynamic. Child protection coordination team capacity is comprised of staff employed by UNICEF, international, national and local NGOs and government counterparts who are working in permanent and temporary, full-time and part-time roles. Child Protection Coordination Groups (CPCGs) are operating at national and sub-national level in a wide range of contexts including locations where the cluster system is in place, locations transitioning out of humanitarian assistance and early warning contexts where the cluster system might not have been formally activated. Within this complex landscape, capacity gaps exist in a large number of Child Protection Coordination Groups, with information management capacity being particularly affected.

Key findings concerning child protection coordination and information management competencies, indicate that while the majority of Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMOs feel confident in their roles, there is an appetite and need for ongoing learning support. Areas particularly highlighted include strengthening leadership skills, working with members of coordination groups and other partners, applying coordination theory in practice and dealing with challenges arising. In addition, there was an appetite for career progression support. Child protection coordination team members and their supervisors also noted an interest in learning support to increase supervisors' understanding of coordinator and information management roles. Amongst coordination and information management staff, motivation for learning is high but finding and protecting time for learning is a challenge that is commonly experienced.

Finally, key findings concerning the mapping of the learning landscape indicate that the capacity strengthening support offered by the Global CP AoR, unilaterally and in partnership with other actors, is well-received and highly valued. The assessment identified lessons learned and examples of good practice from other actors which can be drawn on to further enhance the Global CP AoR learning and development offering. These include the use of blended learning, incorporation of approaches to

increase the application of learning in context, the use of coaching/mentoring programmes to support career progression, and increased involvement of managers in the learning process. The assessment also highlighted the potential value of establishing a systematic monitoring and evaluation system to identify which specific areas of capacity strengthening support are most effective and inform future interventions.

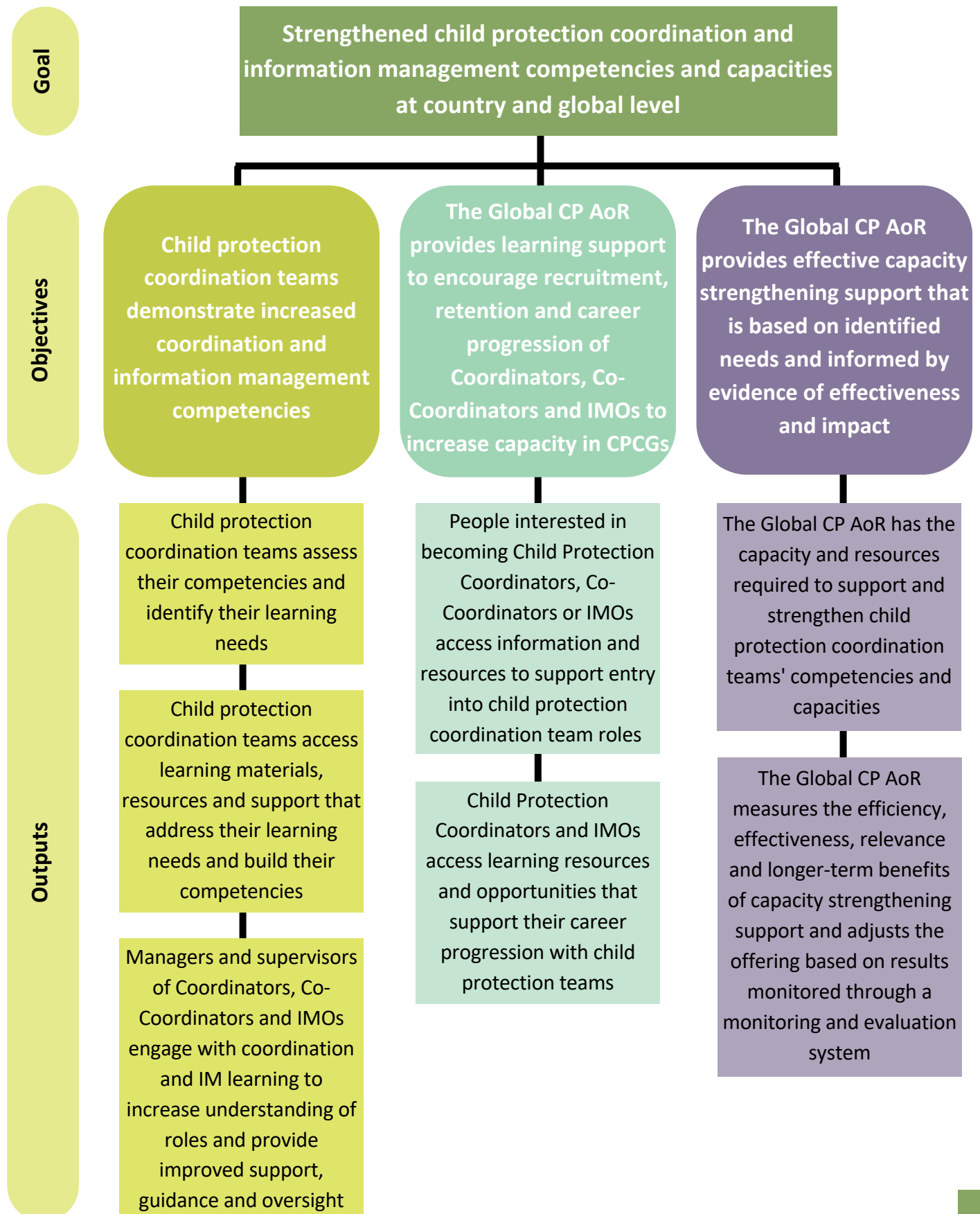
## **Overview of the Learning and Development Strategy**

