

**Child Protection Sub-Working Group**  
**31.03.2020 Minutes of Meeting**

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 at 10:00-11:30 a.m., via Webex</b>	
<b>Participants:</b>	Special Secretary for the Protection of UAM Ms. Agapidaki, Arsis, Caritas Hellas, DRC, GCR, ICRC, IOM, Metadrasi, NCR, Panteion Univeristy (European Centre of Research and Training on Human Rights and Humanitarian Action), PRAKSIS, Solidarity Now, TdH Hellas, The Home Project, UNHCR Attica Team, UNHCR CO, UNICEF, Zeuxis, Elix,	
<b>Chair:</b>	<b>UNHCR: Theodora D. Tsovili (<a href="mailto:tsovili@unhcr.org">tsovili@unhcr.org</a>)</b>	
<b>Agenda</b>	<p>➤ <b>The impact of the COVID-19 spread on the child protection actors' engagement is discussed.</b> The agenda includes the following items (10 minutes per item):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on ESTIA and the sites (<b>UNHCR</b>)</li> <li>• Update on the islands' situation (<b>UNHCR</b>)</li> <li>• CP Case management on the islands (<b>PRAKSIS</b>)</li> <li>• CP case management in the sites (<b>IOM</b>)</li> <li>• NFE (<b>ARSIS, Metadrasi</b>)</li> <li>• Safe areas on the islands (<b>IOM</b>)</li> <li>• Safe zones (<b>IOM, ARSIS</b>)</li> <li>• Shelters (<b>EKKA</b>)</li> <li>• IOM hotels (<b>IOM</b>)</li> <li>• Relocation of UAC (<b>SS for UAC Ms Agapidaki</b>)</li> <li>• Cash for UAC (<b>UNHCR</b>)</li> <li>• Study on Homeless UAC (<b>European Centre of Research and Training on Human Rights and Humanitarian Action - EKEKDAAD, Panteion University</b>)</li> <li>• Advocacy letter (<b>UNHCR</b>)</li> </ul>	
<b>Update on ESTIA and the sites (UNHCR)</b>	<p>Given the COVID-19 situation, the exits from ESTIA accommodation scheme have been suspended until the 31 May 2020. The government announced also the suspension of all exits from all reception facilities as part of the COVID-19 measures including suspension of exit from the cash assistance mechanism.</p> <p>The referrals to ESTIA accommodation scheme continue (even in a slower pace) as an effort to maximise the response to the needs emerged by the COVID-19 situation with priority to the refugee population from the RICs on the islands.</p>	<p><b>Action Points:</b>  <b>CP actors running care arrangements for UAC are advised to continue referring the 18+ to DPAS system</b></p>

	<p>UNHCR continues to work closely with the Government for the transition of ESTIA accommodation scheme within 2020. The Government has announced the increase of places in ESTIA and has requested UNHCR to plan on the increase prior the transition.</p> <p>Legal Developments: in accordance to the new Law all recognised refugees or those granted subsidiary protection should exit the reception system (accommodation and cash assistance) 30 days post the notification of the decision – suspended until the 31<sup>st</sup> of May. UNHCR is working on a plan regarding the suspended exits as of 1<sup>st</sup> June which will be shared with the Government. The new law affects also the UAC population turning 18 years old, all underaged refugees will have 30 days grace period post reaching adulthood, i.e. UAC granted international protection who reside in shelters will have to exit shelters in 30 days after turning 18 years old.</p> <p>UNHCR advocates for the group of 18+ so that more time (more than the grace period of 30 days) is provided to this particular vulnerable group.</p> <p>On 24 March, a Ministerial Decision was issued for the existing 28 mainland reception facilities. All of them are therefore managed by RIS. RIS managers and RIS staff are to be recruited soon, the operational framework is to be harmonised.</p>	
<p><b>Update on the islands' situation (UNHCR)</b></p>	<p>The refugee population on the islands remains above 40,000 people while the RICs' capacity remains limited for approximately 6,000 people. Due to COVID-19 situation, UNHCR urged the authorities to move PoCs and especially the vulnerable groups out of the RICs, i.e. the elderly and the people with specific medical conditions.</p> <p>In the context of the COVID-19, the Government announced specific preventive measures with restriction of movement outside the RICs in an organised and controlled manner, PoCs can exit the RIC upon permission of the RIC Director following the measures applied for the rest of the population in the Greek territory. Police is undertaking controls for the entrance and exit of PoCs in the RICs.</p> <p>MMA announced the establishment of Health Units within the RICs for treatment, medical screening and isolation as a response measure to a positive COVID-19 case. RIS in the RICs provides information with posters and megaphone announcements – UNHCR supports this effort along with other NGOs and volunteers.</p> <p>In coordination with RIS, many actors provided NFIs including Hygiene items. UNHCR will provide also top up cash assistance. The government's COVID-19 prevention measures included the postponement of cash assistance provision for one week and the roll out of ATMs inside the RICs was announced.</p>	<p><b>Action Points:</b> N/A</p>

