

ESSN Task Force Istanbul Minutes

Objective

Provide an update on the ESSN (WFP/TRC), present sweep back: dormant accounts and uncollected cards (TRC), present updates on the CCTE (UNICEF/TRC), Q&A session with PDMM, and AOB.

Date of meeting	12 April 2018 10:30 - 12:30	Location	WALD Office Binbirdirek Mah. Piyer Loti Cad. Arif Paşa Konağı No:2 34122 Sultanahmet / Fatih İstanbul
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1. Action points:

Follow up issue:	Who will take action:	Deadline:
The SMSs in Arabic not being clear and if a message can be sent before assistance ends.	TRC/WFP	

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 9 April, a total of 429,000 applications were registered; 3,638 applications were not assessed; 226,966 applications were deemed eligible and 198,396 applications were ineligible. Approximately, 38.16% of the applications were registered by 9 TRC Service Centres. A total of 1,258,489 beneficiaries received ESSN assistance in March (51% female/49% male).
- Inclusion rate is 52.5%. Average household size is 5.84. It is noted as stable compare to last month.
- In March, 1,325 Turkish citizens assessed for demographic criteria.
- On 9 March, 403 accounts were swept back: 150 uncollected cards (3+ months) and 253 dormant accounts (6+ months). Beneficiaries are called to find out why they have not collected their cards.
- According to MoFSP, refugees under temporary SGK, such as ISKUR trainees and interns, will not be excluded from the ESSN programme as of April payment. A separate circular on that issue has been shared with the SASFs accordingly.
- In Marmara Region, majority of the applications are from Istanbul, Bursa and Kocaeli. Top 3 most applied districts in Marmara region are Yildirim/Bursa, Esenyurt and Bagcilar from Istanbul. Edirne, Kirlareli and Canakkale have the least percentage of DGMM registered Syrians applied for ESSN due to their special geographical locations and circumstances.
- Based on the information provided by WFP & TRC Istanbul Area offices (IAO):
 - WFP IAO covers 12 provinces. Estimated number of refugees: 795,332 TPs and 62,542 IPs.
 - UNHCR initiative: <http://www.refugeeinfoturkey.org> website for data for refugees under temporary and international protection by province and nationality. Please note that it does not reflect humanitarian residence figures. The website has also links to very useful documents and studies about refugees in Turkey. During March 2018, WFP IAO monitoring teams visited 100 sites in 30 districts including SASF, Nufus, Halkbank branches, Muhtars, hospitals and NGOs in 7 provinces out of 12 provinces. Most visits are conducted in Istanbul and Tekirdag provinces. TRC IAO M&E teams are also visited 177 sites in the region. Many of the visits are done together by TRC and WFP monitoring teams.
 - Issues identified during the monitoring visits are: 1) Refugees without kimliks are transferred to other provinces. 2) Fake kimliks are reported in Esenyurt. 3) There is a rise in protection cases in Istanbul and other areas. Those cases are referred to TRC, AAR Japan, HRDF etc.
 - Language preferences Survey conducted for Afghan nationals. Most of them prefer to communicate in Farsi. As a conclusion of this survey, SMSs to Afghan nationals will be sent in Farsi.
 - In March, four Focus Group Discussions conducted in 3 provinces [Istanbul (2 female), Bursa (1 male) and Kocaeli (1 male)]. WFP IAO shared a summary of the FGDs under the theme of Gender. Some of the findings from Istanbul area are: 1) 95% of participants were agreed that the income is generated by men. 2) Women are in charge of household chores and helping children for their homework. 2) Women even can read and write don't work for cultural reasons. 3) Older people have difficulty to search and

find a job. 4) Regarding ESSN, mostly women apply as they have more time to go and apply. 5) They're able to send their children to school with the help of ESSN assistance. (The results of the full report of the FGD of March will be shared with you in a separate e-mail once it's ready).

- WFP/TRC noted concerns of NGOs and will look into the SMSs in Arabic not being clear and if a message can be sent to warn the refugees before ending the assistance. Additionally, it was confirmed that the ESSN 2 funds are in place until Jan 2019.

3. Presentation on Sweep Back: Uncollected Cards and Dormant Accounts (TRC):

ESSN programme is designed as a swift response to provide the foreign people living under International Protection or Temporary Protection or with a Humanitarian Residence Permit in Turkey with the chance to meet their basic needs in dignity. Therefore, after detecting idle amounts remaining in some of the beneficiaries' accounts, the reason for remaining balances analysed. Two types of idle accounts were discovered:

- In the first one, which is called dormant accounts, the beneficiary collects his/her card but does not make any spending for 6 months after being eligible for the ESSN Programme,
- In the second one, which is called uncollected cards, the beneficiary does not collect his/her card more than 3 months after being eligible for the ESSN Programme,

Those beneficiaries were informed via SMSs and were called by 168 call centre to be informed to collect their cards and/or to make disbursements and the amounts remaining in the accounts of beneficiaries, who did not take action, were swept back. The total amount swept-back was added back in the programme funds and redistributed to beneficiaries in need.