Building on the findings of the assessment, the Learning and Development Strategy presents:

- A goal, objectives and outputs which together describe the desired outcome of the strategy,
- A set of approaches which will guide the achievement of the goal and objectives,
- A learning and development framework which provides an overview of the intended offering.

The Learning and Development Strategy is accompanied by a detailed work plan to guide the process of achieving the desired outcomes and which includes a description of key activities.

# THE STRATEGY





## Goal

*Strengthened child protection coordination and information management competencies and capacities at the country and global levels.*

## Objective 1

Child protection coordination teams demonstrate increased coordination and information management competencies.

## Outputs

- 1.1 Child protection coordination teams assess their competencies and identify their learning needs,
- 1.2 Child protection coordination teams access learning materials, resources and support that address their learning needs and build their competencies,
- 1.3 Managers and supervisors of Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMO's engage with coordination and information management learning to increase understanding of roles and provide improved support, guidance and oversight.

## Description

The first objective of the strategy is to support child protection coordination team members to strengthen their coordination and information management competencies so that they are able to coordinate child protection humanitarian responses effectively. To achieve this, the Global CP AoR will support people to independently, and with the support of their managers, assess their competencies, identify appropriate learning opportunities to address their learning needs, and access support that focuses on helping them to apply their learning in their professional context. This will ensure learning and development interventions have maximum impact on their ability to perform in their role. In addition, the Global CP AoR will engage line management in learning and assessment processes and will provide appropriate learning support for those who are supervising or managing Coordinators or IMO's. The intention will be to positively impact the support, guidance and oversight provided and create enabling environments which encourage the application of learning in context.



## Objective 2

The Global CP AoR provides learning support to encourage recruitment, retention and career progression of Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMO's to increase capacity in Child Protection Coordination Groups.

### Outputs

2.1 People interested in becoming Child Protection Coordinators, Co-Coordinators or IMO's access information and learning resources to support entry into child protection coordination team roles,

2.2 Child Protection Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMO's access learning resources and opportunities that support their career progression within and beyond child protection coordination teams.

### Description

The second objective of the strategy is to provide learning opportunities and support that will build the capacity of child protection coordination teams. In order to achieve this, the Global CP AoR will implement activities that encourage an inflow of new staff into Coordinator, Co-Coordinator or IMO roles and support and encourage career progression within child protection coordination teams in order to encourage retention of talent. To encourage retention and progression within Child Protection Coordination Groups, the Global CP AoR will offer personalized career advice, establish a coaching/mentoring programme and facilitate access to more advanced courses when appropriate by sharing information and supporting application processes.

Activities to encourage recruitment, retention and career progression will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Global Cluster Coordination Section, in alignment with activities undertaken as part of the Talent Management Strategy (currently being finalized), and will be undertaken in the context of the broader findings of the CLARE II report. In addition, the Global CP AoR will collaborate with UNICEF Programmes Group, the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and other sectors/clusters to ensure Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMO's have access to learning resources relevant to their future career goals.

## Objective 3

The Global CP AoR provides effective capacity strengthening support that is based on identified needs and informed by evidence of effectiveness and impact.

