

## Bi-Weekly National PWG Meeting Minutes

**Theme:** COVID-19

**Time & Location:** Friday, 17 April 2020 / WebEx

**Chair:** Lara Özügergin – Assistant Inter-Agency Coordination Officer (UNHCR)

**Participants:** Dilara Peker (ASAM), Fatmanur Bakkalbaşı (ASAM), Nicolas Metri (DRC), Nadin Murad (DDD), Burçak Sel Tüfekçi (Dünya Evimiz), Şebnem Feriver Gezer (Expertise France), Sinem Kuz (GIZ), GOAL, Merve Kılıç (IBC), Barış Deyirmenci (IFRC), Hülya Barbaros (IFRC), Sayeeda Farhana (IFRC), Berna Köse (IGAM), Dilara Türker (IGAM), Metin Çorabatır (IGAM), Khalil Omarshah (IOM), Kyoko Nishimura (JCCP), Hayriye Kara (KAOS GL), Elif Çelikleş (MSYD), Merve Ekşi (MYSDD), Mehtap Erdem (Mülteci-Der), Pırıl Erçoban (Mülteci-Der), Bircan Kilci (PLA), Merve Merdane (SCI), Mahmut İsal (STL), Nazlı Erkan (TRC), Bora Özbek (UNFPA), Ahmet Ünver (UNHCR), Ayşe Nur Peker (UNHCR), Christopher Bender (UNHCR), Derya Köksal (UNHCR), Elif Eser Mooty (UNHCR), Esin Koç (UNHCR), Eylül Başak Tuncel (UNHCR), Fatma Mine Gültekin (UNHCR), Gökçe Saraydın (UNHCR), Güz Gültan (UNHCR), İpek Arseven Güven (UNHCR), İpek Miscioğlu (UNHCR), Levent Ekşi (UNHCR), Livio Mercurio (UNHCR), Samir Hamid (UNHCR), Sıla Sönmez (UNHCR), Berivan Erbil (UNICEF), Dicle Su Han (UNICEF), Arif Mert Öztürk (UN Women), Gözde Bingüler (UN Women), Nuriye Hapmani (WALD), Seden Gürlek (WALD), Eda Kılınç (WATAN), Deniz Sağanak (WFP), Miray Yücel (WFP), Obada Kahil (WHH), Şeyma Demirlikan (YYD).

**Donors:** Philippe Schneider (ECHO), Elif Özkaya Aydın (US Embassy, PRM)

### Meeting Agenda:

- I. Introduction and Updates
- II. Update on Services Advisor and Activity Info
- III. Discussion on Ongoing and Planned Needs Assessments
- IV. Discussion on Outreach, Case Management and Access to Services
- V. AoB

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### Agenda Item #1: Introduction and Updates

- Donors, namely ECHO and PRM are present in today's meeting.
- **National PWG Meetings:** Thematic issues designated for bi-monthly PWG meetings/workshops de-prioritized due to current circumstances. However, to ensure continuity of protection coordination, bi-weekly COVID-19 specific information sharing meetings will be facilitated. COVID-19 meetings will focus on the following thematic areas: communication and information needs of communities, access to services (and barriers), outreach and case management, and social cohesion.
  - **Action Point:** Bi-weekly COVID-19 specific national PWG meetings to be facilitated. Partners are encouraged to contribute to the meeting agendas, either by suggestions towards thematic issues or delivering presentations on developments through dedicated agenda items. Next bi-

weekly PWG meeting scheduled for Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, with focus on service continuity through public institutions and innovative outreach modalities.

