

UN EDUCATION SUB-WORKING GROUP MEETING

MINUTES

Wednesday, 17 February 2021

11:00-12:00

VENUE: Yerevan, ARMENIA (via Microsoft Teams)

Participating organizations:

15 participants from UN agencies, international organizations and international/local NGOs (see – attached Participants list) attended the eleventh meeting of the Education Sub-Working Group.

Iren Sargsyan (Save the Children) facilitated the meeting. She opened the meeting by welcoming participants, presenting the meeting agenda and thanking the partners, who have already submitted the 5W reporting template.

Meeting agenda:

- Presentation of issues related to 5W template reporting
 - Presentation of Education SWG active page on the Armenian response portal
 - Presentation on “Early Learning Corners in Temporary Shelters” by “Step by Step” Benevolent Foundation
 - Updates by agencies
 - AOB
- **5W template presentation by Allan Amulabu (Information management specialist (UNICEF))**
- Allan informed, that so far 9 partners submitted their reports, but in term of using them for analysis, only 3 of them are useful, as others didn't complete their activities and couldn't fill all required fields, they reported on their ongoing activities;
 - According to the available information analysis the total population reached support is 11,541, children are 11,341, institutions reached are 89, gender disaggregation data (girls-4708, boys-5568) and population reached by regions are also available;
 - *Jessie Gerena (UNDP) asked to check about the initially targeted population considered for support and what is the share of the supported population in the targeted population.*
 - According to Allan the main challenges regarding to 5W template reporting are that most of the partners could not indicate the indicators and settlements, and community level data are not available.
 - After the submitting of reports by all partners, organizations implementing activities in different regions will also be analyzed and visualized.
- **Education SWG active page on the Armenian response portal presentation by Allan Amulabu (Information management specialist (UNICEF))**
- Allan showed the Armenian response portal mentioning that Education sub working group in under protection working group;
 - In the portal the meetings' calendar, meetings' minutes and 5W template reports can be find;
 - *Allan suggested partners to send Education related analysis, assessment and reports to him, which they have conducted and would like to share with partners, and he will upload them in the portal;*

- Iren Sargsyan asked Allan to share Armenian response portal's link with the working group members.
- **Presentation on “Early Learning Corners in Temporary Shelters” by “Step by Step” Benevolent Foundation**
 - Marine Mkrtchyan started the presentation by thanking for the opportunity to share the project's results and mentioning that Project is funded by UNICEF;
 - She noted that the project has 3 big components and they will present only one component “Establishment of 11 Early Learning Corners in Temporary Shelters in Vayots Dzor (Jermuk-5 corner), Kotayk (Tsakhkadzor-3 corner), Tavush (Dilijan-2 corner) and Gegharkunik Marzes (Sevan-1 corner)”;
 - The aims of the project are 1. To create safe temporary learning corners, 2. To provide teaching and learning materials, they provided thematic units, lessons' plan and activities using holistic approach 3. To train local facilitators and ID parents 4. To provide onsite mentoring and support 5. To organize preschool services for children of ID families;
 - Project activities are 1. To develop teaching material, which were developed by using different developmental domains 2. To identify the locations of shelters, this step took much time, then was considered initially, as population were moving constantly, and the data was changing daily, and it was very difficult to receive information on displaced population 3. The provision of educational kits, 4. Training of educators and mothers and 5. Ongoing training and mentoring;
 - She highlighted that parents of children were also involved in the provision of learning services;
 - For the provision Early development services SBS trained 12 facilitators and 19 mothers;
 - Corners were established either in shelters, or in preschools, or the local NGO's provided facilities;
 - So far “Step by Step” Benevolent foundation provided services to 137 children;
 - The main challenges of project implementation mentioned by Marine were 1. population movement, that is why the initial decided numbers of corners in each region were changed, 2. Information availability on displaced children, 3. the ID parents' reluctance to bring children to corners to receive early development services, to overcome this challenge trained facilitators provided individual psychological support to parents. 3. Difficulties with transportation, especially in Dilijan and Tsakhkadzor, so SBS provided also transportation, 4. Difficulties to arrange services for children located in Golden Palace Tsakhkadzor, as the shelter manager was unwilling to provide space;
 - *Marine Mkrtchyan noted, that there were children in “Golden Palace Tsakhkadzor” shelter not attending to school, as school is far and parents had no mean to send them to school, so in consultation with UNICEF “Step by Step” Benevolent foundation also provided transportation to those children to exercise their right to education.*
 - Marine Mkrtchyan also mentioned success factors of the project which are 1. close and continued cooperation with local authorities, 2. using resources of preschool, 3. cooperation of within SBS network, especially regarding to finding information and high flexibility.
 - She highlighted, that the whole staff of selected sites are extremely supportive (musical, outdoor and indoor physical activities are also provided to children by the staff of preschools).
- Iren Sargsyan asked , whether SBS also has PSS activities within their educational and recreational activities, and Marine Mkrtchyan responded that it is included in their teaching activities and all the activities include social and emotional domains. By answering the question Marine Mkrtchyan highlighted the importance of this component and the reported positive influence on children and parents.
- Regarding Iren's question, Maya Simonyan commented, that psychological and psycho-social support are provided in shelters within other project through the psychologists.
- Nazeli Kirakosyan asked about training initiative provided to parents and its influence on the project sustainability, as Armenian Red Cross has a similar activity- learning spaces for school age children. Marine Mkrtchyan responded, that in case of shelters it depends on how long the children will stay at the shelters, in case of preschools, the latter informed to SBS, that they will continue to work with children and provide the services even after the completion of the project, if children will stay at the communities.