### Outputs

3.1 The Global CP AoR has the capacity and resources required to support and strengthen child protection coordination teams' competencies and capacities,

3.2 The Global CP AoR measures the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and longer-term benefits of capacity strengthening support and adjusts the offering based on results monitored through a learning and development monitoring and evaluation system.

### Description

The third objective of the strategy is to ensure that the Global CP AoR has the capacity and resources to provide effective capacity strengthening support. In order to provide effective support, the Global CP AoR requires evidence of the impact of learning interventions and evolving learning needs, as well as sufficient resources, internal capacity and expertise to design, implement and refine learning interventions.

To achieve this objective, the Global CP AoR will establish an overarching and robust monitoring and evaluation system to measure the medium and longer-term benefits of learning interventions and assess ongoing and emerging learning needs. The framework will enable the Global CP AoR to identify which activities and approaches are most efficient, effective and have the most sustained impact on performance and retention and will be used to ensure appropriate provision is offered on an ongoing basis. Information on learning needs and lessons learned will be shared with partners as appropriate. Activities will also include assessment of the capacity strengthening skills of the Global CP AoR team and systematic planning and budgeting for capacity strengthening activities.

# APPROACHES

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In order to achieve the goal and objectives of the strategy, the Global CP AoR will be guided by the following approaches:

## **Adopt a holistic approach to capacity strengthening ensuring support to the full coordination ecosystem with an emphasis on coordination teams**

The Global CP AoR will prioritize providing capacity strengthening support for Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMO's at national and sub-national level but will recognize the broader structure within which they operate and will work with coordination teams to address competency and capacity issues amongst Child Protection Coordination Group members, partners, government counterparts, managers and other relevant actors who comprise the child protection coordination ecosystem. Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMO's will be actively supported to cascade learning from facilitated courses by sharing information, resources or learning with colleagues, partners and peers in their workplaces and experienced Coordinators and IMO's will be pro-actively supported to build capacity in-country. To ensure the approach is successful, there will be an expectation that Coordinators, Co-Coordinators and IMO's will take an active role in supporting the broader child protection coordination group ecosystem in partnership with the Global CP AoR.

## **Focus on strengthening competencies for child protection coordination and information management**

The Global CP AoR will provide learning and development opportunities that strengthen the competencies and capacities required to effectively coordinate child protection humanitarian responses as outlined in the Global Child Protection AoR Competency Framework for Coordination and Information Management. The focus of the core learning elements will be on coordination and information management functional competencies with additional thematic and topical areas, and other areas outlined in the Child Protection in Humanitarian Action Competency Framework, covered in ongoing and additional learning programmes. In addition, emphasis will be placed on providing opportunities and tailored advice that build individuals' competencies and strengthen their performance in their current and desired role(s).

Learning programmes will be designed to allow learners to identify ways to implement the learning in their professional context. Follow-up support will be provided as part of the training programme and the involvement of managers will be encouraged to support application of learning.

### **Provide effective learning and development opportunities that offer structured, recognized and valued pathways**

The Global CP AoR will offer a range of learning and development opportunities that are structured into learning pathways. Coordinators, Co-Coordicators and IMO's will be required to follow core learning programmes as they start their roles in Child Protection Coordination Groups and will be able to access additional support on an ongoing basis. Learning opportunities will be designed to encourage engagement, and have a tangible impact on their role performance and career progression. This will ensure they are valued by learners and recognized within and beyond child protection coordination groups: in the CLA, other clusters and AoRs and amongst other relevant humanitarian actors. Learning and development interventions will be informed by adult learning principles, humanitarian capacity strengthening good practice, topical research and lessons learned from other actors to ensure high-impact support is offered. In addition, learning opportunities will be designed in line with accessibility best practice to ensure all learners can access learning opportunities.

### **Work in partnerships and collaboration with relevant entities, experts, colleagues, and teams to ensure complementarity and maximize the impact of learning opportunities**

The Global CP AoR will work together with other actors in collaboration and partnership to ensure complementarity of learning initiatives, to avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts, to maximize resources and to combine expertise of different actors to increase the impact of interventions. Existing collaborations with actors such as the Global Cluster Coordination Section and other UNICEF-led and co-led clusters, the Global Protection Cluster and AoRs, relevant UN agencies, the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and other members of the Global CP AoR will continue and opportunities for new partnerships will be nurtured. Relevant information and lessons learned will also be shared with partners as appropriate.

