

## Health Sector Working Group Meeting, December 2023

### Minutes of Meeting

---

**Date:** 28 December 2023

**Place:** UNHCR Amman Branch Office

**Chaired by:** Adam Musa Khalifa – UNHCR, Jihan Salad- UNFPA

**Attendees:** UNHCR, UNFPA, EMPHNET, CVT, Islamic Relief, Caritas Jordan, IRC, Midair, IMC, UOSSM USA.

#### Operational Updates (UNHCR, UNFPA and EMPHNET):

- As WHO will not be available today to join us in the meeting due to the transition of the co-chair, Jihan Salad (the chair of the SRH SWG) will be co-chairing the meeting. (EMPHNET): There was a meeting conducted on 27 of December 2023 to discuss the seasonal variation in the number of flu cases. Around 30% of the cases are H1 and H2 according to the MoH according to the PCR tests conducted at the central lab.
- The Global Refugee Forum was conducted between 13 and 15 of December 2023. His Majesty also attended the forum. The event was attended by around 4,000 participants including some of the heads of the states. Five refugees from Jordan also attended the event. The High Commissioner emphasized on the humanitarian responses due to the new crises including the Gaza and Sudan situations. The UN General Secretary also attended the event. One of the important outcomes of the event were pledges made by the donors and stakeholders, around 2.2 billion USD.
- King Salman Relief Center signed an agreement with Jordan Hashemite Charity to provide mobile caravan to the Syrian refugees in Zaatari camp for the shelters. The total amount is one million and three hundred ninety-eight thousand USD.
- The overall funding situation is on decline, and it is expected to continue during 2024.
- The epidemiological situation in refugee camps is stable with seasonal variations observed in communicable diseases remaining within the thresholds without any major alerts. Some increase in chickenpox cases has been recorded in Azraq camp, similar to the increase in cases in urban areas. An increase in Influenza like illness has also been recorded in camps. The coordination, service delivery and surveillance activities in camps are underway as per regular plans.
- For the operational updates, Arabian Medical Relief (AMR) will take over the service delivery from IMC in the PHC facility in village 5 in Azraq camp from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2024. All other operations for the delivery of PHC and secondary services will continue without any major changes.
- In the given challenging funding situation, camps are no exception, but all efforts will be put to maintain the essential health services delivery and maintaining the minimum essential health services delivery standards. In response to the question, UNHCR has been advocating for the involvement of MoH in the service delivery in the refugee camps. MoH is currently involved in the overall coordination in the camp by co-chairing the health coordination structures in both camps and provision of vaccination services.
- UNFPA added that continuation of the essential SRH services in camps is a priority until the needs of these services exist. In the host communities, the engagement with the MoH is increasing. According to DHS preliminary results, greater unmet needs of Family Planning were observed in camps as compared to the urban areas and this needs further probing and assessment to identify the gaps in

service delivery. UNFPA has also conducted a countrywide Obstetric & Newborn Care (EmONC) Assessment in 2022-2023 and some interesting findings came out to strengthen the health system building blocks.

- 2023 was a productive year in terms of assessments. In addition to other assessments conducted during the year, Health Access, and Utilization Survey (HAUS) was conducted in 2023. According to the survey, some stability was observed in the status of access of refugees to essential health services without any major deteriorations. The delivery of essential health services in refugee camps must be continued as the alternative venues of service delivery in camps are not available as they are available in the urban areas in the form of public health facilities where refugees can access the health services at subsidized rates. We particularly encourage the partners to focus on Azraq camp for bringing PHC services delivery projects.

#### IRC & IMC

- IRC and IMC jointly presented a presentation on the Integration of Mental Health in Sexual and Reproductive Health Services in Azraq Camp. The presentation was followed by questions and answers sessions.

#### SRHSWG

- UNFPA has conducted a countrywide Obstetric & Newborn Care (EmONC) Assessment in 2022. A total 66 facilities were assessed during the assessment including private and public hospitals and the BEmONC facility in Zaatari refugee camp. The report has been published, it is available on UNFPA website, and we will share it with the sector. It is more focused on the coverage rather than the quality aspects. One of the key findings is the projected population which was 11 million and we found out that Jordan should have 110 EmONC facilities to ensure full coverage. As a result of the assessment, it was found that there are 32 fully functional EmONC facilities. When we looked at the seven EmONC functions, there are only one or two functions that need to be integrated for the facilities to be fully functional. One of the important recommendations of the report is to expand the role of midwives. The level of documentation was also identified as one of the challenges in terms of reporting for the institutional deliveries and maternal mortalities. Almost similar trends were observed for the Caesarian Section as compared to the other reports at the national levels with private sector with the highest rate of CS.

#### EMPHNET

- The neonatal death audits are being implemented by EMPHNET smoothly. We have observed a lower neonatal mortality rate as compared to the last year in Azraq camp. The neonatal mortality rate in both camps remained within the acceptable thresholds during 2023.

### MHPSS SWG

- MHPSS SWG monitored the suicide trends including suicide ideation and attempts in the camp and in the urban settings. We made comparison between the trends in 2023 and 2022 and we noticed a reduction of 30%. For the 4Ws, we carry out the exercise every other year and the final report for 2023 will be shared soon with the sector. There was a case report study for integration of mental health into the primary health care, conducted jointly by IMC and UNICEF and WHO. The report is being finalized and will be shared with the sector. The key findings will be shared in one of the HSWG meetings as part of the dissemination strategy.

### Caritas Jordan

- We expect that the next year will be easy both for refugees and the organizations working to provide assistance in the country. Caritas has been providing primary health care services in urban areas. Caritas will stop delivering UNHCR supported primary health care services in its Irbid clinic starting from 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2024. The patients depending on this clinic for receiving essential health services have been guided and directed to access the services from the public health facilities. The referral services have also been handed over to the IMC. Caritas will continue to provide services at its clinics at other locations. Caritas is also exploring the possibility to resume services at its Irbid clinic through other funding sources.

### IRC

- IRC updated about the visit by QFFD to Zaatari camp on 6<sup>th</sup> of December where three of the PHC facilities were visited. All the three partners will start the service delivery at their respective clinics in the first quarter of 2024 with AMR has already started the service delivery.
- IRC can take 100 NCD cohort in Irbid to include them in the cash for health support program from the case load that was previously receiving the services from Caritas Jordan clinic.
- IRC will arrange a workshop in February for the key staff at selected 10 public health facilities where IRC NCD cohort has been accessing the services. The findings of the health services delivery assessment conducted by IRC will be shared with the participants of the workshop. The gaps identified and the area of potential improvements for health system support will be discussed during the workshop. IRC will invite the relevant UN agencies and MoH to attend the event.

### CVT

- CVT is continuing to provide services including the peer support groups, the parenting workshops, physiotherapy group sessions, and the counselling services. CVT also signed an agreement with IFH for provision of service in Zarqa.

### Medair

- Medair is continuing its cash for health program in the urban areas for obstetric, NCD and emergency cases.

### Islamic Relief

- Islamic Relief is continuing the primary health care services through the mobile and fixed clinic. In addition, the surgical and referral services will also be continued in 2024. Islamic Relief will also continue to provide services to the patients in need of dialysis services and will explore further funding opportunities to continue this critical service in future. Services for disabled patients will also be continued in 2024. The awareness raising activities will be continued and will be further strengthened in 2024. Islamic Relief is ready for collaboration with other partners for provision of the mentioned services. Islamic Relief is also working on in kind donation to MoH to extend the support to dialysis cases at the MoH facilities.
-