

# Overview

The humanitarian response to situations of armed conflict or natural disasters involves a broad range of generic protection and assistance activities, which are usually strategically combined, as illustrated in Part III. The way in which humanitarian actors plan, implement or combine these activities may have a vital impact on the situation of the civilian population.

Part IV of the Handbook offers guidance to help staff in the field to maximize the potential of such activities for protecting internally displaced persons and other affected populations of different ages, sex and backgrounds. While it focuses on twelve activities, presented in the form of *Guidance Notes*, Part IV is not an exhaustive account of possible interventions. Activities herein have been selected following close consultation with the contributing organizations to the provisional release of the Handbook. The protection potential of such activities and their prevalence in IDP field operations were important criteria leading to the final selection.

The *Guidance Notes* aim to highlight ways in which each activity can support IDPs and other persons of concern in realizing their rights. They also provide suggestions to build and strengthen the capacity of national authorities and communities at different levels to fulfil those rights. In doing so, they aim to help mitigate the potential for additional protection risks created through these activities. Part IV is closely interlinked with Part V, which deals with specific protection risks, and both parts complement each other.

Suggestions provided in these *Notes* are wide-ranging as they are addressed to humanitarian staff in field operations of a varied nature and purpose. Therefore, humanitarian actors in the field will need to make a judgement call in the allocation of roles and responsibilities as appropriate.

The provisional edition of the Handbook will be field tested during the first half of 2008. All human rights and humanitarian staff and partners are encouraged to provide feedback on the Guidance Notes. Examples of relevant field practices, which will be included in the first edition of the Handbook, are also welcome. All comments and suggestions can be sent to [hqidphb@unhcr.org](mailto:hqidphb@unhcr.org).