

ESSN Task Force Istanbul Minutes

Objective Provide an update on the ESSN (WFP/TRC), UNHCR briefing on the unregistered refugees in Istanbul (UNHCR), presentation on complementary programming (Mavi Kalem) and AOB.

Date of meeting 12 March 2018
10:00 - 12:00

Location ASAM Dolapdere Cok Yonlu Destek Merkezi Bostan
Mah. Küçük Odalar Sok. No:9 Beyoğlu/İSTANBUL Turkey

1. Action points:

Follow up issue:	Who will take action:	Deadline:
Sweep back/uncollected cards report will be presented	TRC	Next ESSN TF Meeting: 9 April 2018
InterAgency Referral Forms will be shared	Mavi Kalem	With the meeting minutes

2. Update of ESSN (WFP/TRC)

- The Co-Chairs World Food Programme (WFP) and Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) provided an update of the ESSN to date noting that as of 5 March, a total of 416,899 applications were registered; 4,018 applications were not assessed; 216,909 applications were deemed eligible and 195,972 applications were ineligible. Approximately, 38.43% of the applications were registered by 9 TRC Service Centres. A total of 1,199,482 beneficiaries received ESSN assistance in February (48.76% male/51.24% female).
- In terms of the eligibility criteria breakdown, there is a slight increase on the “At least one disabled person in family” criteria rate.
- Inclusion rate is 51.2%. Average household size is 5.85. The average HH size has decreased a little bit.
- As of February, almost 5,000 people acquired Turkish citizenship. As it was mentioned earlier, if the head of household has acquired citizenship, the family can go and re-apply with a new head of household and may be eligible for the ESSN again based on demographic criteria. If someone in family acquire citizenship, the criteria for the family to be evaluated. When HH became eligible, Turkish members are not receiving ESSN assistance but the others are. The TF will try to include DGMM in upcoming meetings to provide further details of the procedure.
- On 8 February, 377 accounts were swept back: 173 uncollected cards (3+ months) and 204 dormant accounts (6+ months). Beneficiaries are called to find out why they have not collected their cards. There will be a dedicated session on swept back process and the detailed information and analysis on this process at the ESSN TF meeting in April.
- MoFSP sent a circular to SASF offices dated 6 February to cut other regular assistance for ESSN beneficiaries. From now on there will not be access to regular assistance for ESSN beneficiaries provided from the Social Assistance and Solidarity Promotion Fund. The regular assistance refers the following:
 - Assistance given to the widow woman
 - Assistance given to the orphans
 - Conditional health assistance
 - Conditional pregnancy assistance
 - Assistance given to the families of vulnerable soldiers
 - Assistance given to the children of vulnerable soldiers
 - It is for ESSN beneficiaries only and not effecting the CTE beneficiaries.
- Homecare allowance coverage is still under the discussion with the MoFSP. The top ups will be provided for the ESSN beneficiaries with severe disabilities (more than 50% disabled; flagged as severe). Further details will be shared once it is agreed and SoP is finalized.
- In Marmara Region, majority of the applications are from Istanbul, Bursa and Kocaeli. Top 10 districts in Marmara region are from Bursa (2) and Istanbul (8).
- In terms of proportion of DGMM Temporary Protection (TP) and International Proportion (IP), based on the humanitarian numbers provided by DGMM on December 7, 2017, almost all of the registered refugees in Istanbul, Bursa, Kocaeli and Tekirdag are under TP.

12 March 2018, 10:00-12:00, WFP/TRC Istanbul

ESSN TASK FORCE

- Based on the information provided by WFP & TRC Istanbul Area offices (IAO):
 - As the PDMM Istanbul has stopped registering new refugees (except for specific cases), the numbers of refugees are slightly increasing every month because of people who had pre-registration documents.
 - Refugees under IP are very few in Istanbul area because Istanbul is not a satellite city. Based on request from the Task Force participants, we provided in the presentation more information about number of refugees under IPs.
 - TRC Istanbul Area Office (IAO) covers 21 provinces overall under its administrative and organisational structure. Izmir Field Office is related to IAO. While 12 of them are directly under IAO, the other 9 provinces are covered by Izmir Field Office (IFO).
 - During February 2018, WFP IAO monitoring teams visited 100 sites including SASF, Nufus, Halkbank branches, Muhtars, hospitals and NGOs in 8 provinces. TRC IAO M&E teams are also covered 36 fields in 7 provinces in collaboration of the WFP IAO.
 - In February, Four Focus Group Discussions conducted in 3 provinces [Istanbul (1 male, 1 female), Bursa (1 female) and Kutahya (1 male)]. The theme of the month was education and health. The findings of the FGD are as follows: 1) Attendance is regular for both boys and girls. 2) Enrolment is easy. Parents know how to enrol their children-The only barriers is in the beginning because of the language. 3) School expenses goes up as the grades of the children go up. 4) Parents are not aware of the scholarships available for the children, because most of the participants had young children not in university level yet. 5) Children have breakfast before they go to school or they take sandwiches to eat at school. The public schools provide milk and raisins for grade one in most school6) Parents go to schools to check on the level of their children in school and their behaviours. Most of the participants praised the Turkish education system and the teachers In women FGD, participants expressed their interest to learn Turkish and they wished if schools open special classes for educating adults. Regarding the health, main challenge is the waiting time and translation. As for translation, they either have to pay or their children has to go to help with translation, in which case children have to skip the school. Some NGOs provided support for vaccination etc.. In general there were more complaints received from Iraqi group in Kutahya than the Syrian refugees. The results of the full FGD across the country will be shared by e-mail on regular basis, this is just a synopsis of the ones from Istanbul office.
 - Istanbul specific highlights of the last month's FGD on housing are: 1) The houses are well insulated. 2) They are not feeling secure in their neighbourhood and also expressing concerns over suspected illegal activities carried out at night. 3) Mostly renting apartments through real-estate agencies. 4) Positive impact of the of the ESSN is improved relationship with the landlords as they pay their rents regularly.
 - TRC IAO Outreach teams have visited 4 provinces and covered 148 sites. They referred 40 cases to TRC Protection Teams and 131 ID cases were directed to Istanbul PDMM. Beginning of February 2018 (before the latest situation of the registration issue) a letter to PDMM office to be sent. Official letter and list of people to the PDMM. According to the procedure before the latest developments, TRC outreach teams were used to write an official letter to PDMM to accelerate the registration process of the persons who meet the ESSN eligibility criteria. Yet, this procedure is not working after the stopping of the registrations. Alternative scenarios for creating new referral lines could be discussed in case of the superiors approved.
 - On issues and actions taken: disability health reports are still issued for free unless the report is 0%, some issues reported by Nufus that some refugees try to tweak the criteria, and in Sultangazi there are reports of escalated tensions between refugees and host community.
 - The two FGDs that in Istanbul were actually in Sultangazi district and we asked questions related to the tensions in the community, they reported nothing major but more FGDs is required. The Kaymakam office are also aware of these tensions and we will keep monitoring the situation.
 - 19 protection cases which came to WFP's attention and then referred to TRC, ASAM, HRDF, SAKVA and UNHCR mostly on the medical, legal and education, SGBV issues.
- After February, nine out of 18 TRC Service Centers have been closed. TRC Area Offices are located in Istanbul, Ankara and Gaziantep with the Field Offices in İstanbul (Anatolia), İzmir, Hatay, Samsun, Van, Erzurum. TRC Area and Field offices located in strategic locations across Turkey, will serve as a base for operational teams. They are responsible for undertaking activities related to ESSN monitoring, operational activities including site visits, household visits, focus group discussions, advocacy with local authorities, as well as sensitization and referral activities.

