



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Turkey

Basic Needs Working Group

January Meeting Minutes

Date & Location	20 January 2022, Joint (National & Field) Virtual Meeting
Chaired by	Ahmet Ünver (UNHCR)
Minutes Prepared by	Umay Atik (UNHCR) & Ahmet Ünver (UNHCR)
Participating Agencies	
CARE, ECHO, GIZ, IBC, IFRC, IGAM, IOM, Islamic Relief, Kırkayak Kültür, MAAN, MoFSS-DGSA, MSYD, SKL International, TRC, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, Violet, WALD, WFP	
Agenda	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welcome & Introductions2. Review Action Points & Announcements3. Highlight: Transition TT & Livelihoods Referral4. Present ESSN and C-ESSN Updates5. Present Sector Achievements in 20216. Highlight: ESSN PDM 127. Present Appeal Analysis & Sector Priorities in 20228. Focus: Food Assistance<ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Present: Food Assistance Standardsb) Discussions9. AoB	
Action Points	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Partners updating their contact information in the BNWG Mailing List Registration Form by 31 January 20222. Sector assess capacity development needs of partners3. Partners provide feedback to BNWG Workplan for 2022.	
Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of January 2022 meeting• Turkey: Basic Needs Sector Dashboard - December 2021• Turkey - Field Achievements: Basic Needs Sector Dashboard - December 2021• Turkey: Basic Needs Sector Dashboard - Quarter 4 / 2021• Turkey: TRC / IFRC - Deepening Poverty and Debt Socioeconomic Impacts for Refugees in Turkey One Year on from COVID-19- Findings from the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN) Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) Survey (Round 12) in Turkey• Turkey: TRC / IFRC - The Stress of Debt: Effects on the Lives of People Living in Turkey under Temporary and International Protection - Focus Group Discussion Analysis Report - December 2021• BNWG Mailing List Registration Form• Survey for Identifying Capacity Development Needs of Basic Needs Sector Members• Draft BNWG Workplan for 2022	
Review Action Points and Announcements	



Action Points:

- Discuss food assistance in the working group. ->>
- Enhance referrals to livelihood opportunities. ->>

Announcements:

- BNWG had 2 joint meetings in January and July in 2021. National meetings were conducted on a bi-monthly basis, covering Ankara AoR. Bi-monthly Istanbul and Gaziantep field meetings were held jointly and virtually as well. Izmir BNWG meetings have recently been initiated to be held on a quarterly basis.
- BNWG is updating its meeting schedule for 2022. Meetings may be quarterly in some locations to have more time in between for bilateral collaboration with partners.
- Separation of Istanbul, Gaziantep and Izmir platforms is planned. The aim is to have more in-person, localised and operationally focused field meetings in 2022.
- Relevant schedules such as that of ESSN meetings will be considered when developing the new schedule.
- Since the update of the BNWG meeting schedule is not finalised, the next meeting date has not been determined yet. Partners were urged to follow related updates.
- Partners were encouraged to update their contact information in the [BNWG Mailing List Registration Form](#) by **31 January 2022**. The list will be renewed to further localise the platform and keep abreast of the latest developments related to partners' staff turnover.

