Minutes of National Basic Assistance Working Group Meeting Beirut, 16 March 2018

Meeting Location	UNHCR, S&K building, B1 Conference Room	Meeting Time	11:30 A.M.
Chair persons	Khalil Dagher (UNHCR) Hadi Haddad (MoSA)	Meeting Duration	2 Hrs.
Minutes by	Hiba Taha		
18 Represented Agencies	ANERA, Chinese Embassy, CLMC, DRC, HEKS/EPER, ICRC, MoSA, NPTP, NRC, OXFAM, RI, SCI, Solidar Suisse, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, World Bank		
Agenda	1. Sector Updates: a) Targeting Assistance b) Winter Assistance 2. Graduation Approach Pilot, Lebanon's NPTP-G: Presentation by the World Bank 3. Interagency Referrals Tracker: Basic Assistance Sector Summary 4. Coordination Review – Partners Survey: Basic Assistance Sector Findings 5. Restructuring of the Basic Assistance Sector Core Group		

1. Sector Updates:

a) Targeting Assistance

69,111 vulnerable households received MPC in February 2018 (RAIS, AI):

- o 58,941 SYR HHs
- o 9,655 PRS HHs
- o 515 LEB HHs
- o 20,075 SYR HHs (children focused cash grant – UNICEF)
- o US$ 12,374,782 injected in the local economy in forms of direct cash assistance.

b) Winter Assistance 2017/2018

192,892 HHs reached with Basic Assistance (BA) during the 2017/2018 winter support plan (end of Feb);

- o 181,892 HHs reached with cash for winter:
    - o 171,504 SYR HHs / US$ 75-147 (3-5 months)
    - o 9,618 PAL HHs / US$ 75 (1-3 months)
    - o 770 LEB HHs US$ 147 (5 months)
- o 11,000 HHs reached with core relief items (CRIs).
- o The low reach for vulnerable Lebanese this year is due to lower funding, particularly since partners received mostly earmarked funding.
- o Partners who did not report achievements on RAIS / AI are urged to do so; a summary dashboard is expected to be finalized by mid-April documenting all Basic Assistance related interventions.

2. Graduation Approach Pilot, Lebanon's NPTP-G: Presentation by the World Bank (presentation attached)

- o The CGAP/ Ford Foundation Graduation Program, launched in 2006, aims at helping participants graduate to a sustainable livelihood;

- The model has four main components tackling the multiple aspects of poverty: Safety Nets, Livelihoods, Financial Services and Coaching;
- The model has three implementing partners: the Livelihoods Provider, the Financial Service Provider and the Healthcare or other Service Provider;
- The model has ten pilots in eight different countries;
- Once people graduate from the program, they are no longer eligible for social programs, which makes them reluctant to join. However, they can reenter the program if they fall back on meeting certain indicators after graduation;
- The NPTP-Graduation pilot is based on the CGAP/ Ford Foundation graduation approach with slight modifications based on the country context;
- The NPTP-G will:
  - target women;
  - benefit 675 HHs among the poorest 10,000 HHs identified by NPTP; and
  - include an M&E system, which consists of a Client Monitoring System along with a robust impact evaluation.
- The program could be tailored to job creation and wage employment after understanding the demand side of the job market, later in the future. However, it relies mainly on self-employment at least for now;
- The program could potentially be extended to include Sanitation and Shelter, among other needs, under the consumption support. The model could evolve down the road based on the results;
- Post-graduation sustainability lasts for 54-60 months, based on market analysis in countries like India and Pakistan;
- A random sample of 675 HHs will be chosen and they will have the choice to opt out of the program. They can also choose from the list of assets presented to them;
- The World Bank is seeking to identify partners and make the program operational by summer 2018; it will last 12 months after that;
- The program is a costly investment: the high average is US$ 400 to US$ 3,000 for the package of services excluding the consumption support for a period of 18 to 24 months.
- Food assistance is the base component of the program as the poorest 10,000 HHs already receive it. This assistance floor is considered income support for the sample population involved in the program.
- The World Bank (WB) defines Graduation as a success in meeting certain indicators;
- The level of savings required depends on the country's savings context. Toward the end of the program, participants graduate once they have enough savings as to not sell their assets;
- The whole idea behind the project is self-employment, financial inclusion and literacy. Eventually it is a matter of inducing participants to be more productive thus empowered on the long run;
- The BA sector could greatly benefit from the ongoing implementation of the CGAP/ Ford Foundation Graduation Program when it comes to the contextualization of such approaches. Under the LCRP, this program is considered an intersectoral window combining efforts from the Livelihoods, Protection, Food Security and Basic Assistance Sectors. This collaboration is an area to be further explored in 2018.

