



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Türkiye

3RP National Protection Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Date & Location: Thursday, 20 March 2025, 09:30 – 12:30 / Zoom

Moderator: Lara Özügergin – 3RP Ulusal Koruma Sektörü Koordinatörü (UNHCR)

Participants: CARE, DRC, Dünya Evimiz, ELAF, Expertise France, FAO, Genç Hayat Vakfı, GIZ, Human Appeal, ICMPD, IFRC, İGAM, İKGV, ILO, IOM, KAOS GL, Maya Derneği, MESEDER, MHD, MSYDD, Qatar Charity, REALs, Relief International, RET International, SAMS, Save the Children, SEVKAR, SGDD – ASAM, SHAFAK, Türk Kızılay, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women, WFP, WHR

Meeting Presentation: [English](#) and [Turkish](#)

Meeting Agenda:

- I. Welcome & Announcements
- II. Voluntary Return: Observations and Needs
- III. 3RP 2024 Protection Sector Year-End M&E Review
- IV. AoB & Closure

Agenda Item #1: Welcome & Announcements

- **Feedback Surveys on Services provided by Presidency of Migration Management (PMM):** As identified in the [eighth round of the Inter-Agency Protection Needs Analysis](#), the need for information on and improved access to PMM specific feedback, complaint, and response mechanisms remains a priority for refugees. Every year, UNHCR shares surveys related to services received through Protection Desks and vis a vis interpreters of PMM with partners, with the aim of disseminating widely to refugees for feedback. However, participation in these surveys remain low. Partners are encouraged to support dissemination.
- **Mainstreaming of Türkiye Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Network Action Plan for 2025:** The 3RP Protection Sector Coordinator has been appointed as the third co-chair of the PSEA Network in Türkiye. The network announced that an action plan for activities to be carried out within the network in 2025 was developed and endorsed through the UN Country Team. The Network is now organizing sessions to mainstream the action plan across different functions including PSEA focal points, HR managers, sector coordinators, and management in Ankara, Istanbul, and Gaziantep. Feedback obtained through these sessions will be shared with the UN Country Team.
- **Inter-Agency Protection Needs Analysis Round Eight:** The report is pending clearance from UNHCR management. Publication process is taking longer than in previous rounds as this Round the analysis is much more extensive. However, as part of the preparations for the ninth round, consultations on the format of the report will be organized, particularly with partners that have contributed to the exercise across the Rounds.
- **Community Pulse Survey:** Data collection is finalized and the preliminary analysis is pending clearance with UNHCR management. Following the publication of the preliminary analysis, a more detailed report will be prepared.
- **3RP 2024 Coordination Survey:** This annual survey aims to collect feedback on 3RP coordination mechanisms to understand best practices within the existing coordination system at the national and regional levels and identify areas for improvement and strengthening in 2025. The survey can be accessed via this [link](#).
- **Cash Based Interventions:**
 - UNHCR's cash assistance programs will continue until May, with the final payments



scheduled within this month. This information was already shared with refugees. Considering UNHCR's programmes are "cash for protection" hence the beneficiaries of assistance are vulnerable and with specific needs, UNHCR underlined the need for a dedicated discussion between cash and protection partners to assess the possibility of referring some of the beneficiaries of UNHCR's programmes to other organizations. The Protection Coordinator will discuss with the Cash Based Interventions Technical Working Group Coordinator on way forward.

- There are currently no changes regarding the Kızılaykart assistance and that the ESSN program is still ongoing. Some households were removed from the ESSN program based on earlier eligibility assessments.

Agenda Item #2: Voluntary Return: Observations and Needs

During the meeting, partners shared their observations on protection risks and concerns in the current context. These outcomes are presented under thematic headings:

Information Needs and Misinformation

- Information gaps remain a key issue, resulting at times to spread of misinformation on procedures and the current context.
- Refugees are approaching partners asking for clarification on Eid related arrangements. For the time being no arrangements were announced by PMM.
- Through presence at the Cilvegözü border gate, it is observed that the vast majority of individuals arriving at Cilvegözü lack sufficient information about the return process. In male headed households, male members have the decision-making power regarding return or stay and have greater access to information. However, they primarily obtain this information from social media platforms such as TikTok. This results in delay in procedures at the border, including for women and children, due to which at times individuals require accommodation and/or transportation support (return to city center). Additionally, refugees who sell their belongings and vacate their homes in preparation for return often find themselves unable to go back to their provinces of residence, leading them to being exposed to protection risks.
- There is an increased risk of irregular crossing by individuals opting to return but facing barriers due to unresolved administrative and/or legal issues (including due to lack of information on requirements and procedures), e.g. absence of letter of parental consent (muvafakatname).
- Importance of reaching returnees in their province of registration/residence before they travel to border areas was emphasized as a measure to mitigate risks related to the lack of information on return requirements and procedures, particularly for those with incomplete documentation or restriction codes (tahdit kodu). These individuals should be counselled to approach PDMMs in their province of registration prior to travelling to border provinces.
- Some individuals who intended to return were unable to do so due to prolonged legal procedures. A significant lack of information was noted regarding permitted entry and exit processes, including reactivation of deactivated IDs in which there is limited clarity on how this can be done.
- UNICEF reported that family information booklets on voluntary return were prepared and will be distributed as part of ongoing coordination with PMM. It was also noted that training on this topic will be provided.
- To address information gaps (at the community and service provider levels) in real time and in between National PWG meetings, partners are encouraged to regularly submit questions through the [3RP Inter-Agency Question Log on Returns](#).
- If there are certain frequently asked questions, it would be beneficial to develop information materials accessible to all NGOs or to create a dedicated section on the UNHCR Help Page addressing common legal issues.

