

## Education Working Group - South

Meeting Notes			
<b>Name</b>	EDU WG	<b>Meeting Date</b>	18 September 2013
<b>Meeting Location</b>	UNHCR, South office	<b>Meeting Time</b>	12:00
<b>Chair person</b>	Heba Dabliz	<b>Meeting Duration</b>	2 hrs
<b>Minutes Prepared by</b>	Heba Dabliz		
<b>Purpose of Meeting</b>	Education Working Group in the South		

### List of participants

ALPHA, AVSI, Amel, Caritas, Intersos, MEHE Sidon, MEHE Nabatyeh, NRC, Nabil Badran, UNHCR, Shield,

### Summary of discussions and action points

1. **Overview of educational challenges in the South:** Partners presented challenges faced by their counterparts, beneficiaries in the South. Main topics discussed tackled issues pertaining to the back to school registration (shift 1, 2), information campaign, second shift (management of schools), school list shortlisted for second shift, children with disability and how they could integrate in the official school system. Practically, all raised issues highlighted the major challenges faced in the field in the objective of finding solutions and best practices in the Education sector facilitating registration, enrollment in schools for children and coordination among designated partners and MEHE as well as all stakeholders in the field of education.

### Challenges faced by partners are identified below as follow :

1. In the South, school directors are still reluctant to register Syrian refugees and allow them to enroll in schools. Priority is still given to Syrian refugees who are paying. The ones with no financial capacity to pay are being registered on a waiting list. When approached by our partners on what is the best approach to tackle this issue, it is only feasible to deal with the situation on a local level in full support with MEHE focal points. Meaning, given that MEHE won't issue an official circulaire stating the process of registration and the payment mode, the delegated NGO working in the area should enter into an agreement with the school and pay the amount of money for the children registered on paper (waiting list) and yet not given the green light to attend school due to financial restrictions. To speed up the process and not delay the child school attendance, leverage should be reached with MEHE focal point on the field to assure school principles in the area that the funding is secure and that they will be funded for the registered children.

**Generally, generally priority is given to Lebanese, then to Syrians residing in Lebanon since a long time, going down to Syrians registered in the school from the previous academic year. Mainly children on the waiting list are new comers to the school.**

2. Regarding families who already paid and are making a query about reimbursement, no verdict has been settled regarding this matter. Proposed solution is to have the partner prepare a database registering those cases. Each case will be studied one on one. Priorities for reimbursement will be given to the most vulnerable families.

3. Transportation. Pertaining to transportation, it was explained to partners that in general priority under the first shift is given to Syrian refugees residing within 3 km. In addition, to vulnerability component. Practically, 30% of children are eligible for transportation if they meet the criterias.

4. 2nd shift: Some school directors are still not comprehensive of the second shift concept and still confusing between 2nd shift informal education (ALP) and second shift formal education.

**Suggested solution:** a briefing by partners case by case in matters where this unclarity occurs.

5. Many school directors have not received any formal information on the agreement with MEHE.

## **2. Information Campaign (SMS):**

Participants brainstormed ideas on the information campaign (SMS)

Preferably, the information campaign should have a holistic approach guiding refugees by school and area and not by agency/partner.

Given that registration to public schools has become lately a confusing process to families, therefore utilizing the sms tool to propagate information outlining a few things such as: a) process of registration for the first shift and the types of entitlements which they are endorsed towards them from the partner under education support.

## **3. Second Shift-Management of schools**

second shift management of schools has been raised and discussed. Hence, it has been reflected in mutually among MEHE focal points in the South that school directors operating in the first shift should delegate by ad hoc another school director under the second shift . Mode of payment to the teachers will be allotted to the school director through the partner. As to management of the school under the second shift will be under the supervision of the designated partner in charge of the designated school running second shift programme.

## **4. Schools designated for 2<sup>nd</sup> shift:**

No final approval has been granted for school premises eligible to be used as a second shift. Designated partners in the South (Amel and Caritas) as well as MEHE focal points in Nabatyeh and Sidon shortlisted a number of schools to host the second shift programme. In Sidon in particular, 2-3 private schools premises (vacant) will operate from 8:00 AM-2:00 PM as second shift given that the school premises are vacant. Adding to the 2-3 schools, a nominated list of identified schools for Saida once approved will activate the 2<sup>nd</sup> shift programme.

5. **Children with disability:** The topic of children with disability and the means of integrating them was raised by one of the partner: Nabil Badran center who hosts Lebanese, Syrians and Palestinian refugees. They raised the issue of supporting children with disability and mainly the Syrian refugees who are unable to cover the cost of tuition fees (\$ 600-800).

#### Education Working Group Tyre Summary of discussions and action points

1.	<b>Issue:</b> First shift registration procedure and payment mode
1.1	<b>Recommendations and agreed upon steps</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School director register students data on waiting list</li> <li>• 2 copies of the School list is sent on a weekly basis to the MEHE focal point (Ms. Soumaya for Saida and Mr. Mahdi for Nabatieh).</li> <li>• MEHE focal point verify the list and disclose its content to UN, concerned partners in the field (caritas, Amel) during weekly meetings where the list is handed over to partners in order for them to link with school principle directly on payment mode bound to take place biweekly.</li> <li>• <b>School principle- delegated NGO collaboration on payment:</b> It takes place as follow:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) School issues invoice upon registration of each child and keeps it in its files with child record.</li> <li>b) Upon payment of NGO to the school through its IBAN # in accordance to number of children registered, school issues a receipt to the partner.</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <b>NGO-Parents collaboration on payment ( those who already paid)</b></li> <li>• No final decision was taken on this matter. However, it has been agreed somehow that NGO's in charge( caritas and Amel) will study the cases upon most vulnerable cases.</li> <li>• <b>On 31th of October</b> upon closure of registration for the first shift, a final list of registered children is compiled by the school principle, sent to MEHE focal point and revised in parallel by the delegated NGO representative and MEHE. As to the financial matters, a final and revised audit is conducted by the NGO focal point to complete the registration process of the 1st shift and ensure budget control.</li> </ul>
2.	<b>Issue:</b> Second shift process on schools preselection
2.1	<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Saida, 4 schools proposed by MEHE focal point; in addition to 2 additional schools ( private schools vacant buildings) to host about 500 child as first shift, yet classified as second shift.</li> <li>• Nabatieh MEHE focal point will select final list of eligible schools eligible as second shift by Friday September 20</li> <li>• Amel and Caritas submitted their final list of second shift ( pre selection)</li> </ul>
3	<b>Issue:</b> Distribution of bags, uniforms, school kits

3.1	<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Distribution will take place through delegated NGO. Mechanism of distribution to be communicated at a different session.</i></li> </ul>
4.	<p><b>Teachers and management of school under 2nd shift</b></p>
4.1	<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School teachers to be selected through MEHE focal point</li> <li>• School principle running the second shift to be suggested by MEHE focal point. He is to assign a deputy in the second shift for convenience matter</li> <li>• Teachers contract is issued by MEHE. Payment mode to the teachers is done by the school principle. The NGO will then reimburse the school principle accordingly.</li> </ul>
	<p>Next meeting TBC</p>