Economic Empowerment Working Group

Jordan

NOTE FROM MEETING

25th January 2023

Agenda

- Update from the inter-sector meeting
- Update on reporting requirements and the 2024 3RP process….
- Presentation on challenges and marginalisation in the employment market
- Selecting the new co-chair: explaining the process and presentations from the two applicant NGOs
- Dedicated discussion on social security and work permits

Attachments support this Note:

Supplementary documents and reports referenced in this paper are attached to the accompanying e-mail and will be uploaded to the Economic Empowerment Sector weblink, *https://data2.unhcr.org/en/working-group/49*

- *Inter-Sector Meeting Minutes (when available/finalized)*
- *Presentations from co-chair applicants (ARRD and DAA)*
- *Presentation on labour market challenges and marginalisation*

UPDATE FROM THE INTER-SECTOR GROUP

The minutes from the inter-sector meeting will be circulated when they are finalized (*from the meeting held on 18th January*).

The inter sector representation that was in Geneva recently gave a presentation from the Global Refugee Forum (GRF) – the global jamboree discussing all things related to refugees and refugee operations. The GRF delegation was high level and included King Abdullah bin al-Hussein. Jordan made a country pledge to the Forum which was "*aspirational and inclusive….included a commitment to 'build on the Compact and stay the course'*". UNHCR global will be developing a series of reports that capture the details of pledges which should be available in March.

The was discussion about 'hitching' refugee issues to economic development possibilities, which builds on the concept of the Compact. This was well received by the development donor community and could open opportunities to explore what this means specifically and exactly in the Jordan context. The 3RP narrative and JRP narrative has stressed the importance of integrating development in the refugee operation, but it has not gained the desired traction. The renewed development donor interest in this could be an opportunity for the humanitarian/refugee community in Jordan to have a conversation with

the development community to see how this can be translated into action. This conversation should be an inter-agency engagement, and not left in the hands of one individual agency to take it forward. The Economic Empowerment chair will take this forward with the inter sector coordinator. A concept note will be developed and presented to the JOSH.

The inter-sector group is moving forward with the localisation agenda. There was discussion, but no firm commitment, on the possibility for all co-chairs of the seven sectors to be taken on by national NGOs. There was also discussion on the possibility for national ministries to be included in the groups, moving the operation to be more aligned with national plans, actors and the JRP. More to come……

Action: *minutes from the inter-sector to be circulated to the Economic Empowerment Group when finalized.*

UPDATE ON REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND THE 2024 3RP PROCESS….

The Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (3RP) serves as a platform for coordination, planning, and advocacy, encompassing humanitarian and development efforts across five countries: Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt. We've commenced the 2024 3RP, aligning indicators for Economic Empowerment with JRP-2024 to streamline efforts and avoid redundancy. The 3RP logframe is in progress, with plans for ActivityInfo upload and internal discussions on finalizing the PLAN DB. Monthly reporting on the MONITOR DB will follow, and sector leads will soon begin work on the 3RP narrative for 2024. This ensures alignment with the Jordan chapter of the JRP.

Action: *UNHCR will share and circulate information on reporting requirements, the final JRP and 3RP and other issues as relevant, when ready.*

PRESENTATION ON THE CHALLENGES AND MARGINALIZATION IN THE EMPLOYMENT SECTOR

Oroub Elabed, and academic working substantially on labour issues gave a presentation on marginalization, exploitation and other challenges in the labour market specific for refugees. The presentation included the idea of a 'one refugee' approach in Jordan to avoid the over-concentration on Syrian refugees; it mentioned the dangers (and opportunities) of work opportunities through the informal sector and the power dynamics between employer and employee related to informal work opportunities; the idea of refugees as a burden and opportunity for economic development; and the importance of promoting self-employment; home-based businesses, and the agricultural and industrial sector as a large scale employer.