Persons with Specific Needs and Persons with Disabilities



- Focus group discussions conducted by UNFPA revealed that key refugee groups are not considering to return due to a variety of factors including lack of protective policies for LGBTI and targeted safety/security risks in Syria. Key points from the FGDs are summarized below:
 - Some persons with specific needs live with their families. They are reporting challenges in participating in decision-making processes as their families wish to return while they do not. This situation increases the need for services in Türkiye including protection, psychosocial support, and legal counseling.
 - Some LGBTI individuals are in the process of resettlement to a third country and are therefore more interested in receiving information on resettlement rather than returns.
 - Similarly, protection risks have increased due to anti-gender and anti-refugee discourse, impacting social cohesion in Türkiye.
 - Deep poverty and the lack of protection mechanisms in Türkiye highlight not only the need for information, but also critical needs in legal protection and MHPSS.
- Persons with disabilities and older persons require specialized services and specific consideration at border crossing points. The need for accessible toilets and the establishment of designated spaces particularly for individuals waiting with children with disabilities was recommended. It was further noted that questions related to disability should be included in the observation form used at border gates.
 - **Action Point:** 3RP National Protection Sector Coordinator will reach out to the Ageing and Disability Inclusion Task Team (ADITT) to discuss the inclusion of disability-related questions in the observation form.
- Considering information needs may also vary across specific needs groups, next National PWG meeting with a return agenda will also include a session on communication with communities vis a vis returns.

Mine and Unexploded Ordnance Risk

- UNICEF announced its plans to organize ToTs on mine and unexploded ordnance risk education. Announcements will be shared as more information becomes available on this issue.
- Save the Children is in contact with their Syria office as they plan mine risk education activities, with a focus on a more [child-friendly programmatic approach](#).
 - **Action Point:** 3RP National Protection Sector Coordinator asked partners planning activities and interventions related to mine and unexploded ordnance risk education to reach out for coordination purposes.

Child Protection:

- Recent research on child protection monitoring specific to Hatay highlights that there is very limited communication with children regarding returns and that caregivers face challenges in discussing the topic in a child friendly manner.
- There's a continued need for psychosocial support, psychological first aid, and child protection case management activities in both border provinces and across Türkiye. Information needs related to child protection also continue to be identified through legal awareness raising sessions.
- Single parents face difficulties when attempting to take their children abroad without legal documentation, often being forced to leave their children with other family members in Türkiye. It was noted that this situation could lead to an increase in the number of children who, over time, become separated from their families and continue to live without registration and documentation. There is a need to inquire into this issue through child protection partners.
- Visibility of child marriages has increased alongside the rise in voluntary returns, and returns may further contribute to this trend. For instance, cases where parents return without consent and leave their children with relatives have been reported as a factor that may heighten the risk. In



this context, partners are encouraged to continue closely monitoring the situation.

Ongoing Discussions Between UNHCR Türkiye and Syria Inter-Agency Coordination Units – Key Highlights

- UNHCR Türkiye Inter-Agency Coordination Unit is now in regular contact with the UNHCR Syria Inter-Agency Coordination Unit and relevant UNHCR colleagues.
 - UNHCR Syria Inter-Sector Coordinator and key colleagues will join Türkiye’s NPWG meetings on returns to exchange updates, explore collaboration, and stay informed on protection-related developments in both countries. Participation details are to be confirmed.
 - Syria colleagues highlighted that the Syria is Home platform is a useful resource to shape information dissemination/counseling to intended returnees in Türkiye. The platform currently includes a FAQ section and is accessible through this [link](#).
 - Partners can inform returnees that UNHCR staff (wearing blue vests) are present at border gates on the Syria side to provide information and make referrals to available services.
 - Discussions are ongoing with UNMAS (Mine Action Service) regarding mine action programming in Syria, subject to funding. Initiatives aimed at raising awareness among returnees on risks and mitigation measures are underway. Mine risk education sessions will be delivered across community centers in Syria, and selected staff will undergo ToT to support implementation.
 - An agreement was made to regularly share FAQs and information from Türkiye with Syria-based colleagues to support evidence-based planning. Partners in Türkiye are encouraged to use the 3RP Inter-Agency Question Log on Returns and contribute to data collection efforts such as the Inter-Agency Community Pulse Survey.