3. UNHCR briefing on unregistered refugees in Istanbul (UNHCR)

- A comprehensive overview of the registration procedures has already been provided by PDMM during the last PWG in February. There are no new developments on this note.
- Registration has been suspended but the verification continues. Additionally, registration continues for those who have been pre-registered and unregistered but exceptional cases.
- For cases, whose registration is refused because of the suspension, PDMM does not make any official notifications but verbally refers them to other cities.
- UNHCR is working with PDMM to develop FAQs on registration and referral lines to clarify the scope of the exceptions and to ensure registration of the identified vulnerable cases. The referral line is in the planning stage and once ready updates will be shared through PWG and other coordination structures.
- UNHCR recommends to come and visit the PDMM as it will be more efficient to solve the cases. It would be better to explain your activities in the field to PDMM officials in person. This can facilitate referrals made by your offices.
- PDMM informed UNHCR that TRC established a referral line with regards to vulnerable groups. In the same vein, ASAM also established a referral line with regards to LGBT individuals. If you identify such cases, please refer them to ASAM. ASAM will lead those individuals to PDMM for registration.
- Please note that *since the verification exercise is to end when the whole population is reached in Istanbul with respect to capacities and resources, it is not possible to provide an exact cut-off date.*
- Scenarios regarding alternative referral lines could be discussed if the superiors approve.
- ASAM stated that they have a recently established referral line for unregistered vulnerable cases. Every Tuesday, the cases are taken to Ercan Bey by the representatives from other centers and Dolapdere center in Istanbul. He provides consultation for each case whether the case can be registered or not. Following his consultation, every Thursday these refugees that can be registered are referred to PDMM for registration.
- Since the registration is closed for new comers in Istanbul, only refugees with serious medical conditions that have been referred from other provinces, exceptional protection cases and family unification cases have been accepted to be registered in Istanbul.
- Refugees who applied for Turkish citizenship reported that their ESSN has been cut before they acquired the citizenship. Please send those cases to WFP & TRC to follow up.
- Household verification through the SASFs has been started.

4. Presentation on Complementary Programming (Mavi Kalem)

- Mavi Kalem is implementing Child Protection Project directly with UNHCR in Istanbul. Their partnership with UNHCR started in October 2017.
- Currently their 2 offices are dealing with child protection in Istanbul: Fatih and Zeytinburnu
- They first started with Save the Children in August 2017, then continued with UNHCR. In September 2017, both teams were in the field.
- Between 1 October – 31 December, they have collaborated with PDMM (Kumkapi), TRC (ESSN/CCTE) and MoE for schooling.
- The Results of Referrals numbers are showing the cases which are opened, monitored, followed up and closed successfully. 11 cases registered in December 2017 with the help of UNHCR referral line.
- Mavi Kalem has a case which the mother and one child are registered in Istanbul while other members of the family are not registered. After consultation with the PDMM in Kumkapi, PDMM stated that mother was registered as an emergency case. The rest of the family should go somewhere else/other cities for registration.
- Every Wednesday Mavi Kalem takes the beneficiaries to PDMM for registration in Kumkapi.
- Inter-Agency Referral form can be used to refer the cases. The form will be shared with the partners.

5. AOB

- CCTE update will be presented next month.
- Please remember to send any issues/challenges observed with as much detail as possible (location, date, etc.) to the ESSN TF focal points.
- The next meeting will be held on 12 April at WALD Address: Binbirdirek Mah. Piyer Loti Cad. Arif Paşa Konağı No:2 34122 Sultanahmet / Fatih İstanbul.

Attachments:

1. ESSN Task Force Istanbul Presentation (WFP/TRC)
2. Presentation on complementary programming (Mavi Kalem)
3. Inter-Agency Referral Forms (Mavi Kalem)

12 March 2018, 10:00-12:00, WFP/TRC Istanbul