



Basic Needs Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Time&Date:	16 April 2020, Ankara Virtual Meeting
Chaired by:	Ahmet Ünver (UNHCR) and Hiba Hanano (WFP)
Participants:	Ali Muhtaroglu (ASAM), Anastasiya Stelmakh (ASAM), Arzum Karasu (WFP), Chris Bender (UNHCR), Berivan Erbil (UNICEF), Bulent Ozturk (TRC), Burak Anadolu (StC), Burak Cinar (ECHO), Candost Aydin (GIZ), Orcun Celik (UNHCR), Ceylan Tunca (UNFPA), Derya Cengiz (Olive Branch Organization), Dilara Turker (IGAM), Dragan Markovic (UNICEF), Eda Kilinc (WATAN), Elif Eser Mooty (UNHCR), Esin Koc (UNHCR) Elif Ozkaya Aydin (US/BPRM), Hazal Aydis (GOAL), Gokce Saraydin (UNHCR), Gozde Binguler (), Gozde Gulgun (WFP), Hanifi Kinaci (TRC), Hayriye Kara (Kaos GL), Hakki Ersoy (UNICEF), Hulya Barbaros (IFRC), Ivan Lwanga (IOM), Jonathan Brass (IFRC), Hazal Karakasoglu (UNHCR), Sevgi Kelly (UNHCR), Livio Mercurio (UNHCR), Lubna Siddique (FAO), Mazen Aboulhosn (IOM), Mohanad Ameen (IOM), Ozan Sonmez (Doctors Worldwide), Ozgur Koc (UN Women), Lara Ozugergin (UNHCR), Piril Ercoban (Multeci-Der), Rumeysa Bozdemir (IGAM), Turker Saliji (Turkish Refugee Council), Sara Asadifar (UNHCR), Ozgur Savascioglu (UNHCR), Seda Baran (UNICEF), Sinem Kuz (GIZ), Eylul Basak Tuncel (UNHCR), Ismet Yasak (UNHCR)
Agenda:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Welcome & Introductions (5 min) 2. Discuss basic needs sector in COVID-19 situation (50 min): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sector analysis & prioritization (Sector Coordinators, 10 min) b. Identified needs & reprogramming (All participants, 30 min) c. Online tracking tool for needs & request (Sector Coordinator, 10 min) 3. Present guidance for distribution in crisis situation. (Sector Coordinator, 15 min) 4. AOB <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Brief presentation of the basic needs assistance provided at the western border (UNHCR, 5 min)

DISCUSSION

Reviewing the agenda

The meeting agenda was introduced, reviewed and accepted without changes.

Reviewing action points from the previous meeting

- UNHCR Data Portal Interactive Basic Needs Dashboard be shared with members - Done ✓
- CBI TWG Mapping Survey be shared with members - Done ✓



Action Points

1. Partners check the Services Advisor and immediately inform sector coordinators/IM if their services or other stakeholders' services are missing
2. Partners inform sector coordinators to share details of their available services, and program updates
3. Partners share information on available support mechanisms among refugees, especially municipal services available
4. Partners share technical/coordination needs in reprogramming with sector coordinators
5. Partners considering to provide CBI overview the [online CBI Programs in Turkey Dashboard](#)
6. Partners ensure their guidance materials are uploaded to UNHCR Data Portal
7. NGO partners share focal points for "Online Tracking Tool for Requests & Needs in COVID-19 Situation" with sector coordinators

Discuss Basic Needs Sector in COVID-19 Situation

A) Sector Analysis & Prioritization

- Refugee and host communities affected, mainly in terms of health and economics, but the impact is not homogeneous. Households with daily wages and without savings have been impacted the most. There is an increasing difficulty to access certain goods such as hygiene and sanitary items. services and market Over-demand on certain services has impacted service providers.
- CBI support and food assistance in TACs continue. Hygiene kits and sanitary items distributions have increased. Shelter rehabilitation and similar activities are limited.
- Major challenge for partners is outreach, assessing new cases and providing support. For refugees the major challenge is decrease in livelihoods opportunities and access to services.
- An ad-hoc appeal for COVID-19 has been shared with partners. The deadline is very tight and many thanks for your quick responses. The priorities are:
 - One off cash support – combined with in-kind support for even more vulnerable households.
 - Multi-Purpose Cash should continue
 - Distribution of hygiene kits and sanitary items
 - Food assistance and NFI support for the most vulnerable households remains needed
 - Needs by municipalities and other local institutions continue.
- Once the appeal is compiled, further indicators to meet the needs might be established.will be visible.
- There is need to reprioritize basic needs sector in the current context. There is high demand for support to cover the most immediate needs through CBI, and for highly vulnerable households through NFIs. Although partners observations bring out that hygiene kits and PPEs. It is difficult to access some hygiene items and PPEs, due to economic situation refugee households might risk deprioritizing these; providing in-kind support is needed.
- Partners highlight that appealing for PPEs provision is challenging due to the centralization of their production and distribution, partners should ensure supply and procurement conditions before appealing. Other sanitary and hygiene items can be provided relatively easy.



