#### MAQ Coordination Meeting

***Minutes of meeting***

Date: 27.02.2018

Place: Al Qaa Municipality

Participants: Mayor of Al Qaa, IRC, UNICEF, GVC, TDH-Italy, UNHCR, caritas, CLAC Qaa, ECHO, IRC, NRC, MSA

***Updates***

* The municipality is very thankful for the coordination meeting being held and believes it has improved coordination and because of the better coordination better work has been implemented in the field by both local and international NGOs. The municipality hopes that the security situation remains stable and heads towards the better and more projects are to be implemented in hopes of filling the gaps and addressing the needs of both the refugee community and the host community.
* The mayor states that the GSO checkpoint has moved further north and hence the freedom of movement of refugees has improved significantly of which at the moment it is seen as a normal passage in between Al Qaa and MAQ.
* Medair has initiated the distribution of shelter kits in December, and is planning to finalize the distribution end of January to those families who were not present or did not receive a shelter kit. The distribution is done on needs basis following a visual assessment in informal settlements. Post distribution monitoring will be held to assess the quality, distribution process, kit usage, need… The post distribution monitoring usually takes place in the quarter following the distribution.
* The mayor restates that these materials and kits are being stored and sold as not everyone are in need of these items and the timber provided could be utilized for illegal construction which he does not support. He also stresses the importance of transparency especially since the Lebanese feel that the Syrians are receiving a lot of assistance. The mayor was wondering whether shelter agency could consider minor rehabilitation works for vulnerable Lebanese houses in Al Qaa.
* UNHCR is coordinating with the GSO to see if any support is required in terms of assistance with elderly, persons with specific needs, etc... As the mayor is stating that prefabs, waiting areas, rub hall and toilets may be needed. The mayor is requesting the support of UNHCR. UNHCR protection unit held a meeting in January with major Nasrallah in regards to the border and the talking points included institutional support at the borders, as UNHCR has a presence in Masnaa border and planning to have same presence in MAQ. UNHCR is planning to provide a latrine as well as facilitation for people with specific needs. Planning to develop same kind of project that is in Masnaa in Al Qaa is on-going. It was agreed with one landlord on the permanent presence of UNHCR office. Mayor urged the recruitment of local residents for minor jobs by UNHCR if an office is set to be opened and UNHCR pointed out that local experience and professionalism are two important factors in any recruitment process. Most importantly, the agency has a clear policy in recruitment which is being applied in a transparent manner.
* The municipality is coordinating with officials for the border to be a first transit point like Masnaa especially that this will assist when the reconstruction is ongoing in Syria and engineers present there will need a place to visit for leisure. As there is a land facing the GSO that can be utilized as a parking lot for those interested in taking advantage of the transit to conduct transit of goods and services. He is also supporting to do a mall or a market perhaps to better enhance the economy and create job opportunities for the Syrian refugees and the residents of Al Qaa and MAQ, in hopes that the families residing in Beirut would reconsider relocating back to the area. Many projects are planned to be implemented whether the cold room by UNDP, Irrigation projects with EU, GVC and other projects with other NGOs... LAF has a center which was facing ISIS, it is planned to turn this into a military based museum to encourage tourism, there are also some historical ruins in MAQ and the municipality will require to clean and prepare them, the Ministry of tourism Is not very helpful and the municipality doesn’t have the means and hence encourages the projects of the agencies to be redirected into that. Religious tourism is also an option. The infrastructure is very important for that aspect. Mayor hopes for the support especially with respective ministries as there is an economic and social deterioration in the area.
* More than 20 staff from different protection related agencies present in the field met along with the mayor and agreed that a workshop is to be held and that the basis of tackling child protection is not sufficient. This was proposed to UNICEF as it should include targeting poverty, pollution and most importantly education.
* TDH-Italy is the only protection agency operating in MAQ and Al Qaa at the moment. The mayor still stresses the importance of following up on discussions and place efforts to deliver change. A focus group discussion was held with both Lebanese and Syrian refugees and the outcome shows that the Lebanese students have sort of a racist attitude towards Syrian students which is not acceptable and hence mayor met with the nuns to provide a psychologist to follow up with the children and integrate recreational activities. Last week, a 7 year old boy came panicked to the school starting that a woman wants to slaughter him and ISIS will bomb him. The child has no phone monitoring on and apparently has a game similar to “blue whale” on his phone called Mariam game that plays on the psychological aspect and could lead to suicide. Mayor stresses the importance of support through securing basic services and awareness raising campaigns in this aspect to avoid severe tensions.
* Municipality is working with UNDP to create a waste water treatment plant although a network is much more needed; however, the plant is less costly. The mayor stresses the need for dislodging trucks to dispose the wastes in a remote area to avoid an environmental disaster. The mayor also urges UNICEF to follow up on the dislodging and waste water challenge especially that the septic tanks are spilling and would be grateful to discuss a project aimed for recycling.
* Medair is cooperating with MoSA to support seven social development centres to develop them to be utilized as a public health centres. At the moment Al Qaa is not included; however, this will be flagged for future consideration.
* GVC conducted a study on drinkable water. It was planned that a well would be organized however it is not seen as highly effective and the mayor stresses the need to establish additional wells, networks and perhaps a pump for each household that could work on solar panels to encourage irrigation and decrease usage of water.
* On basic assistance, a follow up on what was mentioned during the last meeting in January, additional funds were secured for a top up on our winter assistance, an extra two months were covered for families with their common card including top up for MCAP beneficiaries (three months one off of $225). UNHCR is planning to conduct the distribution of Medco Cards to 300 vulnerable Lebanese households on the following Monday.
* On a protection a strategic point with regards to registration of late birth was raised as a decree was issued and approved by council of ministries to facilitate the birth registration as to limit it to administrative processes rather than judicial. UNHCR is still following up on the new arrival movement and will conduct another round of counselling appointments if deemed needed.
* In regards to IRC, the protection team is fully effective and proactive providing legal assistance, protection monitoring (child and women empowerment). An assessment was also conducted under child protection (CP) in order to assess which activities to be implemented and this was coordinated with other child protection (CP) actors in the area. The results will be shared with the municipality. NRC is conducting outreach activities regularly in regards to legal services and protection monitoring. TDH- Italy is also conducting community based activities such as focus group discussions, focus psychosocial support and case management to both Lebanese and Syrian households.

***Action points***

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| Action | Who |
| Monitor shelter material being distributed and discuss possibility of rehabilitation for houses of vulnerable Lebanese. | Medair |
| Discuss possibility of providing latrines, benches, and rub halls at the GSO. | Shelter/Protection/municipality |
| Provide information as to whether the health unit will have a presence on the border for vaccination purposes. | UNICEF/UNHCR(health) |
| Provide finding of the child protection (CP) study to the municipality. | IRC |
| Provide number of refugees receiving food assistance in Qaa and MAQ and a list of contracted shops. | WFP |
| Wash issues to be addressed | UNICEF |