- **COVID-19 Appeal:** Sector coordinators recently reached out to 3RP appealing partners with regards to their potential submissions for a COVID-19 specific appeal, that is complementary to the ongoing 3RP appeal. Partners were requested to provide information on targets and budgets for programmes that will be implemented in the context of COVID-19, and in alignment with the identified sector priority interventions. The appeal will be finalized and sent to the region by the end of next week (20-24 April).
- **DGMM-UNHCR Cash Scheme:** UNHCR and DGMM are working on a cash scheme, where vulnerable refugee households (both Syrian and other nationalities) will be provided with one-off cash support. The target number of households will depend on the availability of resources; therefore all needs may not be met through this scheme only. Referrals will be made to DGMM through PDMs, in coordination with local authorities. Transfer values are aligned with national social protection schemes. Currently, stakeholders are finalizing the details of the scheme, including vulnerability criteria, referral mechanisms, transfer modalities, communication with communities and other parameters. Once decisions are finalized, further details on the programme will be made available to partners for their information.
  - IOM is also in discussion with DGMM for a similar cash scheme, to be implemented in Gaziantep and Hatay.
  - Once available, partners request further information on the programme to communicate with refugees, even if to boost their moral.
  - Partners emphasize that currently, amongst the most vulnerable (in terms of impact of COVID-19) are unregistered individuals, especially of Afghan nationality. Advocacy by UNHCR with DGMM is requested in this regard.
  - Partners emphasize there is a need to coordinate cash schemes and programmes (both ongoing and planned) in terms of eligibility criteria and geographical distribution. In this regard, the Cash-based Interventions Technical Working Group (CBI TWG) chair provided information on the mapping of cash interventions that was recently finalized. Further communication and coordination between protection partners and basic needs/CBI TWG partners to take place.
- **Action Point:** Protection coordinator to share further information on UNHCR – DGMM cash scheme once made available by UNHCR. Outcomes of the national PWG discussion to be shared with UNHCR as well.
- **Action Point:** Protection coordinator to continue sharing information on relevant Basic Needs Working Group (BNWG) meetings, as well as CBI TWG meetings to ensure linkages and coordination between protection and basic needs partners on ongoing / planned cash programmes.
- **CBI TWG Mapping of Cash Schemes:** CBI TWG recently finalized the CBI mapping survey (2019-2020) which aims to effectively map and analyze all programmes that use CBI as a tool to achieve its sector specific targets. Finalized outcomes are disaggregated per sector, including information

on comparison of 2019 – 2020 budgets, age and gender breakdown of each programme, transfer values of each activity (etc.). Partners are highly encouraged to review the dashboard, in case of plans to implement cash schemes to address COVID-19 impact.

- **Action Point:** Protection coordinator to re-share email on the results of the CBI Mapping Survey, including the link to the interactive dashboard.
- **Mapping of Material Assistance Needs and Requests:** Basic Needs Working Group is rolling out an “Online Tracking Tool for Requests & Needs in COVID-19 Situation”. The tool will be available on ActivityInfo, and it aims to compile and present the 1) basic needs request of local authorities (such as material support) received by partners, and 2) basic needs of refugees assessed by partners. The tracking tool has pre-set categories to capture request and needs of basic needs modalities (such as food assistance, hygiene kits, sanitary items etc) to facilitate accurate and effective data collection. Compiled data will be made available to interested partner organisations through an online dashboard which will 1) help prevent duplication in responding the requests received from local authorities and 2) provide a general overview of needs in Turkey to feed into reprogramming and planning processes around COVID-19 situation. This online tracking tool will not be a new platform to report partner activities; reporting will still be done through ActivityInfo against indicators under 3RP. This tool aims to capture requests & needs, and it will also be tracking status updates related with these entries. Sector coordinators will request organisations to share focal points for the online tracking tool; focal points will be trained on how to use the tool with online sessions in the following week.
- **Action Point:** Once information is received from the BNWG coordinators, the protection coordinator will request partners to designate focal points to provide inputs to the tracker. A training will be conducted for designated focal points on how to use the tool, for which information will be shared soon.