The presentation was rich in substance and relevance and requires a more focused discussion on how to capitalize on employment opportunities and mitigate exploitation and other threats to employees and refugees. It is particularly relevant to conversations about social security and work permits.

There was broad agreement that a dedicated conversation would be useful. The Economic Empowerment Sector will organize a dedicated session (60-90 minutes) on the topic that could be led by Oroub. The date of this session will be arranged and communicated shortly.

In the meantime, please take a look at the documentary that has been produced. It is short and accessible, interesting and informative. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMRGwAZKoks. A more thorough report on the topic is currently being finalised and will be circulated when it is ready.

Action 1: *organise a dedicated session to dicsuss labour market issues led by Oroub Elabed in the form of a conversation/workshop more than a presentation.*

Action 2: *circulate the final report when ready to the Economic Empowerment Group.*

SELECTING THE NEW CO-CHAIR OF THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT GROUP

This meeting represented the final official co-chairing between UNDP and UNHCR – even though this co-chair arrangement has only been in place for a couple of months! The Economic Empowerment Group (co-chairs) committed to an approach that puts national organisations in the centre of the leadership and coordination of the refugee operation, and was delighted that two national NGOs – highly credible national NGOs – nominated themselves for the co-chair role.

Both organisations – Dar Abu Abdullah (DAA) and the Arab Renaissance for Democracy and Development (ARDD), - had the opportunity to make a pitch on their suitability for the co-chair role. The pitch by each organization was accompanied by a presentation. The presentations are attached to the e-mail for members to absorb and help them make a decision on which organization fits well for the co-chair role.

The co-chair will be selected through a voting process by the group members. Each group member will have one vote, and the selection will be based on a simple majority rule i.e. the organisation with the most votes will win. Each organization will have one vote.

You can cast your vote at the Kobo survey which my UNHCR colleagues have set up. https://enketo.unhcr.org/thanks?taken=1706525186463. The link is also embedded in the e-mail accompanying this meeting note, and has been circulated previously. The link will be open until COB, Thursday 1st February. The new co-chair will be announced early next week (week beginning 4th February).

Action*: Oversee the voting process and announce winner, week beginning 4th February.*

DEDICATED DISCUSSION ON SOCIAL SECURITY AND WORK PERMITS

There was no time for a dedicated discussion on social security and work permits. A separate meeting was arranged for this discussion (and to inform senior level JOSH discussions) for Sunday 28th January. A meeting note on this meeting and the subsequent JOSH meeting will be circulated.

Action*: organize dedicated session on social security before the special JOSH meeting.*

DEPARTURES AND THANKS

This meeting was the final meeting with UNHCR as co-chair, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank Najwan Aldorgham <aldorgha@unhcr.org> for her leadership of the group for the last six years. It is also time to say goodbye to Ramayana Mahafza <MAHAFZA@unhcr.org> as she moves on to support another sector with her style, her grace and her critical voice. Good luck to both Ramayana and the next sector that has to deal with her 😊. Ramayana sizeable shoes (metaphorical comment) will be filled by Ehab Haddad haddade@unhcr.org and I am sure the entire group welcome him.

Contact information

Stuart Kefford, UNDP, Co-Chair Economic Empowerment Group
stuart.kefford1@undp.org; +962-7-9847-6551 (and +33-766-674-514 when outside Jordan)

To be confirmed, To be confirmed, Co-Chair Economic Empowerment Group
tobeconfirmed@verysoon.org

Ehab Haddad, UNHCR, Economic Empowerment Group, Assistant
haddade@unhcr.org

Group communication: WhatsApp Group

Please send me a WhatsApp message to my international number +33-766-674-514 and I will facilitate a WhatsApp Group that will allow everyone to exchange messages quickly with each other. The intention of the group is unrestricted and unregulated sector conversations. Laissez faire Coordination. Coordination is not control!!

Please message me with two words: your **name** and **organization** and I will add you to the group if you want to be in it.