Disability and Age Task Force
Minutes of Meeting

Date: 09 June 2021
Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Venue: Remote Via Microsoft Teams
Chairs: Huda Al-Shabsogh (UNHCR), Lauren Schoenster (UNHCR), and Marwa Mubarak (HI)
Minutes prepared by: Shatha Malhas (UNHCR)
Participants: Abeer Qatarneh (Care), Eman Soubani (JOHUD), Taqi Wahsh (ARCS Culture Solidali), Fathia Zorba (NHF), Eman Subhi Mohammed (ARDD), Zeinab Albukhari (IMC), Maite Serrano Oñate (MPDL), Maria Paola Crisponi (AIDOS), Mohammad Al Salem (Habitat for Humanity), Mayda Elsabah (UNRWA), Mohammad Almustafa (UNHCR, DATF Irbid), Muammar Fuad (NHF), Asmaa Eldakar (Terres des Hommes Italy), Afnan Suleiman (IOCC), Samah Mannai (INTERSOS), Dalila Camargo (IOM), Aleta Morn (DRC), Baraah Al Dalati (Souriyat Across Boarders), Esraa Janajreh (CVT), Raneem AL-Sa'di (JOHUD), Ali Almaany (Medair), Alia Zureikat (HCD) Rana Kawar (UNICEF), Maisa Al-Qaisi (UNHCR Education), Mais Al-Jbarat (JHCO), Nizar Saraijy (IOCC), Giulia Capuani (Vento di Terra), Jehan Zaben (Finn Church Aid), and Yara Al Suna (Caritas).

Meeting Highlights

Agenda Item I. DATF co-chairs update
Presenters: Huda Al-Shabsogh (UNHCR), Lauren Schoenster (UNHCR) and Marwa Mubarak (HI)

- 18 Disability and Age Focal Points have been appointed by the different sectors of the refugee response. The DATF conducted an induction with the focal points and, in partnership with HelpAge International (HAI), organized the first training on Age Inclusion in Humanitarian Action for 29 humanitarian actors (18 female; 11 male) on 26-27 May, including the recently appointed Disability and Age Inclusion Focal Points, chairs of the DATF at urban and camp levels, and NGO staff. The training was facilitated by HAI and focused on healthy ageing and rights-based approach to including older people.
- The Disability and Age Inclusion focal points introduced themselves to the DATF members.
- Considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health, the DATF has advocated for the inclusion of a question on Depression from the Washington Group Questions into the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) questionnaire. HI, as the DATF co-chair, facilitated a training to the VAF enumerators on disability inclusion and the Washington Group Questions in June.
- UNHCR, JOHUD, NHF, and IMC organized two training sessions on Disability Inclusion to 26 UNHCR frontline staff (15 females; 11 males) on 30-31 May. The training focused on the concept

of disability, communicating with persons with disabilities as well as services being provided by UNHCR partners to persons with disabilities.

- DATF co-chairs engaged with the Sector Gender Focal Point Network, UN Women and IOCC about the organization of a join webinar focused on the Power of Inclusion on World Refugee Day.

Agenda Item II. Presentation about the Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) study and Data Sharing Agreement with UNHCR

Presenters: Pan Basilika Sagala (UNHCR) and Maria Eirini Lagourou (UNHCR)

- Made a presentation about UNHCR's data protection policy in practice, highlighting what is data protection and the reason why it is important for DATF members. Shared the data protection framework, core data protection principles and the concept and importance of having valid data sharing agreements with UNHCR.
- Highlighted that personal data is any data related to an individual who can be identified from that data; that data subject is an individual whose personal data is subject to processing; that processing is any operation, or set of operations, automated or not, which is performed on personal data – including collection, storage, transfer or mere consultation; that consent is any freely given and informed agreement by the data subject to the processing of his/her personal data; and that personal data breach is a breach of data security leading to the accidental or unlawful/illegitimate destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorized disclosure or, or access to, personal data transferred, stored or otherwise processed.
- Informed that UNHCR processes personal data of persons of concern to pursue its international protection and solutions mandate. Data belonging to persons of concern to UNHCR is sensitive. Any breach in their personal data can lead to security problems; dealing with personal data is therefore a responsibility.
- Data protection refers to control over data through a range of principles and measures such as confidentiality and security. The aim is to allow for data processing while minimizing risks for data subjects.
- UNHCR core data protection principles are accuracy, accountability and supervision, legitimate and fair processing, rights of data subjects, confidentiality, security, purpose specification, necessity, and proportionality.
- Informed that the VAF is an inter-agency initiative that supports the humanitarian community to establish a profile of vulnerability among refugee households and enables monitoring of changes in vulnerability over time; target assistance in a more efficient and equitable manner, based on the application of common vulnerability criteria; and strengthen coordination and decision-making of the delivery of humanitarian assistance. This year both Syrians and non-Syrians refugees are going to be included in the VAF study.
- UNHCR has incorporated the Washington Group Questions (WGQ) into the VAF study to make sure that no one left behind, and to enable humanitarian actors to identify the most vulnerable cases in order to provide the necessary services.