3. Interagency Referrals Tracker: Basic Assistance Sector Summary
- The newly developed Inter-Agency Referral Mechanism aims at standardizing the Inter-Agency Referral Form and setting minimum standards and procedures for individual case referrals;

- o Effective referral pathways are critical to ensure an adequate and holistic response that would strengthen accountability vis-a-vis the people being assisted;
- o Scope of the system:
    - o It covers any form of referral involving a request for action from one service provider to another;
    - o It does not track the status of individual referrals, the system only provides an aggregated analysis of referrals made from the Protection Sector to other sectors and where they stand in terms of feedback;
    - o It does not provide information on specific services provided to an individual;
- o The effective communication channels between the individual, the referring agency and the receiving agency increase accountability by confirming that the referral has been made:
    - o The Receiving Agency acknowledges the receipt of referrals and provides feedback to the Referring Agency within 14 days in normal cases, and 48 hours in urgent cases;
    - o The Referring Agency documents the feedback by date and type and records the referral tracking in the AI database on a quarterly basis;
- o Effective referral pathways ensure that there is accountability and that the person seeking assistance does not get lost eventually;
- o Referrals are updated every three months. However, the lifecycle of the referral is unknown, it can take longer;
- o The Receiving Agency and the Referring Agency communicate by phone or email;
- o A distinction needs to be drawn between served/ non-served and eligible/ non-eligible: an eligible person can be served or non-served whereas a non-eligible person cannot be served;

4. Coordination Review – Partners Survey: Basic Assistance Sector Findings
    - o 19 respondents completed the BAWG questionnaire;
    - o The majority of respondents believe that the BAWG is effective in achieving its objectives. It scored above average compared to other sectors on most indicators;
    - o The BA sector scored less than the average on preparedness and contingency planning and protection mainstreaming; there is more focus on procedures rather than the individual-based human element;
    - o The majority of respondents do not know if the Sector is having cross-sectoral discussions. This could be explained by the fact that only members of the Core Group are aware of such discussions; intersectoral discussions and protection mainstreaming to become regular agenda items in working group meetings;
    - o Suggested topics for national working group meetings include contingency planning, the Graduation approach and the funding challenges facing the BA sector (donor approaches to funding);
    - o It has been suggested to reflect more on niche projects being implemented under the Sector by different member organizations to reflect on diversity and specialization.

5. Election of the Basic Assistance Sector Core Group
    - The Core Group sets policies and adopts practices, which makes it the final decision maker, whereas the Working Group discusses critical issues and provides consultations.
    - The Basic Assistance Sector will have an election with composition of the Core Group remaining the same with some enhancements to the roles and responsibilities.

2015 Core Group Structure**	Suggested 2018 Core Group Structure**
3 Chairs (Gov, UN, INGO) 2 Technical Support (Cash + NFIs) 1 Gov / NPTP 5 UN 4 NGOs: 3 INGOs + 1 National	3 Chairs (Gov, UN, INGO*) 1 Gov / NPTP 4 UN 4 NGOS: 2 INGOs + 2 National

*MOSA (Gov), UNHCR (UN), and INGO co-chair (different from the two INGO members)

**9 members have voting powers: 1 Gov Chair + 4 UN agencies + 4 NGOS

- The three co-chairs (GoI, UN, INGO) have similar tasks.
- There are currently five openings for the membership of the BA Sector Core Group: two INGO representatives, two NNGO representatives and a co-chair.
  - ➢ 2 INGO seats: ACTED, Save the Children, ACF, RI expressed interested in the INGO representation ➔ elections to take place;
  - ➢ Caritas and the Lebanese Red Cross are interested in the NNGO representation ➔ no elections needed;
  - ➢ RI and ACF are interested in the co-chair position ➔ elections to take place;
- The election is conducted through a circulated email (containing a link) under ONE agency ONE Vote rule for both the co-chair and the regular seat;
- Elections for the co-chair position to take place first;
- Procedures to be circulated separately.