## Offer evidence-based and needs-based learning and development opportunities

The Global CP AoR will systematically collect data on emerging needs and the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of learning and development interventions to enable continuous improvement of the learning offering, to ensure high-quality, effective and appropriate opportunities are provided, and to inform the revision of the Learning and Development Strategy for its next iteration. The monitoring and evaluation framework, informed by Kirkpatrick's model for evaluating training, will provide a structure to measure the impact of various interventions on learners' satisfaction, acquisition of knowledge and skills and demonstration of competence in role, and will seek to illustrate the wider benefits of the interventions on child protection coordination. In addition, the monitoring and evaluation framework will evaluate the impact of interventions against the resources required to deliver them in order to assess the efficiency of different elements of the capacity strengthening offering.

# LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

## - Entry point

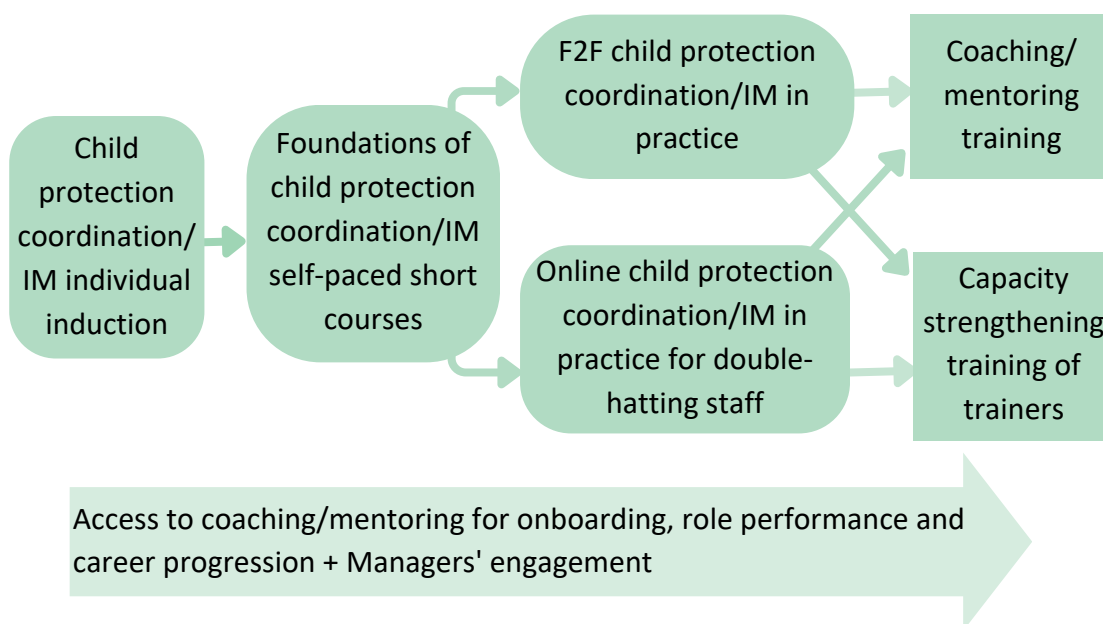
Introduction to child protection coordination/IM self-paced modules

Open house: webinar and 1-1 support

Integration of coordination/IM into ongoing training

Guide to entering child protection coordination/IM

## - Core learning



## - Ongoing and additional learning and support

### Ongoing learning

Additional self-paced modules

Thematic and topical webinars, calls and clinics

Annual retreat

### Specialized programmes

Global Child Protection AoR thematic trainings

Specialization programme on protection coordination

Global Cluster Coordination Section leadership training

### Individual and country-level support

Field Support Team

Communities of practice

Thematic trainings for countries

Monitoring, Evaluation & Competency Assessment

The Global CP AoR learning and development framework will incorporate four components:

1. Entry point,
2. Core learning,
3. Ongoing and additional learning and support,
4. Monitoring, evaluation and competency assessment.