## Agenda Item #2: Update on Services Advisor and Activity Info

- UNHCR IM reached out to all sector partners via email on March 24th, with the request to update information on the Services Advisor platform related to service delivery based on: 1) activities suspended due to COVID-19; 2) services that are continued to be provided remotely; and, 3) new services provided in the context of COVID-19.
- IM shared the [link](#) to the dashboard indicating changes per the three elements mentioned above and provided an overview on results.
- The majority of services included on Services Advisor fall under the protection sector (3309 individual services). These services are provided by public institutions, NGOs, INGOs, UN agencies, municipalities and Bar Associations (in order from highest to lowest number of services on the platform).
- Subsequent to IM request to update services, protection partners updated 199 services on the platform since March 24<sup>th</sup>.
- Of the 24 service providers who updated information in 249 locations, 173 individual protection services continue to be provided remotely. Top five provinces where these services are provided are in Istanbul, Sanliurfa, Gaziantep, Izmir and Kilis.

- The most affected services under protection, in the context of COVID-19 developments, are individual counseling, awareness raising sessions, referrals to non-protection services, MHPSS services and legal counseling.
- Of the 8 service providers who updated information in 66 locations, protection services rank the highest at 66, in terms of services provided specifically to alleviate the negative impact of COVID-19 on refugees. Top five provinces where these services are located include Sanliurfa, Hatay, Istanbul, Kilis and Diyarbakir.
- Partners are also requested to update, if applicable, information related to their hotlines.

### Agenda Item #3: Discussion on Ongoing and Planned Needs Assessments

- It is noted that many sector members are currently undertaking or plan to facilitate needs assessments with refugees. To this end, the South East Inter-Sector Working Group (SET ISWG) coordinator shared an announcement that they currently initiated a mapping exercise to better capture information on surveys, needs assessments, impact assessments and rapid needs assessments specifically related to COVID-19. Participants shared their interest to contribute to this mapping exercise.
  - **Action Point:** Protection coordinator to convey information related to the mapping exercise of ongoing and planned assessments initiated by the SET ISWG.
- In consideration that many organizations have already initiated efforts to assess needs, participants agreed that at this phase, rather than developing a common **rapid** needs assessments tool, it would be more effective to agree on a few key questions which would serve the purpose of compiling outcomes and findings of needs assessments, as well as general observations regarding the impact of COVID-19 on various refugee groups.
  - **Action Point:** Protection coordinator to share online tool including the key questions to serve the purpose of compiling outcomes and findings of needs assessments, as well as general observations regarding the impact of COVID-19 on various refugee groups. The platform will be accessible to sector partners. Partners will then be requested to regularly share summarized outcomes of needs assessments into the platform. It is noted that this will facilitate the consolidation of assessment outcomes in one database, which would in turn inform programming and advocacy efforts. The coordinator will be sharing summaries of inputs to the platform in bi-weekly COVID-19 PWG meetings.
- Nonetheless, members also express the need for a common, harmonized **comprehensive** needs assessment tool to be utilized for the coming weeks (in relation to COVID) and beyond, to support evidence-based programming and advocacy in the refugee response as well. The tool will be predominantly protection focused, however should also provide insight to other related needs (especially basic needs, livelihoods and education) to the sector as well. Partners emphasize that beyond the development of a common tool, agreements should be made on the larger process around this potential country-wide inter-agency assessment, including sampling, geographical distribution, target profiles etc.
  - **Action Point:** Once mapping of assessments initiated by SET ISWG is finalized, UNHCR Inter-Agency Coordination / Information Management units will organize a technical meeting with

interested partners to initiate efforts on developing a common, harmonized comprehensive needs assessment tool (and the larger process). All efforts to build on existing tools of sector partners.