- The needs of the vulnerable local communities are increasing as well due to the socio-economic impact. Their inclusion can be meaningful especially for the NFI modalities.
- The priority is to identify needs and make sure our work is not duplicated and that it benefits the highest number of refugees. There will be longer-term impacts and basic needs sector will be working with livelihoods and protection sectors to address these longer-term consequences.
- B) Identified Needs & Reprogramming**
- Coordinators shared the five major questions and discussions with partners were focused on only one of these: What are the assessed needs by partners? Coordinators encouraged partners not to limit discussions around these questions to the meetings.
- ESN and top-up update shared by TRC/IFRC:
 - ESN has been handed over to IFRC from WFP as of April 1st.
 - In order to respond to emerging needs, various options have been explored –reducing various cycles of the ESN to accommodate the additional needs or asking for further funding.
 - IFRC have been in touch with MoFLSS which has already put in place a 1000 TL one-off assistance for vulnerable Turkish households over a two2-month period and MoFLSS asked if IFRC could provide a similar support to refugee community.
 - The expectation is that next month (May), when the normal top-ups are taking place, IFRC would be rounding these top-ups to match the to reach 1000 TL per family, this would suggest an increase of 28 million Euros in funding.
 - This is top-up is still being negotiated and is not finalized, information will be shared with the sector partners once available.
- UNHCR and one-off cash assistance:
 - UNHCR is working together with DGMM on a one-off cash assistance scheme. In this process UNHCR collaborates with MoFLSS (through DGMM) to avoid duplication with other assistances in place. The proposal is to support the most vulnerable households with 1000 TL, in line with the assistance announced by MoFLSS for local community households.
 - UNHCR is planning to assist 20 thousand households at the initial phase. The discussions around beneficiaries, intake criteria and referrals are ongoing with DGMM. Program is at its initial stage, and parameters need to be set and formalized by DGMM before UNHCR can share further information externally.
 - Modality will be one-off and it is expected that needs will be beyond reached households, as a natural consequence of funding availabilities. The risk of raising expectations is very high, therefore communication of the program needs to be handled carefully.
 - The criteria is still under discussion and hasn't been finalized. The program will aim to target those with the highest vulnerability and work towards leaving no one behind.
 - For persons transferred from Western borders, UNHCR has ongoing consultations with DGMM yet the procedure is that those formally registered will be referred back to their registration provinces and will apply to PDMMs to continue their registration. There is no cancellation risk. The unregistered will be referred to provinces, taking into consideration the risk of crowding at PDMMs. Once registered, they can benefit from assistance schemes in provinces. Those with vulnerabilities and emergency situations will be prioritized for registration but UNHCR is working towards flagging these cases to PDMMs.



- IOM
 - IOM started supporting 9 provinces with basic hygiene kits. 14 thousand hygiene kits have been distributed so far. Some include spraying machines provided to municipalities. Kits are distributed to most vulnerable refugees and host communities. IOM is starting a pilot project of food assistance in Izmir. 700 kits are ordered to be distributed by local authorities.
 - Another cash assistance programme (500 TL per household) to 100 refugee families is planned in Gaziantep and will be using the winterization database, the most vulnerable households are selected, and verification is done through the online system. The aim is to increase the cash assistance to cover 30 thousand households including host communities. These beneficiaries are all non-ESSN beneficiaries. IOM is transferring through Ziraat Bank but are looking for other options.
- WFP
 - WFP is conducting specific COVID -19 Hygiene kits distributions in all the camps with support from DGMM, a lot of requests has been sent to donors to provide support for those in need off camps and those under quarantine.
- UNICEF
 - UNICEF is starting procurement of 40 thousand kits targeting approx. 200 thousand people. This estimation has been done with demand from implementing partners and local authorities.
 - UNICEF and MoNE are targeting 15 thousand households nationwide. COVID-19 Hygiene kits will be distributed to vulnerable refugee and host community households, targeting learners and those struggling with distant learning programs.
 - UNICEF is targeting families with out of school children, to increase the motivation of children to join school and continue learning.
- Multeci-Der
 - Those who have returned from Edirne were transferred to removal centres for the COVID-19 period quarantine. Some of them were later transferred to Canakkale and Edirne. The release process continues and those released are outside without a place to go. They cannot travel to their cities of registration. Those from Edirne have emptied their houses before going to Edirne and have no houses or jobs to return to therefore the basic needs are very high.
- UNFPA
 - UNFPA has provided 13.200 customized dignity kits to 23 removal centers which were distributed by ASAM and 500 customized dignity kits to Ankara Provincial Health Directorate.
- TRC ([copied from field meeting minutes for the kind information of national partners](#))
 - VEFA group is distributing hygiene kits and food to Turkish populations who are vulnerable and cannot access markets. Distributions continue not only part of VEFA group also TRC distributing hygiene kits and food.
 - As a cash programme, TRC always keeps in touch with partners and tries to share proper information regarding COVID-19 with refugee population.
 - Several times, TRC sent out SMS to 400.000 refugees who are registered in the system to inform prevention from COVID-19.
 - Call center service is provided in 5 different languages to respond to refugees needs and questions
 - TRC is registering requests and referring some cases to services such as municipalities and VEFA group, also referring some cases to outreach teams. If it is related to cash programmes, they are referring cases to outreach teams. Also, TRC receiving cases identified and referred by other stakeholders. Agencies can refer refugees to TRC hotline (168).