Highlight: Transition TT & Livelihoods Referral

- BN sector coordinator shared updates on the outputs of the TT on Transition to Livelihoods Opportunities.
- The protracted refugee situation has been ongoing for over a decade and many households still depend on basic needs assistance which cannot go on forever. Thus, provision of livelihoods opportunities to refugees to increase their self-reliance is crucial.
- IA, TRC, IFRC and other key stakeholders such as World Bank and GIZ established a TT focusing on referrals and transition at the national level. TT produced an output paper on transition, whose key takeaways were presented and discussed in the STF+ meeting held on 19 January 2022.
- TT will be maintained to see the next steps through. More comprehensive feedbacks will be provided in February STF meeting.
- The output paper and the policy brief will be shared with the BN partners who were urged to follow the relevant developments closely.
- **Livelihoods sector coordinator presented the profiling form of the LWG.**
- Profiling of refugees' skills, education levels and needs for further career development is needed to achieve self-reliance so that trainings and job placement programmes can be planned accordingly. Databases should be more open, accessible, and harmonised across sectors.
- LWG's profiling form is a tool to conduct general profiling by gathering information needed to take up on a referral from another organisation for various reasons including trainings, skills and capacity development, job placement, and mentoring/counselling for job search etc.
- It is also a complementary tool to IARF concerning referrals specific to livelihoods. The other purpose of the form is to act as a data storage document for livelihoods service providers for storing data of beneficiaries in line with the appropriate data protection measures. This way, all actors would have a unified set of data due to which it would be easier to have statistical information on overall trends.
- LWG profiling form has 5 different parts: 1) general individual Information of the beneficiary, 2) skills, education level and the employment history, 3) household of the beneficiary, 4) social assistance received, 5) referral mechanism. The form will be shared with partners as well.



- It will be used as part of a greater mechanism with IARF, Services Advisor, KIZILAYKART Information Exchange Mechanism so that all available databases and tools would be accessible and open to partners for sharing information, referring cases and following-up on previous cases.
- Partners were encouraged to reach out to BNWG and LHWG coordinators concerning their questions.

Present ESSN and C-ESSN Updates

Latest Figures:

- As of **17.01.2022**, ESSN has received **630,162** applications. In December 2021, payments were delivered to **1,537,510** individuals nationwide (**214,151**, **197,639**, and **34,057** recipients in Gaziantep, and Istanbul, and Ankara respectively). **5,008** cards were distributed, **672** were in Gaziantep, **747** in Istanbul, and **223** in Ankara.
- A total of **38,159** individuals have received ESSN assistance through the SASF Discretionary Allowance. Out of this, **3,279** in Gaziantep and **2,174** in Istanbul received the monthly assistance through the SDA practice, while the number of recipients through SDA is 1,343 in Ankara. The main objective of the allowance is to avoid exclusion errors.

M&E Activities:

Monitoring & Evaluation Teams carried out on-site and card distribution monitoring activities during the months of November and December. Teams visited **127** institutions in **11** SET provinces, **222** institutions in **11** Marmara-Aegean provinces, and **180** institutions in **15** Ankara-Central Anatolia provinces. Under the scope of M&E activities, Halkbank branches, SASFs, DGPCs (Directorate General of Population and Citizenship), and PDMMS were visited. The main observations from these visits are:

- During the visits, it was learned that migrants usually work in irregular and/or daily jobs, mostly without insurance. Such jobs are usually in agriculture, livestock, industry, and construction. It is also not a rare practice for them to move to other provinces to find employment.
- During the visits, it was noticed that some SASFs such as Merkez, Çınarcık, Termal, and Altınova (Yalova), Mengen (Bolu), and Maltepe (Istanbul) are providing refugees with in-kind assistance regardless of their Kızılaykart status.

FGD:

- In Marmara&Aegean region, 12 FGDs were conducted during the period of November and December. The FGDs focused on the topic of “Perceptions on the Impact of Increased Transfer Value of ESSN Assistance on access to Basic Needs and Coping Strategies & the General Satisfaction around the Transfer Value”.

IVS:

- The data collection process of IVS 2 has started in December 2021. The IVS 1 report was shared on the ReliefWeb. After the conclusion of the data collection process for IVS 2, the report with its findings will be shared on the relevant platforms.

R&O Activities:

In November and December, Referral and Outreach teams made basic needs referrals to other institutions for **203** cases and SASF Discretionary Allowance referrals for **213** households in all regions. Alongside these the teams conducted visits to **131** institutions in SET provinces, **327** institutions in Marmara-Aegean provinces, and **192 institutions** in Ankara-Central Anatolia provinces. The main observations from these visits can be listed as following:

- Teams observed that increasing number of Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centres have started to conduct activities in the neighbourhoods where refugees live. Seminars and presentations were given to refugee women, alongside locals, about the rights they have while residing in Turkey.
- Applications to the hospitals increased for Disability Health Report renewals. But this issue has probably ceased to exist since the Ministry of Health has extended the durations of the reports once again.
- Applications for in-kind assistance at the SASFs have dramatically increased in the months of November and December. Particularly, the problems regarding the supply of coal that SASFs have been receiving led to an increase in hardships related to heating.