	<p>As regards post 1<sup>st</sup> March arrivals, it was observed that families and children including unaccompanied &amp; separated children remained at the ports of different islands for a period of time prior their transfer to the closed reception facilities of Malakasa and Kleidi (Serres). This raised concerns for the registration of UAC and family links' assessments.</p>	
<p><b>CP Case management on the islands (PRAKSIS)</b></p>	<p><b>Praksis</b> on the islands of Lesbos, Chios and Samos continue to support unaccompanied and separated children and children at risk with families in the RICs. All sessions with the children are held via phone or internet and only urgent cases are followed up with physical presence or when tele-sessions are not feasible.</p>	<p><b>Action Points:</b> N/A</p>
<p><b>CP case management in the sites - Safe zones (IOM, UNICEF, ARSIS, SN, TdH)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IOM:</b> Messaging of the government's announcements for the COVID-19 movements' restrictions and precautionary measures were shared in all sites along with WhatsApp broadcasting. Referrals and transfers to Hospitals remain a challenge.  Distribution of Hygiene Items, i.e. gloves were provided to IOM and EODY Staff. IOM distributes NFIs and food baskets including unregistered population.</li> <li>• <b>Arsis</b> operates in the SZs with reduced staff per shift in rotation. Creative activities for the UAC take place inside the SZs.  Arsis has informed EKKA, that given the current COVID-19 situation, they will be able to accept referrals and proceed with placements in the SZs only for extra vulnerable children with prior assessment.</li> <li>• <b>UNICEF:</b> continuity of services for CP activities with adjusted presence, reduced staff and suspension of group activities. UNICEF is working on the development of a plan in case of a COVID-19 positive case based on experience from other countries (such as China). UNICEF developed a Dropbox with material for communicating with children. Web training on CP and COVID-19 to be launched: further information to be shared soon.</li> <li>• <b>SN</b> has presence in 14 sites in Greece: 6 in the North and 8 in Southern Greece. Since 11 of March, all SN services and activities have been adjusted to the COVID-19 measures. SN teams are present inside the sites every second day with reduced composition following a rotation system.  SN is engaged in remote case management prioritising high risk cases (i.e. including spontaneous UAC arrivals, mental disorders, SGBV cases, etc.). As regards NFE activities: packages of educational materials are distributed in hard copies weekly.</li> <li>• <b>TdH</b> operates with CP activities in the sites where DRC is the SMS manager: 3 sites in Southern Greece, 4 in the North Greece and 2 sites in central Greece. Given the COVID-19 situation, TdH operates with</li> </ul>	<p><b>Action Points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>UNICEF to share information on an upcoming web training on CP and COVID-19.</b></li> </ul>

	<p>reduced staff focusing in tele-working and in remote case management prioritising high risk cases. TdH is present in sites with a social worker and an interpreter while the psychologist and the lawyers provide assistance remotely. New referrals: TdH undertakes only urgent cases.</p>	
<b>NFE (ARSIS, Metadrasi)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Metadrasi:</b> Metadrasi is present on Lesvos (Kara Tepe &amp; Moria) and Chios (Vial) with the provision of NFE activities. Currently, due to the COVID-19 context all activities with physical presence have been suspended and distance learning is implemented: educational materials provided on a bi-weekly basis to the children.</li> <li>• <b>Arsis:</b> Arsis is present on Kos (KEDU) and Leros (LEDU) with the provision of NFE activities. Due to the COVID-19 restriction measures the classes are suspended. The Arsis teams develop on a weekly basis education material which is distributed in hard copy to the children inside the RICs with the assistance of UNHCR. Arsis created a new Facebook page where all educational materials and relevant information material to COVID-19 is uploaded.</li> </ul> <p>Arsis has initiated a Helpdesk via Skype: Children (including unaccompanied) can reach the Helpdesk on specific days and hours - a social worker and a lawyer follow up the Helpdesk requests.</p>	<b>Action Points:</b> N/A
<b>Safe areas on the islands (IOM)</b>	<p>IOM reported no major changes in terms of the COVID-19 response. The composition of staff per shift in the Safe Areas is slightly reduced but with 24/7 presence. Case management services are continued, access of UAC to Hospitals are facilitated. Group activities, all external visits and events have been cancelled.</p>	<b>Action Points:</b> N/A
<b>Shelters (EKKA)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Following UNHCR's communication with MoL and EKKA until now there is no finalised guidance for the CP actors running shelters for UAC – efforts still ongoing.</li> <li>• Child friendly information material continue to be shared by EsWG and CPsWG with all actors. Actors running care arrangements for UAC should follow EODY guidelines.</li> <li>• UNICEF is compiling guidance of good practices inside and outside Greece which will be shared with MoL, Unit for UAM.</li> </ul>	<b>Action Points:</b> N/A
<b>IOM hotels (IOM)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IOM Hotels:</b> awareness raising activities and information provided to all UAC regarding prevention measures for the COVID-19 along with specific instructions in case the children will feel sick or having the symptoms. All mobility restriction measures have been applied with the suspensions also of all group activities which have been reduced to the participation of two persons only. The transfers of children to the hospitals have been reduced only to the urgent medical cases. IOM is operating in the hotels with reduced staff per shift and teleworking for the rest of the staff.</li> </ul>	<b>Action Points:</b> N/A

