

Minutes of Northern Inter-Agency Meeting (Eviction specific)

28 May 2019, 10:00 – 12: 00

UNHCR Tripoli Office

Chairperson(s)	Ita Schuette (UNHCR) Alian Chatry (UNDP) Khaled Osman (MoSA)
Agenda of the Meeting	- Batroun Eviction - Hard Structures Dismantling

Summary of Discussions and Action Points:

UNHCR protection initiated the meeting with a presentation on the eviction background, main highlights, challenges and potential risks/impact.

It was highlighted, that LAF are not planning on looking and searching for self-built structures.

Batroun Eviction:

The eviction activity in Batroun started during March 2019 where refugee families living near to the rivers were notified by municipal police and ISF. Since then, UNHCR and partners have conducted a number of advocacy activities resulting with an issuance from the Minister of Interior to put the eviction on hold/suspension.

Notwithstanding the above, the implementation of the eviction was resumed without any prior official notification/communication with the international community nor proper communication with refugees.

This time, the eviction was being implemented by State Security forces, some ISF and some municipal police targeting hard structures in agricultural lands and near rivers. Also it was communicated by state actors that the purpose of these evictions/dismantlement is to move refugees from unlawful structures.

As a result, state actors have locked a number of rooms during the last week and sealed them with red wax. The wax under the law is removable based on approval from the mayor.

Mhammara Eviction / Dismantlement:

No clear indication from state actors on the reason of the eviction/dismantlement, yet the only request by state actors is that families should remove all hard structures as these structures are unlawful.

Based on discussions with affected refugee, approximately 100 USD is required from each HH in order to remove the debris.

Field/Shelter sectors:

From a field/shelter sector perspective and plan is to provide shelter assistance to refugees impacted who have already dismantled their shelters and have been granted approval by Municipality and landlord to set up a tented shelter instead.

All debris should be removed to dumping sites as advised by municipalities. Yet, landlords and refugees should seek the advice of the municipality on the locality of the dumping site and all the logistics.

The current materials to be distributed are not enough to set up a similar structure as the hard structure. Thus, families might have to spend some extra money in order to upgrade their shelters.

As for Assistance, There is no clear agreement or guidance on the national level, yet we will be approaching each incident separately. We will be treating referrals as usual based on assessment and proper agreement with stakeholders.

As for complimentary assistance, we need to be mindful not to encourage the demolition campaign through providing CASH to affected PoC. It may also lead the landlords to push the responsibility from them to PoC. (It could be considered for exceptional cases).

Around 5000+ structures in Aarsal – only 20 that started to be dismantled.

Shelter discussions on national level regarding the capacity that is available and what shelter kits to be provided.

As for the debris removal, In Qobbe the debris was remain on site. At the moment, this is all politics, thus we shouldn't be running through to respond and provide support in the removal.

Challenges and Concerns:

UNDP is concerned with regards to the tensions that might arise due to the remaining debris. This will be highlighted to the social stability WG.

We should try to reach out to the ministry of interior on the issue of debris removal, methodology, funding, etc.

SI, IRC and Intersos as well as other agencies are facing access restrictions in Batroun and Koura District. Both organizations approached mayors and other stakeholders during the year. SI started 2 weeks ago to monitor the situation in Batroun, the team 22-23 municipalities (4 refused the intervention of SI WASH intervention) Anfe, Kfifen, Qoubbe, Zakroun, deir billa.

In some cases, it was reported by Intersos that some families are leaving Lebanon back to Syria due to the evictions for couple of weeks and then re-see asylum in Lebanon due to the situation in Syria.

Way forward:

- SI will be conducting assessment to the affected families – Batroun
- As for Akkar, we need to discuss more on the national level and internally on the north level on the level of involvement the humanitarian organizations.
 - o No cash assistance to be mobilized (at the moment)
- A meeting with Qa'am maqam of Batroun to discuss the access of INGOs in batroun