DHR Validity Period, the new regulations of the Ministry of Health refer to:

- Disability health reports, which validity period expired between 01.01.2020 - 31.12.2020, has been extended until 30.06.2022.
- Disability health reports, which validity period expired on and after 01.01.2021, has been extended until 31.12.2022.

Complementary ESSN (C-ESSN) project

- It was mentioned that the C-ESSN project, which is funded by the EU and implemented in cooperation with the MoFSS and TRC, has been designed to meet the basic needs of the most vulnerable individuals who cannot be referred to livelihoods.
- Within the scope of the C-ESSN, payment for each beneficiary is 250 TL, and the payments for each severely disabled is 800 TL.
- Current project updates were shared, including the Number of People Receiving Regular Cash Assistance, the Top Ten Provinces with the Highest Number of Individuals Receiving Regular Assistance, Nationality, and Age Breakdown.
- In addition, it has been stated that the assistance of severely disabled, which has been available since 2018; however, continues within the scope of C-ESSN, and payment for per disabled individual is 800 TL.
- Finally, In December 2021, payments were delivered to **363.464** individuals nationwide (88,700 households), (56,175, 37,557, and 21,189 recipients in Gaziantep, and Istanbul, and Ankara respectively).
- UNHCR asked whether the proportions of the numbers of ESSN beneficiaries to the overall population of refugees are similar across different provinces. Since the 4 top provinces with the highest absolute number of ESSN beneficiaries are in SET, it may be interesting to note if there is (or no) correlation between the absolute numbers of recipients and the total refugee population. TRC answered ESSN and C-ESSN beneficiaries are selected based on specific criteria and not on provincial refugee population; thus, only absolute numbers are considered. However, TRC added they will share this idea with their management. BNWG coordinator suggested that a thematic mapping focusing on such proportional values may provide insights on cities that can be targeted for transition to livelihoods as differences may be related to the varying levels of working population in provinces.
- WFP asked about the impact of the recent economic developments such as high inflation rates on ESSN beneficiaries and whether ESSN implementing partners are considering revising transfer/top-up values. TRC stated a gap analysis (detection of the difference between income and money) including the calculation of the ESSN transfer amount, income and MEB was carried out and MEB calculations are very critical at this point. Hence, some arrangements were planned in the MEB calculation style and efforts were made to improve the MEB calculations. It is stated that secondary data coming from TUIK and other government sources, which will directly affect the transfer value calculations, are also followed. Moreover, it was stated that the methods applied to understand the household income were developed and tried to be improved.
- WFP inquired on the reason for the difference in the number of ESSN beneficiaries from May-June 2021 (around 1.8 million) to December 2021 (around 1.5 million). MoFSS explained the transfer value should increase in the of new analyses. This issue is currently being worked on for ESSN and C-ESSN, and if the process is positive, the details will be shared in the coming meetings.
- TRC and MoFSS stated some ESSN beneficiaries were transferred to C-ESSN according to the latter's criteria.
- UNHCR asked when C-ESSN data verification to prevent duplication would be available for I/NGOs. MoFSS stated they were currently working on it, and it would be possible in the near future to conduct data verification cross-checks for C-ESSN as is currently the case with ESSN.