## 1. Entry point

The first component of the Learning and Development Framework is the entry point into Child Protection Coordination Groups. Entry point learning opportunities will be aimed at people who are interested in taking on or applying for coordination and information management positions in child protection coordination teams with an overall aim of increasing the pipeline of future Coordinators and IMO's. Learning opportunities will increase learners' understanding of the requirements and importance of the roles and allow potential applicants to gain the relevant skills and experience. The offering will consist of a curated set of self-paced modules on Agora, open house webinars and 1-1 sessions offering information and careers advice, the integration of information about child protection coordination and information management into relevant existing courses and the creation of a simple guide to provide information about working in child protection coordination groups and the support that is available. Additional support options may be added based on monitoring and evaluation data.

## 2. Core learning

The second component is the core learning programme. The core learning will be recommended for Coordinators, Co-Coordination and IMO's at national and sub-national level as they enter Child Protection Coordination Groups. Learners will be encouraged to complete the core learning within the first year of working in a coordination or information management role. The core learning programme will also be open to members of Child Protection Coordination Groups as appropriate.

The core learning programme will consist of four stages:

**The first stage** will be a personal orientation to establish contact with incoming Coordinators and IMO's and share relevant information about the Global CP AoR.

**The second stage** will be a foundations programme of newly-created and pre-existing self-paced modules designed to build essential knowledge and skills in coordination, information management and cross-cutting skills.



**The third stage** will comprise a facilitated learning programme focused on strengthening competencies. Participation in the facilitated programme will be contingent on completion of the foundations programme. In the facilitated learning programme there will be two tracks: one will incorporate an element of face-to-face training which will be primarily targeted at people in dedicated roles and one will be delivered remotely and will be primarily targeted at people in double-hatting roles. Both facilitated programme tracks will incorporate various elements including follow-up coaching, peer learning activities, reflection on performance and activities to encourage and support cascading of learning by the participants in their workplace.

**The fourth stage** of the core learning programme will comprise follow-on programmes to further build the skills of Coordinators, Co-Coordiators and IMO's to facilitate capacity strengthening activities and to provide individualized support to less experienced colleagues using a coaching/mentoring approach. In addition, personalized one-to-one support will be available to all Coordinators, Co-Coordiators and IMO's to supplement orientation, improve role effectiveness and support career progression. This will be offered by Global CP AoR team members and Coordinators and IMO's who have completed the core learning programme.

Managers and supervisors will be encouraged to be involved in the learning process at all stages of the core learning programme to increase application of learning.

### **3. Ongoing and additional learning and support**

The third component of the Learning and Development Framework will be ongoing and additional learning and support. A range of ongoing and additional learning opportunities will be offered by the Global CP AoR and other partners. These opportunities will address topical and thematic areas and support the further development of coordination and information management competencies. The learning offering will include self-paced modules, facilitated courses offered online and in-person and personalized support offered by the Field Support Team and peer-to-peer through communities of practice.

The ongoing and additional learning programmes will consist of existing learning resources created by the Global CP AoR and other actors which will be supplemented over time based on evidence of emerging learning needs and monitoring and evaluation data.

#### 4. Monitoring, evaluation and competency assessment

The fourth component of the Learning and Development Framework is to establish a monitoring and evaluation framework and system for the assessment of competencies to ensure that the learning opportunities offered by the Global CP AoR are efficient, effective and have sustained longer-term benefits on performance and retention. The monitoring and evaluation framework will allow for continuous improvement of learning resources to ensure they are high-quality and effective. The data will also provide evidence for the revision of the Learning and Development Strategy for its next iteration.

The competency assessment system will allow Coordinators and IMO's to work alone, or with their managers, to measure their level of performance against the competency frameworks, to identify their learning needs and areas for further development, to develop a professional development plan and to identify appropriate learning opportunities to address their learning needs. The system will be designed in a way that is accessible to UNICEF employees and those outside the organization. For UNICEF employees, it will harmonize with the Achieve system to ensure it is embedded within existing performance evaluation processes.

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#### Implementing the framework

Under the Learning and Development Strategy, initial priority will be given to the development and implementation of the core learning programme. Refinements and adjustments will be made to the ongoing and additional learning options after the monitoring and evaluation system has been established and data on the impact of various interventions is available. The core programme and ongoing and additional offering will draw on and consolidate previous initiatives and existing resources developed by the Global CP AoR and other bodies when they are available and aligned with the identified priority needs.

The Global CP AoR will strive to provide opportunities that are tailored to regions and that are in a range of languages depending on the resources and availability of the team.



## Child Protection Area of Responsibility

Global Protection Cluster

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Area of Responsibility

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