Agenda Item III. Presentation of services being provided by Habitat for Humanity Jordan

Presenters: Mohammad Al Salem (Habitat for Humanity Jordan)

- Habitat for Humanity Jordan is a global non-profit housing organization founded in 1976 in the USA. It delivers effective housing programs and was founded in 2002 to help low-income families improve their living condition by supporting them to build and/or repair their homes.

- Through shelter rehabilitation, Habitat for Humanity Jordan aims to assist families to shift their focus to the progress and development of other aspects of their lives. It works on construction activities (i.e. rehabilitating and building new homes; upgrading communal and public facilities); providing financial access (i.e. access to grants and loans); raising awareness (i.e. distribution of brochures, short messages and trainings); and in volunteering programs.
- Since 2002, Habitat for Humanity has worked with 22 local communities. Achievements include building more than 450 new homes; installing 500 water tanks; rehabilitating more than 9,500 homes; installing 350 solar water heating system; working on green affordable homes; and rehabilitating 10 schools.
- **Middle East Refugee Crisis Initiative MERCI Project:** This project aims at helping both vulnerable Syrian refugees and Jordanian families to rehabilitate and repair their homes and upgrade communal spaces and public facilities.
- **MERCI Project Households Pillar**: Improve the living conditions of 320 vulnerable refugees' families and local households living in sub-standard housing to create safer and healthier living conditions for individuals.
- **MERCI Project focused on Households:** This project started last December in coordination with local CBOs and relevant stakeholders. More than 400 socio-economic assessments were conducted by their social workers. A technical assessment for the eligible ones was conducted by Habitat's engineers. Habitat for Humanity Jordan ir working on repairing and renovating homes through contractors (75% has been completed).
- **Communal projects**: This helps to leverage the quality of Jordan's infrastructure in certain locations for having better sustainable services for everyone and encouraging the inclusion of vulnerable social segments, such as maintaining public toilets, classrooms, parks, and building ramps for more than 20 different projects.
- **MERCI Project inclusion**: 414 socio-economic assessments were conducted; 96% were eligible, including 10% persons with disabilities,18% older people, 9% female-headed households; 75% of which were rented homes; 55% Syrians and 45% Jordanians.

Agenda Item IV. Good practices presentation by NHF and the impact of the pandemic on people with disabilities

Presenter: Muammar Fuad (NHF)

- Persons with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty and often are exposed to higher rates of violence, neglect and abuse. The pandemic has made these inequalities even more acute and have led to exacerbated risks.
- Persons with disabilities are among those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. They face challenges to receive information about the COVID-19 pandemic as it is often not accessible and barriers to access basic hygiene items and health facilities, as many are not accessible. Additionally, persons with disabilities, particularly those with underlying health conditions, are at higher risk of complications and even death if they contract COVID-19.
- The lockdown, curfew and other restrictions implemented to curb the spread of COVID-19 had a disproportionate impact on children with disabilities as they relied on treatments and services such as rehabilitation and special education programmes.
- Some challenges during the pandemic included (1) lack of access to health information and awareness about COVID-19, especially for persons with visual and hearing disabilities, as well as intellectual and severe mental disabilities; (2) isolation from society and restricted participation in community life; (3) increase in cases of depression and stress among persons with disabilities and older people due to feelings isolation and discrimination as well as increased

marginalization; (4) barriers to access personal care and sanitation items and personal protective equipment (PPE); (5) some persons with disabilities and older people have difficulties to wear the PPE depending on their specific health conditions, as some might have difficulty breathing or are unable to put the masks by themselves; (7) the interruption of physical therapy and other rehabilitation programmes (i.e. occupational therapy and provision of assistive devices, mobility aids and prosthetic and orthotic devices) compromised some health and functioning outcomes (i.e. joint mobility limitation and stiffness, poor alignment and posture, muscle weakness and atrophy, deterioration of self-reliance, etc).