- TRC has authorization from the government to travel to the 31 provinces with a travel ban. If needed, TRC teams can deliver the service to the refugee population in need.
- The outreach team deliver cards to the refugees with restricted or limited mobility.
- **TRC conducted an assessment survey through the call center, collected data and results will be shared.**
- TRC are referring their received requests through the call center to governmental institutions.
- Partners should remember that ESSN cross-check matrix is available to all partners to prevent overlaps in beneficiaries.
- Services Advisor is updated, available services during the COVID-19 can be seen.

C) Online tracking tool for needs & request

- Basic Needs Working Group is rolling out an “Online Tracking Tool for Requests & Needs in COVID-19 Situation”
- Tool is ActivityInfo based, and it aims to compile and present the 1) basic needs request of local authorities (such as material support) received by partners, and 2) basic needs of refugees assessed by partners.
- The tracking tool has pre-set categories to capture request and needs of basic needs modalities (such as food assistance, hygiene kits, sanitary items etc) to facilitate accurate and effective data collection.
- Compiled data will be made available to interested partner organisations through an online dashboard which will 1) help prevent duplication in responding the requests received from local authorities and 2) provide a general overview of needs in Turkey to feed into reprogramming and planning processes around COVID-19 situation
- This online tracking tool will not be a new platform to report partner activities; reporting will still be done through ActivityInfo against indicators under 3RP. This tool aims to capture requests & needs, and it will also be tracking status updates related with these entries.
- Sector coordinators will request organisations to share focal points for the online tracking tool; focal points will be trained on how to use the tool with online sessions in the following week.

Present guidance for distribution in crisis situation

- Turkey and other 16 countries, imports wheat from Russia and rice from India. 9 out of 17 countries import more than 60 percent of the wheat consumed and 11 out of 17 countries import more than 60 percent of rice consumed.
- As of April 5th, 2020, there were no trade restrictions imposed on either wheat or rice from major exporting countries.
- For the economic accessibility of food, potential trade restrictions, herding behaviour and panic buying could lead to higher food prices affecting negatively the purchasing power of households.
- Countries like Iran, Sudan, Syria, Lebanon and Turkey were already experiencing high inflation rates as of Feb 2019. These countries are subject to more severe adverse impact of COVID-19 compared to countries that were experiencing relative price stability.
- In addition to high prices, purchasing power could be further threatened by loss of income and higher unemployment rates. Beneficiaries are likely to be affected the most, Turkey is one of the countries that host the highest number of WFP beneficiaries.
- To be able to estimate the impact of COVID-19 outbreak on communities, it is important to understand the volume of those most vulnerable populations in the region. Age, health, food insecure and economics are important factors to determine vulnerability.



- Protection, community engagement, distribution layout, distribution planning should be considered while planning or designing distributions. Further considerations such as marking, having a hand washing area are highlighted in the presentation.
- The sample site plan for food distribution sites in the COVID-19 environment is presented. All phases which begin in hand washing area and end with the exit are explained clearly.
- The checklist for possible adjustments is presented. There are different factors to understand the impact and partners' role and mechanisms.
- To change transfer mechanisms, large-scale closure of needed mobile agents, banks, ATMs is needed.

AOB

Brief presentation of the basic needs assistance provided at the western border:

- Between the dates of 2 and 15 of March, the number of individuals remain in Pazarkule remained stable. Edirne PDMM and DGMM encouraged to return cities of residences. The number of people started to decrease gradually.
- On 13 March, the Turkish government decided to evacuate the remaining 6000 people in Pazarkule. Majority of these people sent to removal centers across the country for 14 days of quarantine.
- DGMM and Edirne governor coordinated all response. Coordination and cooperation between public institutions, UN Agencies and NGOs formed the basis of the responses.
- Basic needs materials were distributed to refugees and migrants remaining in Pazarkule, details can be seen in the [online dashboard](#). The coordination of the distribution of all materials was handled by PDMM initially. Later they handed over the coordination to AFAD.
- UNHCR provided technical IM support for the maintenance & analysis of distribution data. UNHCR shared daily reports and analysis on the type & amount of materials distributed as well as the institutions that provided these items.
- The actual distribution line was organized by ASAM. Distribution of all materials was channeled through one distribution point and ASAM was responsible from it.
- ASAM worked with a protection sensitive distribution approach. Persons with vulnerabilities were prioritized or the materials were brought to the locations they stay. ASAM and TRC cooperated on vulnerability identification.
- In cooperation with DGMM, UNHCR supported incentivizing returns from Pazarkule to their province of registration. They were provided bus tickets and cash support by UNHCR. In total, 322 individuals were provided bus tickets. Cash support provided to 154 individuals. The cash was distributed through ASAM.
- The appeal deadline is extended one more day.

Next meeting

Next meeting will be announced with respect to needs and developments.