➤ Updates by agencies

Anahit Galikyan(OSF)

- Reported, that partner organization “For equal right” completed the 1st stage of informal classes for displaced children. They have conducted 3-day classes on children rights, on media literacy and profession orientation, children had also participated in developmental games, learned about exchange programs and voluntary work, but the data on the reached children and regions of activities are not yet available.

Anush Shahverdyan (WB)

- Noted, that they have already designed Emergency management plan for preschool based childcare facilities, which will be used in times of emergencies.
- Currently they are in the process of contracting a firm for piloting the Management plan based on 2 preschool institutions in Yerevan.
- Regarding to “Armenian early learning partnership” Trust fund, she mentioned they have started preschool teacher trainings and Step by step has received award for conducting the training.
- The project targets the whole country and 1200 teachers.

Gohar Musaelyan (ADB)

- Informed, that ADB has contract with “Child development foundation”, who is providing socio-psychological support to teachers, children and their families, who suffered from online education during COVID 19. CDF have conducted survey and based on survey’s results they develop training modules and currently capacity development activities stage is in process and it will end at the end of March.
- Considering NK conflict, the contract was expanded for supporting to children suffered from conflict and children either affected by conflict or displaced from NK were also targeted for this project.
- At the end of March ADB will make presentation on the activities carried out and on project results.

Lidiia Kasianchuk (MHPSS TRWG)

- Presented a book on how children can fight of COVID(“My Hero is You”) The book was a project developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings. The storybook “My Hero is You” explains how children can protect themselves, their families and their friends from the coronavirus and how to manage difficult emotions when confronted with our new and rapidly changing reality.
- There is also a guide “Actions for Heroes” as an accompaniment to book, that will benefit caregivers and teachers reading “My Hero is You”.

Maya Simonyan (UNICEF)

- Informed, that 22 tablets were provided to displaced children and hosting community in Tsakhkadzor, and
- School in a box and Recreation kits were provided to Tsakhkadzor secondary school.
- Reported, that in some shelters of Tsakhkadzor there is a shortage for school textbook and students are forced to share textbooks, which affect their performance and they would like to have support for having individual books.
- Another project implemented by “Source foundation”, which aims to ensure individual services and support to children with moderate and severe disabilities mostly displaced from NK;

- UNICEF implementing partner “Full Life” NGO is providing art therapy and other extra curriculum activities to school age children in Yerevan, Tashir and Stepanavan to promote their social inclusion with the host communities and reaching to 150 children in 2 months.

Nazeli Kirakosyan (Armenian Red Cross Society)

- Updated, that ARCS continuous providing children’s resilience building non-formal activities and Mine risk education activities and these projects will end in 2 weeks.
- They expect to new partnership with UNICEF for Mine risk education and for creating safe learning spaces for children in 10 shelters.
- Together with ICRC, ARC is going to submit Early recovery project proposal to Echo foundation and Education in Emergency is a project component. Results will be available in March.

What was agreed:

- To share Armenian response portal link with meeting minutes;
- To share SBS presentation so it can be uploaded on the response portal.
- At the end of March to have presentation on ADB activities.

*UNICEF Armenia
17 February 2020*

Participants list

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| Iren Sargsyan | Child Protection/ Education Technical Adviser – NK Response/ MEEE R, Save the Children |
| Maya Simonayn | ECD Officer (UNICEF) |
| Hasmik Araqelyan | CWD Officer (UNICEF) |
| Manuk Khachatryan | IRCS Education Program Manager |
| Allan Amulabu | Information management specialist (UNICEF), |
| Lidiia Kasianchuk | WHO |
| Jessie Gerena | UNDP |
| Umar Yakhyaev | UN HCR |
| Anahit Galikyan | Education program coordinator (OSF), |
| Gohar Musaelyan | Urban development and education programs (ADB) |
| Anush Shahverdyan | World bank |
| Nazeli Kirakosyan | Head of organizational development (The Armenian red cross society), |
| Ashkhen Gyurjyan | “Step by step” Benevolent foundation |
| Marine Mkrtychyan | “Step by step” Benevolent foundation |
| Hermine Katvalyan | Program assistant (UNICEF) |