Present Sector Achievements in 2021



- Basic Needs sector achievements in 2021 were presented by the sector IM officer. According to the [BN sector dashboard as of December 2021](#), 49.5% of beneficiaries are female, 50.44% are male and 0.07% are non-binary. Since collection of data for non-binary beneficiaries started in early 2021, these figures may increase in the coming years as more partners are starting to collect and report data with such a gender breakdown.
- 53.92% of sector beneficiaries are children. Activities targeting children such as diaper distribution via municipalities in Marmara region may be one of the main reasons increasing the proportion of children.
- 88.93% of beneficiaries are Syrian and 9.46% are non-Syrian. 2021 was the first year when data was collected with a nationality breakdown covering also non-Syrians. The proportion of non-Syrians in 2021 (9.46%) shows that most partners already had some activities targeting them and were collecting data with a nationality breakdown. Further increases in the figures reported for non-Syrians in 2022 are expected as more partners are adjusting their activities and reporting.
- In terms of the progress achieved against sector indicator targets, cash assistance remains the activity reaching the most beneficiaries (over 2.1 million).
- Over 385 thousand beneficiaries (53% of 2021 target) benefitted from gender-appropriate hygiene, dignity or sanitary items.
- The number of in-kind and cash food assistance beneficiaries was over 94 thousand (70% of 2021 target).
- Nearly 43 thousand individuals benefitted from partners' CRI distribution activities (27% of 2021 target).
- Partners were encouraged to share their feedbacks regarding the development of sector dashboards shared.

Highlight: ESSN PDM 12 FGD Results

rCSI & LCSi

According to PDM 12, both ESSN recipients and non-recipients adopt coping strategies related to food security at concerning levels. rCSI score rose from 9.14 to 11.6 for the ESSN recipients while it slightly improved for the non-recipients since PDM 10. Relying on less preferred or less expensive food was the mostly adopted reduced coping strategy for both ESSN recipient and non-recipient households. From PDM 10 to PDM 12, LCSi score increased for the ESSN recipients. There was a sharp increase in the number of ESSN recipient households adopting crisis coping strategies since PDM10.

Food Consumption Score

PDM10 with PDM12, percentage of ESSN recipients with acceptable food consumption score (FCS) has significantly reduced by about 20 per cent.

Debt

ESSN applicant households owe higher amounts of debt compared to PDM 10 with median amount increased from 2,000 TRY to 2,500 TRY (by 25 %), and they struggle to manage their finances. Friends or relatives, as well local shops are still the main sources of debt for ESSN applicants. ESSN applicants borrowed to cover their most basic needs, namely food, rent and utilities followed by essential non-food items and health care.

Expenditure

Between PDM 10 and PDM 12, median expenditure for all ESSN applicants increased by 24 per cent from approximately 2,700 TRY to 3,300 TRY. According to PDM 12, the majority of both ESSN recipient (73.3 per cent) and non-recipient (75.5 per cent) households had per capita expenditure levels above MEB.

Income

Compared to PDM 10, the median household income increased by 55 % for ESSN recipients and 22 % for non-recipients.



Conclusion

- Increase in income did not cover for the increased expenditure
- The gap between income and expenditure was covered via increasing amount of debt
- Decreasing food consumption score
- [PDM 12](#) and [FGD](#) reports were shared with partners again.

Present Appeal Analysis & Sector Priorities in 2022

Appeal Analysis

- Total 3RP BN sector appeal for 2022 is over \$185 million (over \$93 million and \$92 million for resilience and refugee components respectively). 22 organisations appealed under BN.
- The map in slide 60 shows the breakdown of provinces targeted by the 3RP partners in their 2022 appeals. The programmes with nationwide targets and coverage are not included in the map, but even without these, it reflects the increase in the number of targeted provinces.
- The trend of concentration of BN activities in SET, Istanbul, Ankara, and Izmir continues. Still, there are also activities targeted in Central and Eastern Anatolia regions and some other provinces in Marmara and Aegean.
- Municipal support, CBIs, and food assistance are the areas under which the total appeals are the highest.
- The indicators related to cross-checking efforts to avoid duplication (a new indicator for which partners will start reporting in 2022), CBIs, distribution of hygiene kits and food assistance have the highest numbers of targeted individuals.
- Most sector partners appealed against CBI, food assistance, hygiene kit distribution and shelter indicators.
- In 2022 appeal, the number of organisations appealing under BN increased with 5 new appealing partners.
- Data collected in 2021 and appeal of 2022 show that partners are interested in and already working towards providing further assistance to non-Syrian populations and host communities.
- The highest amounts of budget were appealed for municipal support programmes but not many funding flows to this area were recorded, despite there being appeals against the related indicator for years now.
- The appeal against the CBI indicator is high. Also, funding and implementation are increasing in this area.