Answers received by the 168 call centre were categorized to understand the behavioural patterns for the beneficiaries with uncollected cards and dormant accounts and cases, in which the beneficiaries would like to collect the card and/or make disbursements but were not able to do so for certain reasons, were directed to related parties (such as outreach teams, financial service provider etc.) to be solved. Results of the SMS notification analysis shows that 22% of beneficiaries who had been warned about the sweep-back process took the necessary action and they were removed from the sweep-back lists.

In addition, MoFSP initiated household visit process upon the request of TRC. In January 2018, TRC shared the lists of the beneficiaries whose accounts were swept back with the MoFSP and MoFSP shared the lists with SAFSs and SASFs conducted and are conducting household visits. The process has not been completed yet, but, according to the interim solutions, approximately 80% of the beneficiaries' (out of the beneficiaries who have been visited so far) assistance were cancelled due to incompliance with programme criteria.

Geographical analysis shows that the cities in which most of the foreign people live (such as, İstanbul, Şanlıurfa, Gaziantep, Hatay) are also the cities with many sweep-back cases.

Demographical analysis also shows sweep-back cases are also correlated with the registration statistics. Beneficiaries under 18 years old are the married household heads.

After the call if the beneficiary takes any action, they have a chance to collect their card and continue to receive the ESSN in the next month.

SMS messages are sent in different languages based on their nationalities.

4. Updates on CCTE (TRC/UNICEF):

- In March 2018, 292,924 beneficiaries were entitled for payment due to regular attendance in 79 provinces. As of 9 April 2018, 348,219 applicants were accepted to the programme (93% of CCTE applications). So far, beneficiaries received six CCTE payments.
- Most of the beneficiaries are located in Istanbul (17.30%), Hatay (15.15%), Gaziantep (12.95%), Sanliurfa (10.68%) and Ankara (5.81%). Most of them are attending primary school (Grades 1-8) and majority of them are 1st grade students.
- 168 Call Center CCTE Statistics: Majority of the calls are categorized under Information Request (64.98%). Unlike ESSN, more calls received from women than men (57.56%/42.44%).
- In Istanbul, CCTE programme reached almost 50,000 cumulative number of beneficiaries as of March. 79% of them are also ESSN beneficiaries. CCTE beneficiaries are mostly located in Esenyurt, Bagcilar, Kucukcekmece, Esenler districts.
- The UNICEF and TRC has been doing monitoring visits to the relevant institutions, some important points raised from İstanbul and Marmara regions are as follows. Because of the closure plan of the Temporary Education Centers (TEC) by MoNE, most of the Syrian students are being transferred to Turkish Public Schools. And the interaction between the Syrian and the Turkish students are more likely to increase, host community tension or lack of information of

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National Programme and the CCTE programme as an extension of the national programme to refugees) noted as one of the important points in the field monitoring in Marmara Region.

- Reported challenges at Halkbank branches have diminished significantly, however, there are still reports of language barrier, pin code problems and issues related to lack of knowledge about payment amounts and checking balances at the ATM.
- There are 16 Child Protection offices are operating in Turkey. There are 2 Community Center in Sultanbeyli and Bagcilar.
- CCTE Child Protection reached more than 30.000 children in Turkey. Most of the cases are located in Konya, Ankara, Istanbul (Bagcilar) and Sanliurfa. Risk level is low (72.17% of them no risk).
- Top four case categories are 1) Child Labor (41%) 2) Education (40%) 3) PSS (11%) 4) Identity Card (8%)
- In Istanbul, Bagcilar Child Protection Office reached 3378 children. There is no risk level (64.15%). Sultanbeyli Child Protection Office reached 3032 children. There is no risk level here, either (80.34%).
- Assessment of the risk level is done by the Child Protection teams by visiting the families. High and medium risk level means children missing school 4 days or more per month is considered high risk level, children missing school less than 4 days is considered medium and low risk level. Child labour is also identified as high risk level.
- If a beneficiary under TP or IP becomes a Turkish citizen, they need to change their ID numbers as their 99 numbers will not be recognizable by the system. Beneficiaries need to submit a new application to SASF. It will be assessed by the SASF as a new application and follow the procedures from the beginning. If they are found eligible, they will start receiving the assistance. First prerequisite of this procedure is to apply to SASF offices, not to TRC Service centers. Second, the assistance will be uploaded to PTT Card, not to Kizilaykart.
- Any member of the family of the CCTE beneficiary start to work and obtains a SGK record, owns a property such as car or house, they will no longer will be eligible to the CCTE programme and their assistance will be cut accordingly when detected by SASFs or automatic inquiry done by ISAIS in every payment period .
- One of the important added value of the extension of CCTE is the child protection component which the national programme does not have. Programme is only covering CCTE beneficiaries who are benefitting from the extension and have ID numbers starting with 99.
- CCTE has conditionality of regular attendance. There is connection between MoFSP's database with the MoNE databases which are YOBIS and E-School to follow up the attendance status. In order to generate the payment, this integration has already been made by Turkish Government since 2010. By the start-up of the extension, YOBIS integration has also achieved. CCTE programme can have access to see if the beneficiaries in public schools or Temporary education centers are regularly attending to school.
- Ideally, age range of the children for the child protection target group is the same with the cash component of the programme, since only the cash beneficiaries can benefit from the child protection visits. But in practice, as TRC Child protection outreach staff are visiting the targeted beneficiaries, they also include children who are identified as not being enrolled in school, vulnerable children and families and children found to be in need/at risk through the "snowball effect" (children who are not beneficiaries of the CCTE but are part of households visited by the outreach teams and, therefore, targeted by the intervention).