- During the lockdown and other restrictions, NHF worked to provide remote services to persons with disabilities as well as psycho-social services through phone calls, video calls and WhatsApp.
- Community-based rehabilitation volunteers carried out the services at urban locations and camp settings in coordination with the technical staff members and focal points.
- NHF activated a hotline for beneficiaries to obtain immediate counselling; designed and shared brochures and posters to raise awareness about the COVID-19 pandemic among staff members and beneficiaries; provided PPE and sanitation and personal hygiene items in all NHF locations; launched an ongoing learning programme through Zoom; and used a digital training tool named Exor Live to help physiotherapy beneficiaries to continue their rehabilitation remotely.
- Most NHF referrals to UNHCR during the lockdown were seeking urgent cash assistance, livelihoods and basic needs (i.e. food, diapers, and hygiene kits), as well as health services.

Agenda Item V. Good practices presentation by NHF and the impact of the pandemic on people with disabilities

Presenter: Baraah Al Dalati (Souriyat Across Borders)

- Souriyat Across Borders is operating under the name of SAB, a non-profit charity organisation registered with the Charity Commission in England since 2014.
- Seven Syrian women founded SAB in 2012 as an emergency response to the humanitarian crisis to provide basic needs to Syrian displaced families.
- Programmes provided by SAB include rehabilitation (i.e. residential center; medical support; physical therapy; psychosocial support; and vocational training); education (i.e. Tawjihi - high school diploma; languages and computer skills; and technical courses); emergency relief (i.e. medical support; food baskets; and caravans); livelihoods (i.e. mosaic making; farming and agriculture; sewing and knitting; soap making).
- Aligned with the Disability Equality Programme, SAB provides occupational skills courses for beneficiaries. The students may be given lessons in career-relevant skills or are enrolled in training programmes which end in secured employment. This includes training as graphic designers and mobile technicians.
- SAB also provides a range of computer skills courses, such as International Computer Driving License (ICDL), web programming, AutoCAD and Adobe Photoshop.
- SAB established and operates a physical and psychological rehabilitation centre in Amman to provide wounded people in need of rehabilitation with medical and psychological support and to assist them in their injury recovery.
- SAB team prioritizes patients with recent injuries as it is more likely that they will benefit from treatment and make a full recovery. SAB also focus on patients with lost limbs who have not yet received prosthetic limbs as part of their previous treatments. SAB sources suitable prosthetic limbs for amputee patients through partner organisations working in Jordan which provide disability equipment such as Humanity & Inclusion, Asia Development and Training and Al Hussein Society.

- In addition to the medical care and physiotherapy, the patients can also be provided with accommodation, food, and transportation assistance, along with medical care and physiotherapy. SAB currently has the capacity to treat 30 in-patients in addition to regular outpatients. The team consists of 18 full-time staff with fully qualified physiotherapists and nurses. The patients also benefit from a wide range of necessary equipment to support their physiotherapy and recovery.

Agenda Item VI. DATF members updates

Habitat for Humanity Jordan

- Improve the living conditions of 240 out of 320 vulnerable refugees' families and local households living in sub-standard housing in Marka to create safer and healthier living conditions for individuals.
- In the communal projects, Habitat for Humanity Jordan is helping to leverage the quality of Jordan's infrastructure in certain locations in Marka to have better sustainable services for everyone and encouraging the inclusion of vulnerable social segments. Eight out of 20 projects were completed.
- Habitat for Humanity Jordan is open to any partnership or mutual proposal to help more people in need. Please e-mail Mohammed Al Salem at msalem@habitatjordan.org.

JOHUD

- In April and May, in light of Ramadan, JOHUD distributed 540 food packages and hygiene kits in the North and Central governorates.
- Implement the blended sessions under the early intervention program for children with disabilities
- As of May, 350 non-Syrian refugees were provided with school fees and kits, including school bags, stationary, uniforms, and shoes, as well as transportation to school.
- Implement the daily educational sessions for students on the Kolibri platform, as well as using WhatsApp groups.
- JOHUD has resumed onsite services in 2021. Psycho-social support activities are being implemented remotely and in-person in compliance with public health and safety measures.
- JOHUD continues to conduct home visits to assess the situation of people with disabilities and older people to provide them with the needed services such as assistive devices and rehabilitation.

Agenda Item VII. AOB

- DATF members are working to ensure that the World Refugee Day on activities, events, and campaigns are inclusive of persons with disabilities and older people.
- UNHCR is organizing a chess game training activity on the occasion of World Refugee Day on the 20th of June, in collaboration with the Asian Association, through the Community Support Committees (CSCs). Persons with disabilities and older people are welcomed to participate in the training.
- DATFs members were encouraged to update the Service Mapping Matrix (4Ws and H1).
- DATF members proposed to meet on the 14th of July of 2021.