



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Turkey

Ad Hoc National Protection Working Group Meeting Minutes

Theme: Protection Sector Support to Emergency Preparedness

Time & Location: Thursday November 12th, 2020 | 14:00 – 16:00 | Zoom

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

Participants: AAR Japan, ASAM, Buca Mülteci Destek Masası, CARE, Çocuk ve Gelecek Derneği, Concern Worldwide, DRC, Doctors Worldwide, DünyaDoktorları Derneği, Dünya Evimiz Uluslararası Dayanışma Derneği, GIZ, Habitat Association, HRDF, IDA, IFRC, IGAM, IOM, JCCP, Mavi Kalem, MSYDD, MUDEM, Mülteci-Der, Positive Living Association, RETYKD, STL, TRC, UN Women, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNRCO, WALD, WATAN Foundation, Welthungerhilfe, World Vision International, Yeryüzü Doktorları.

Meeting Agenda:

- I. Welcome and Introduction
- II. Lessons Learnt from 2020 Earthquakes
- III. Opportunities for Protection Sector Support at National and Local Levels
- IV. Way Forward and Next Steps
- V. AoB and Closure

Agenda Item #1: Welcome and Introduction

- This meeting is facilitated per the request of sector members to hold an ad hoc, dedicated meeting on emergency preparedness and potential support of the sector to response coordinated by AFAD in times of emergencies. Sector members clearly recognize that the Protection Sector is not responsible to coordinate response in emergencies. However, the Protection Sector can play an important role in understanding the impact of emergencies on refugees, facilitate their access to assistance and services in such situations, and mainstream refugees in the response led by public institutions.
- During the meeting, lessons learnt through the three natural disasters that took place in 2020 (Elazığ/Malatya earthquakes; Adana flood; and Izmir earthquake) were discussed, in addition to gaps and areas for improvement, particularly in terms of prevention and risk mitigation.
- Issues identified during the meeting will be conveyed to various higher-level coordination platforms including the Syria Task Force and the Emergency Response and Preparedness Working Group (under the UN Country Team).



Agenda Item #2: Lessons Learnt from 2020 Earthquakes

- Participants express that basic needs inherently increase after emergencies and particularly now, given that COVID-19 has already exacerbated vulnerabilities and winter is approaching. Accommodation, cash assistance, hygiene items and nutrition needs are amongst the most urgent needs, as well as the identification and rehabilitation of damaged buildings.
- Provision of basic needs items to the most vulnerable groups must be prioritized. Pregnant women, elderly, children, individuals with serious medical concerns, persons with disabilities (including disabilities as a result of emergencies themselves), and those that face general difficulties in accessing public services (i.e. key refugee groups) are considered the most vulnerable.
- Targeting, identification and referral of the most vulnerable individuals must be the key consideration for protection sector members.
- Partners observe that poverty levels within refugee communities are on the rise in Izmir, due to the impact of the disaster, increasing vulnerabilities and protection risks such as domestic violence and other forms of GBV, child labour, child, early and forced marriage (etc.).
- Psychosocial support (PSS) is deemed crucial especially for children, as well as individuals with no family or community networks. PSS planning must be implemented at the individual, community and society levels. PSS directly related to earthquake trauma should be strengthened.
- Participants observe significant gaps in information and awareness levels of refugees. Accordingly, increasing knowledge and awareness on available emergency coordination mechanisms must be prioritized. Activities targeting refugees in terms of risk mitigation and information sharing on activities as well as personal precautions must be prioritized. Child friendly messaging is also another point of consideration. Misinformation should be tackled.
- There is a need to improve coordination between natural disaster responders, including public institutions and supporting civil society organizations. Partners observe that coordination between public institutions and municipalities is an area for improvement. Further, existing coordination prioritizes basic needs, whereas protection concerns (including those specific to refugees) require additional focus.
- Refugees face difficulties in accessing assistance and services due to language barrier. Information tools developed by municipalities and AFAD are not available in different languages. Furthermore, while Arabic speaking personnel is already limited in Izmir, there are no interpreters providing support in other languages. NGOs play a critical role in this regard, providing information to refugees in their own languages and referring them to available services.
 - **Action Point:** With UNHCR's support, IA Protection is currently translating key messages prepared by AFAD, which aim to raise general public awareness on emergencies, risk mitigation measures, and measures to take once an earthquake takes place. Once all



documents are finalized, further discussion with PWG members will take place regarding dissemination of these messages.

- Registration under Temporary Protection or International Protection is a pre-requisite for accessing national services. In Izmir, registration is carried out on an exceptional basis under both schemes. Some refugees impacted by the earthquake are pending registration and documentation with DGMM/PDMM, hence face difficulties in accessing services. It is also reported that certain individuals have requested to change their provinces either on a temporary or permanent basis, and there is a need for clarification on whether this would be processed by PDMM İzmir.
- In emergency situations, needs assessments are carried out both by public institutions and I/NGOs. In Izmir, the needs assessment conducted by institutions did not include impacted refugees that reside outside of the main affected areas. On the I/NGO side, the assessments are not harmonized and due to absence of structured coordination, there is a potential for duplication of assessments and important gaps, for example in the absence of multi-sectoral needs assessments by relevant specialists.
 - **Action Point:** Sector partners which have conducted assessments on the Izmir situation to share with Protection Coordinator for dissemination.
- In Izmir, some refugee children who participated in distance learning are unable to continue to damage and disruptions in TV/TV connections, internet and laptops.
- Partners report that fear of discrimination prevents certain refugees from accessing the services, especially in the temporary service areas. Discriminatory speech and xenophobia are reported to rise during natural disasters.

Agenda Item #3: Opportunities for Protection Sector Support at National and Local Levels

- Protection coordination platforms could support mainstreaming of refugees in emergency response.
- Improved communication, collaboration and coordination between 3RP sectors and the ERP WG should be sought. Roles and mandates of the different coordination platforms should be clarified.
- More nuanced analysis is needed on how to activate 3RP engagement vis-à-vis public institutions.
- Cash for Protection schemes targeting specific disaster/emergency situations should be an area of advocacy with donors.
- Sector partners have critical added value in outreach to refugees through various channels, including mobile teams, social media and via their case management databases.



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- Protection partners can support response by identification of persons with specific needs and referral to available assistance and services (including those provided by PDoFLSS, municipalities, SASFs).
- The outreach capacity of partners after an emergency situation allow them to identify medium- and long-term protection concerns, in addition to rapid needs. The former includes GBV risk, child marriages, child labor and school drop-outs.
- Stakeholder mapping can help identify organizations providing support and the type of support they provide in emergency settings, including their geographical scope. Mapping will prevent duplication and allow complementary action in different types of risks, and the mainstreaming of refugees into those services.

Agenda Item #5: Way Forward and Next Steps

- Impact of disasters on refugees and their needs; gaps and areas for improvement in response: capacities of Protection Sector partners and recommendations for way forward will be presented during the upcoming ERP WG meeting.
- A Protection Sector Paper on Support to Emergency Preparedness will be developed based on the outcomes of this ad hoc National PWG meeting.
- Once finalized, Protection Partners will be requested to review translations of AFAD key messages on earthquakes. PWG discussion to take place on modalities of dissemination of these messages.
- Partners to share needs assessment reports for the Izmir earthquake situation.
- Emergency awareness related questions to be incorporated in Round 3 of the Protection Sector Rapid Needs Assessment that will take place as of January 2021.