Agenda Item #3: 3RP 2024 Protection Sector Year-End M&E Review

- Information Management team presented key findings from the year-end M&E review, including inconsistencies and underreporting for the 3RP Protection Sector and Accountability to Affected Populations/Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse indicators. The presentation also covered 2024 progress, target achievements, geographical coverage and a comparison with 2023. During the meeting, 3RP NPWG Coordinator collected partner feedback on underreporting. Discussion outcomes will be shared with donors and incorporated into the 3RP M&E report. (Slides 6 – 17)
- Protection sector partners are encouraged to refer to the Indicator Guidance Note ([English](#) and [Turkish](#)) for detailed information on reporting related issues and to contact the 3RP NPWG with any further questions.
- The main challenges and key outcomes of the discussion are outlined below.

Social Cohesion

- The events in Kayseri in 2024 impacted the participation of both the host community and refugees in social cohesion activities, as well as the motivation of institutions to engage in such initiatives. These effects could continue in 2025 as well.
- Information dissemination, awareness raising and social cohesion activities targeting Turkish citizens should include information on the reality in Syria, including in relation to the security situation, access to fundamental rights and services, and infrastructure. This can help mitigate risks of tension related to the return context.
- There is a risk of social tension between those who remained in Syria throughout the conflict and those who left but are returning. Particularly children born in Türkiye or individuals who have obtained dual citizenship may be at additional risk of exposure to such tension. In this context partners highlight the importance of advocacy around citizenship in Türkiye.

Legal Assistance and Counseling



- As identified in the latest Round of the Inter-Agency Protection Needs Analysis, the need for legal assistance remains high (and is increasing over time), with refugees primarily seeking assistance from I/NGOs. These two factors may explain the relative success in achieving targets and should be considering in target setting for 2026.
- Partners report the majority of issues refugees require legal assistance include access to registration, appeals against negative administrative decisions, representation trusteeship (temsil kayımlığı), custody, marriage, and divorce.
- The sector anticipates an increase in need for legal assistance in 2025 and beyond, considering the ongoing return context.
- Another development in legal assistance is the increasing number of requests for advice on alternative options that could be pursued in the event of a potential change in the Temporary Protection Regime. Requests related to citizenship are also frequently received.
- Numerous inquiries have been reported by NGOs regarding permitted exits and entries, indicating that an information gap/need still persists in this area.

Persons with Specific Needs

- Target for indicator 2.1.2 should reflect the total number of persons with specific needs/vulnerabilities assessed and identified with protection needs. Target for 2.1.3 should reflect the total number of referrals (should not just reflect the number of persons referred) for persons reported under 2.1.2 target. Therefore, reporting under indicator 2.1.3 is expected to be at least equal or ideally higher than under 2.1.2, as persons with specific needs may require multiple referrals. Additionally, reporting partners should include both internal and external referrals to other organizations under indicator 2.1.3.
- While their internal reporting aligns with the 3RP reporting structure, partners noted that donor organizations and the 3RP reporting system operate differently. It was also conveyed that the reporting system might be misinterpreted by field teams and that more detailed work is needed to clarify the exact definition of referrals.

Trainings/Technical Capacity Development

- The coordination team identified a misunderstanding among partners with regards to the differences in scope between indicators 1.1.1. (general trainings on international protection) and 2.6.1. (trainings on service delivery to PSN). If the training contents are mainly related to international protection, they should be reported only under indicator 1.1.1 (general trainings on international protection). If the training materials are mainly related to service delivery to persons with specific needs, they should be reported under indicator 2.6.1 (trainings on service delivery to persons with specific needs).

Institutional Support

- **Action Point:** There may be a misunderstanding in the reporting of indicators 2.6.2 and 2.6.3. Typically, only the number of institutions supported should be reported for both indicators. 3RP Protection Sector Coordinator will follow up with reporting partners to clarify whether there is any confusion regarding the reporting process.

Accountability to Affected Populations / Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

- It was stated that although reporting is adequate, considering that an average of two million people has been reached through the protection sector with information dissemination and awareness raising efforts, there is potential to expand information dissemination within the scope of PSEA. Additionally, **common materials are available for PSEA related information.**

Agenda Item #4: AoB & Closure

- Given the evolving context and emerging needs, certain agenda items could not be covered in this meeting, including the overview of appeals for the 3RP 2025 Protection Sector (including the return addendum) and prioritization of activities for the National Protection Working Group in 2025. A survey will be sent to partners to determine whether these pending items should be



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Türkiye

presented at a future meeting or if written feedback should be collected via email. Based on the survey results, the pending agenda items will be addressed at the ad hoc 3RP National Protection Working Group meeting scheduled for April.

- The findings of a recent UNHCR survey on communication with communities will be presented during the ad hoc National PWG meeting in April.
- Ad hoc meetings can be organized in a more frequent manner based on request by partners or identified need.