Sector Priorities in 2022

- A light review of BNWG 2021 Priorities Plan was done. Partners' responses regarding priority areas they deem the most significant for 2022 indicate that the highest priorities are respectively sectoral needs assessments, coordination with public institutions, capacity development of sector partners, and supporting self-reliance.
- A prioritisation plan will be prepared and shared with partners who were urged to provide feedback.
- Partners were encouraged to assess the performance of WGs. IAWG will share an email with all WGs.

Focus: Food Assistance

- Regarding the purpose of food assistance, WFP shared a schema according to which there are 3 pillars of food security: food availability, access, and utilisation. Food availability is about famines, droughts, and absence of resources and includes the components of production. Food access is related to affordability based on the income component and utilisation is about consumption and nutrition.
- Concerning nutritional well-being, the focus is not only on food system but also on systems of health, water and sanitation, social protection, and education, which is why defining nutrition is hard. Hence, the absence of nutrition, namely malnutrition, was defined.
- Malnutrition is identified with its different repercussions such as stunting, wasting, being underweight and overweight). For example, being overweight is seen more among Syrian women experiencing malnutrition.



- The nutritional well-being of Syrian children in Turkey have improved since they have come here due to the assistances provided.
- Nutritional food intake list of the Sphere Handbook used by WFP was shared. According to this, in general, a person needs 2,100 kcal per day, 10-12% coming from protein and 17% from fat.
- When developing a nutritious food basket, focus needs to be on consumption as well. WFP's food basket targets Syrian persons of concern in Turkey. To come up with a list of food items for the basket, they analysed consumption patterns in Syrian refugee camps in Lebanon and they came up with a 12-item list as their general food basket. However, since one size does not fit all, customisation may be needed for different target groups.
- In terms of calculations regarding food baskets, WFP demonstrated how to utilise [NutVal](#) website. Comprehensive NutVal excel file that can be downloaded from the website includes a food database including nutrient information of all food items. Ration calculator of NutVal calculates calorie levels of food baskets based on items and amounts specified. Logistics calculator shows possible food losses in milling and transportation processes and the cost of delivery of in-kind food assistance. NutVal also has a training on developing food baskets and WFP stated they can be approached on this issue for cooperation.
- Target groups and the number of individuals in them, where they live, and frequency and modality of assistance should be determined when designing a response.
- In-kind assistance, commodity voucher and cash-based transfers (including value vouchers and cash assistances) modalities were reviewed with respect to their advantages and disadvantages. Value vouchers can be paper or electronic, restricted, or unrestricted and can be redeemed at assigned/contracted stores. For instance, food assistance in refugee camps in Turkey is partially restricted as 80% of the value must be redeemed for food. This option is better where cash transfers pose security and/or protection risks. On the other hand, unrestricted cash assistance is best when there is an established financial system, if assistance is continuous and where conducting a pilot is possible and it is easy to scale up. The advantage of cash assistance is freedom of choice and prioritisation of beneficiaries regarding which items to get. However, nutritional sensitisation is required for this modality.
- Once the food basket per person/household is set, the cost of it helps to determine the transfer value, to quantify the adequacy of assistance and to track trend changes.
- WFP added that food restriction in their joint voucher programme with TRC in refugee camps in Turkey is due to their donor's intention to ensure food security throughout the year. However, in Turkey context, if there is no donor restriction, it is always good to provide multi-purpose cash assistance according to WFP's analyses conducted when it was part of implementing ESSN.
- The sample food basket (presented previously in CBI TWG) that was prepared based on retail store prices considering the dry food based one created by WFP and IOM was shared with partners. This sample basket was updated in line with retail store price changes in CBI TWG for the first time in May 2021, whence food prices have increased by 70%. In addition, food prices have increased by 48.5% since the latest CBI TWG meeting in November 2021.

AoB

- N/A