5. **Q & A Session with PDMM:**

- Verification exercise: The process has started and ongoing in Istanbul.
- İstanbul PDMM Office is accepting 5.000 applications every day. This number includes both verification and new registration process.
- There was an issue reported by refugees in Esenyurt that there was a police campaign checking the Kimliks of refugees, and those who has no kimliks or kimliks not from Istanbul were put in a bus and send somewhere unknown. PDMM official stated that, it was a regular public security exercise performed by police department. This security exercises included other nationalities including Turkish citizens. They were released after their kimliks were checked. WFP IAO stated that they were informed by NGOs that these cases were not returned back to Syria, or detained (like the rumors), but they were sent to provinces where they still accept new applications from refugees.
- As of 01.11.2017, DGMM took over the new registration from the Foreigners Police Department. Prior to this date, districts police departments were accepting 300 new registrations. Now, Istanbul PDMM is accepting 200 new registrations per day. Registrations are not completely closed in Istanbul. PDMM is performing registration under certain conditions: 1) Those who previously took appointment from the district police department should apply again for registration 2) Those whose passports are expired and couldn't renew on time 3) Those who need a special treatment at hospitals in Istanbul (the need must be requested by the doctor) 4) University students 5) Work permit holders 6) LGBT people 7) Family reunification cases are accepted.

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- Pre-registration certificate with 99 numbers are issued on the same day. However, Temporary Protection IDs are issued after 30-day investigation/security check period.
- Besides accepting new registrations, PDMM is also performing verification exercise. 2000 kimliks are verified per day in Sultanbeyli and Kumkapi offices.
- "Closing of new registrations" decision is made by the Governors together with the Ministry. There is no timeline if/when the registration will be opened again.
- Protection desk is located in Kumkapi. Two psychologists are working here.
- Cases of child marriage are reported to the office of the attorney general.
- ESSN sensitization materials are displayed in the PDMM offices.
- During the verification exercise, some important documents (like diploma, competency certificate etc.) needs to be confirmed by the consulate. DGMM cannot decide on accuracy of these papers. On other hand, it is well known fake diplomas are forged and sold with 200 TL, the thing which opens the door for abuse and forgery. For these reasons, people are directed to Consulate of Syria in this case to get their documents notarized.
- The reason behind why men and women are welcomed separately to Kumkapi Office is not related to any gender discrimination, it is related to prevent any infighting cases which occurred formerly in the same office among women and man due to group.
- List of refugees who can acquire Turkish citizenship is determined by DGMM at Ankara level, and not by PDMM.
- The reason of having more than one 99 numbered identity cards, after each update on identity (letter correction etc.) in different provinces, system assign new 99 number. In order to prevent this type of misuse, DGMM uses finger print application under Verification process. When a refugee makes any update on his/her identity card, fingerprint will be taken basis and the number which registered for social assistances will be kept, all other available 99 numbers for same person will be deleted by system.
- Based on the DGMM's website, there are 557,573 refugees under temporary protection in Istanbul. Currently 305,000 identities verified. and the rest of them is planned to be completed until the end of 2018. All I/NGOs and other humanitarian actors should accept the original identity card with wet ink signature and cold sealed stamp on it while registering refugees to any assistance project they implement. Since misuse, abuse and forgery is very familiar cases in İstanbul.
- For the women that have been either divorced or their husbands have been left the country but are in the DGMM database as a head of household; PDMM asks for a document from Syrian Consulate in Istanbul or any document from Syria that proves the woman is single. They added that with ESSN, those cases have been increased and in order to prevent any kind of demographic structure change in order to match the ESSN criteria, they ask for that document. Women that declare their husbands missing, they should go to the court and follow the official procedures.

6. AOB

- 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 14 May 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 sweep back: dormant accounts and uncollected cards (TRC)
3. CCTE Presentation (UNICEF/TRC)
4. ESSN - FDG March 2018: Gender Issues
5. ESSN Market Bulletin Q1, 2018
6. ESSN 2018 Q1 Monitoring Report