#### Agenda Item #4: Discussion on Outreach, Case Management and Access to Services

- There are differences in implementation across PDMs. However, it is noted the majority continue to process individuals on an exceptional basis.
- Partners express growing concern over access to health services, especially considering that refugees may not be approaching health services for non-COVID related medical needs.
- In relation to women’s shelters and child institutions operating under MoFLSS, partners stated that for the time being there are no changes in procedures. Admissions to centers are observed to continue, with the standard condition that health reports are provided to authorities. However, it remains unclear how individuals access health reports under these circumstances, and how quarantine procedures are handled by authorities.
  - **Action Point:** Partners are requested to share information with UNHCR, either through the protection coordinator or directly with colleagues from Policy Development Unit or Protection (CP and SGBV) on challenges and issues regarding access to services, including admission procedures to women’s shelters and child institutions, that cannot be resolved at the local level.
- In Istanbul, social solidarity groups (i.e. Vefa Destek Grupları) are reported to have basic criteria for providing support. However, in relation to extending support to refugees, need for interpretation support is highlighted. Municipalities are also observed to require human resources support to provide services in an effective and timely manner.
- Persons in Edirne Kapikule with no prior registration with PDMs are reported to be transferred to various provinces (including Izmir and Canakkale) where they were initially placed under a 14-day quarantine, and subsequently released. Those with prior registration were referred to their provinces of registration.
- Partners state that although the appeal procedures have been delayed, it is unclear whether persons under administrative detention are issued deportation orders or not.
- Due to the interruptions in resettlement procedures, persons who were pending departure to resettlement countries (and whom are not able to depart for the time being) are noted to be in vulnerable situations and in need of support.
- Partners highlight the need to have discussions around the following issues as well: challenges on TP/IP registrations, access to services for unregistered individuals, persons transferred to other provinces from Edirne, and administrative detention related procedures and issues.
- Field coordinators expressed their willingness for partners (who do not necessarily operate in respective field WG areas of responsibility) are more than welcome to join meetings, such as Protection Core Group, SGBV sub-WG, Child Protection sub-WGs in Istanbul and the Southeast.
  - **Action Point:** Partners interested in joining various field level working group meetings are requested to reach out to relevant coordinators, either through the national protection coordinator or directly with the respective coordinators (refer to this [link for the coordination](#)





[contact list](#)). Partners are encouraged to request participation in these meetings and to be included in the respective contact lists.

- Through various coordination platforms such as the Syria Task Force, as well as through direct engagement with UNHCR and other stakeholders, the above-mentioned challenges will continue to be communicated for advocacy purposes.

## AoB

- The next bi-weekly national PWG meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 5th 14.00 – 16.00. The agenda will mostly be focused around access to services through public institutions for which ASAM will deliver a presentation.
- In the next meeting, IGAM requests to deliver a short presentation on their innovative outreach modalities. MSYD also requests to deliver a short presentation on their new COVID specific services.

## Action Points

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- Protection coordinator to share further information on UNHCR – DGMM cash scheme once made available by UNHCR. Outcomes of the national PWG discussion to be shared with UNHCR as well.
- Protection coordinator to continue sharing information on relevant Basic Needs Working Group (BNWG) meetings, as well as CBI TWG meetings to ensure linkages and coordination between protection and basic needs partners on ongoing / planned cash programmes.
- Protection coordinator to re-share email on the results of the CBI Mapping Survey, including the link to the interactive dashboard.
- Once received from the BNWG coordinators, protection coordinator to share link to the online tracking tool for requests and needs in COVID-19 situation. Subsequently, partners will be requested to designate focal points to provide inputs to the tracker. A training will be conducted on how to use the tool, for which information will be shared soon.
- Protection coordinator to convey information related to the mapping exercise of ongoing and planned assessments initiated by the SET ISWG.
- Protection coordinator to share online tool including the key questions to serve the purpose of compiling outcomes and findings of needs assessments, as well as general observations regarding the impact of COVID-19 on various refugee groups. The platform will be accessible to sector partners. Partners will then be requested to regularly share summarized outcomes of needs assessments into the platform. It is noted that this will facilitate the consolidation of assessment outcomes in one database, which would in turn inform programming and advocacy efforts. The coordinator will be sharing summaries of inputs to the platform in bi-weekly COVID-19 PWG meetings.

- Once mapping of assessments initiated by SET ISWG is finalized, UNHCR Inter-Agency Coordination / Information Management units will organize a technical meeting with interested partners to initiate efforts on developing a common, harmonized comprehensive needs assessment tool (and the larger process). All efforts to build on existing tools of sector partners.
- Partners are requested to share information with UNHCR, either through the protection coordinator or directly with colleagues from Policy Development Unit or Protection (CP and SGBV) on challenges and issues regarding access to services, including admission procedures to women's shelters and child institutions, that cannot be resolved at the local level.
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