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the <b>shelters run by IOM</b> similar adjustments have been applied as the ones in the IOM Hotels.</li> </ul>	
<b>Relocation of UAC (SS for the protection of UAM, Ms Agapidaki)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SS for the Protection of UAM informed the CPsWG members that discussions are ongoing for the preparatory actions for the relocation of UAC from Greece to EU MSs including on the eligibility criteria.</li> </ul>	<b>Action Points:</b> N/A
<b>Cash for UAC (UNHCR)</b>	UNHCR has secured funding for the provision of cash assistance to UAC in the RICs via DG Home. Due to the COVID-19 situation, unfortunately the implementation of the activity has been put on hold until all CP actors' presence is restored for the proper monitoring of the activity. All relevant tools, SOPs and monitoring mechanisms have been developed and once the situation is restored UNHCR will stand ready for the impemenetation of the activity.	<b>Action Points:</b> N/A
<b>Study on Homeless UAC (European Centre of Research and Training on Human Rights and Humanitarian Action - EKEKDAAD, Panteion University)</b>	<p>UNHCR announced the initiation of an in-depth "Research on Homelessness of unaccompanied children in Greece" with Panteion University (European Research Center on Human Rights and Humanitarian Action-EKEKDAAD) since mid-February 2020 under the scientific supervision of Prof. Ms Marouda and Prof. Mr. Stelianides. The goal of the research is to propose tailed-made interventions for the protection of homeless UAC in the Greek context. The Research Team informed the CPsWG members on the actions and the progres of the research so far.</p> <p>On 3 April 2020, a separate meeting will take place among UNHCR, the Panteion research Team and the CP actors engaged in streetwork and case management of homeless UAC in Athens and Thessaloniki context.</p>	<b>Action Points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNHCR to share the invitation for the meeting (03 April) to CP actors dealing with homeless UAC</li> <li>UNHCR will share more information in the coming weeks for a workshop on streetwork for homeless UAC</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy letter (UNHCR)</b>	UNHCR is planning to draft a letter with the current challenges with proposals on possible solutions for the protection of children (including unaccompanied children) and those faced by the CP actors.	<b>Action Points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CP actors to share the current challenges with UNHCR</li> </ul>
<b>AOB</b>		<b>Action points:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNHCR to share the social media tool</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Home Project</b> noted that CP actors running shelters for UAC (namely Arsis, The Home Project, Zefxis, Medin, GCR, Iliaktida) drafted a letter which was addressed to the Ministry requesting a guidance tailored for shelters in case of a positive to COVID-19 case.</li> <li>• <b>SS for the Protection of UAM, Ms Agapidaki</b>, urged the CP actors to follow EODY guidelines which apply to the general population and seek advice from CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and WHO. SS for the Protection of UAM advised the CP actors to be also in contact with the local Health Services apart from the EODY Helplines.</li> <li>• As regards the specific regulation for the post 1<sup>st</sup> March arrivals, <b>Ms Agapidaki</b> focuses on ensuring the protection of unaccompanied children and their transfer to age appropriate care facilities.</li> <li>• <b>AMIF Open Call for SIL apartments: SS for the Protection of UAM</b> is looking into retracking the announced AMIF call in order to be revised. Efforts are ongoing so that the Government secures extra funding for SIL's scaling up from DG Home</li> <li>• Child Friendly Messaging will continue to be shared. UNHCR works together with CwC WG and the social media tool will be shared to be filled in by CP actors.</li> <li>• The DUBS' scheme was successfully completed during March 2019, all 119 extremely vulnerable unaccompanied children have been transferred from Greece to the UK.</li> </ul>	<p><b>developed by the CwC WG.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SS for the protection of UAM to revert with more information on any developments on the specific regulation for the post 1<sup>st</sup> March arrivals and especially for UAC</b></li> <li>• <b>SS for the protection of UAM will consult MoH to adapt existing EODY COVID-19 guidelines for the CP actors running care arrangements for UAC</b></li> </ul>
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