

POLAND NATIONAL PROTECTION SECTOR MEETING

Meeting Minutes – 24 March 2022

Meeting subject:	Weekly National Protection Sector Meeting
Time & location:	2pm, online meeting
Chaired by:	Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights; UNHCR
Minutes prepared by:	UNHCR
Participants:	ACTED; Action Aid; ASAM; CARE; CORE; Corus International; CRS; Faros Elpidas; Halina Niec Legal Aid Center; ICRC; IFRC; Intersos; Lutheran world; Mercy Corps; MSF; Oxfam; Polish Humanitarian Action; Premiere Urgence; Relief International; RET International; UNESCO; UN Global Compact Network Poland; UNHCR; UNICEF; Safe passage; Save the Children; The Red Pencil; WHO.
Agenda:	<p>Agenda</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Coordination updates 2) Updates from the Protection Sub-sectors and other relevant coordination groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection Sub-Sector • Gender-based Violence Sub-sector • MHPSS Working Group • CWC Working Group • PSEA Network 3) Updates from partners on priority protection needs they identified 4) AOB
AGENDA POINT	DISCUSSION
Introductions and Overview	<p>Participants were welcomed to the third weekly Protection Sector meeting for the Refugee Response on Poland. The agenda was presented. Daniel Witko (daniel.witko@hfhr.pl) was introduced as the new Protection Sector co-lead on behalf of Helsinki Foundation.</p> <p>A brief update was provided on the status of action points from the last meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The draft TORs of the Protection Sector circulated last week were discussed. Several suggestions were made.

	<p>2) On 21 March, an ad hoc meeting was convened to exchange on opportunities to coordinate training initiatives for volunteers. The group discussed priority areas for training, including, but not limited to, do no harm, psychological first aid and child safeguarding. A mapping of existing training resources is ongoing. A Taskforce was created to facilitate continuous collaboration. Partners to participate can write to kernin@unhcr.org and dknoppik@unicef.org</p> <p>3) Partners were thanked for their inputs to the draft service mapping tool for referrals. The mapping tool will be launched once all inputs have been incorporated.</p>
<p>Agenda point 1</p>	<p>Several coordination updates were shared and discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The latest Poland Refugee Coordination Architecture was presented. 2) Interested partners implementing protection monitoring activities were invited to join a small group to analyze protection monitoring findings and trends. This collaboration may result in a joint inter-agency product discussing key protection trends. 3) The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights reported that the Polish Government is preparing amendments to the Act on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens in the Context of the Armed Conflict in Ukraine. Some of the envisaged provisions relate to unaccompanied minors and eligibility of Ukrainian nationals for entitlements.
<p>Agenda point 2</p>	<p>Updates from the Protection Sub-sectors and other relevant coordination groups were shared:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Protection Sub-Sector The third CP SS meeting focused on unaccompanied and separated children. It highlighted new national procedures, including the MOU between the Polish and Ukrainian governments, and relevant guidelines. Identified priorities for the Sub-Sector include support and strengthen access to services for unaccompanied children, dissemination of guidelines, mapping of referral pathways, information-sharing, capacity-building and family-tracing. Regarding cash assistance for children, some guidance is upcoming in light of national regulations requiring that all unaccompanied children should be referred to family courts to appoint a guardian as a first step before cash assistance can be provided. ▪ Gender-based Violence (GBV) Sub-Sector CARE rapid gender analysis was highlighted. GBV materials and guidelines are being uploaded to the Poland Data Portal. IOM will soon lead a Working Group on Human Trafficking. Partners were encouraged to share information about referral pathways for GBV survivors to complement the ongoing mapping. The weekly Sub-sector meeting takes place every Tuesday at 10am. Interested partners are free to contact Lorett Jesudoss (jesudoss@unhcr.org) to be added to the mailing list.

- **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Technical Working Group (TWG)**

The MHPSS TWG involves 60+ agencies. TORs of the group are being drafted and will be shared with group members for review by end of the week. Partners are requested to share the MHPSS capacity building events to coordinate the time, the topics and target audiences. Referral pathway information for Mental health specialized care is being obtained from the ministry of health by WHO will be shared shortly. Translation of PFA WHO in Polish is being finalized. Upcoming events organized by the TWG include:

- An orientation on Polish Mental Health Care System by Ministry of Health, Poland on 28 March at 11.00 am. Click [here](#) to join the session.
- An Orientation on the MHPSS Minimum Service Package on 30 March at 12.00. Click [here](#) to join the session.
- WHO on-line course on MHPSS in emergencies will be launched next week (language English)

Interested organizations can send email to mhpsstwg.poland@gmail.com to become member and register for events.

- **Accountability to Affected People (AAP) Working Group**

The first meeting occurred on 18 March. Issues to be covered by the WG include two-way communication, engagement with refugees and community-based organizations, participatory approaches to ensure refugee voices inform our response. The first meeting identified some priorities including two-way communication, identifying refugee information needs and preferred communication channels, standardizing messages for refugees. An information and communication assessment is in the pipeline. In the meantime, the WG will share a few questions partners can include in their surveys and assessment forms. A shared folder will be made available to all partners with all materials for communication with communities. The AAP Working Group will meet every Friday at 10am. Interested partners are free to contact Tamar Joanian JOANIAN@unhcr.org to be added to the mailing list.

- **PSEA Network**

The PSEA Network will meet every Friday at 2pm. Interested partners are free to contact Nadia Abu Amr (ABUAMR@unhcr.org) to be added to the mailing list. Draft TORs and workplan are in the pipeline. Initial priority areas include information provision, training of local and other actors and access to services. It is recognized that many services are already in place including information materials in Polish.

Agenda point 3

Protection partners exchanged findings about identified protection needs:

- 1) National partners highlighted the need for common protection-sensitive European policies and response, including in relation to the relocation of refugees from Poland to third countries by train or other means. Existing directives such as the

	<p>Temporary Protection Directive and guidelines provide limited details. Clarifications could also be sought in relation to the disbursement of funds from the European Union to support Poland as outlined in the Temporary Protection Directive.</p> <p>2) In light of recent history, concerns remain regarding the access to rights of third-country nationals. The most recent piece of legislation on refugee entitlements in Poland doesn't include this group. The establishment of a dedicated working group is a positive development.</p> <p>3) While volunteers have played a significant role to respond to the needs of refugees at heightened risk, the State will have to step up the capacity of the national systems to care and protect refugees over the longer term. This is an important area of support.</p> <p>4) Discriminatory practices at the Belarus border were reported as a persistent concern, affecting in particular third-country nationals seeking access to Poland territory. 88 people were pushed back on 28 March according to the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights.</p>
AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The next weekly protection sector meeting will take place on 31 March at 2pm.

ACTION POINTS SUMMARY				
No.	Action	Responsible	Deadline	Status
1.	Final review and feedback, as necessary, to the final draft TORs for the Protection Sector for endorsement at the next meeting.	All protection partners	30 March	Pending
2.	Convene an ad hoc meeting to exchange on cash and protection for interested partners.	Co-leads	30 March	Pending
3.	Share existing protection training materials with kernin@unhcr.org and dknoppik@unicef.org to inform the development of curricula and inter-agency training for volunteers	All protection partners	30 March	Pending
4.	Share an update on the amendments of the Act on Assistance to Ukrainian Citizens in the Context of the Armed Conflict in Ukraine	Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights	31 March	Pending
5.	Launch of the mapping tool for referral to national services	UNHCR	3 April	Pending