Minutes of Meeting

Monthly meeting with the Economic Empowerment Working Group

Date: 19th December 2024

Attendees	Organisation
Laith Aktham Qusus	ONLUS
Abdallah Abu Assaf	GIZ
Sawsan	GIZ
Samira	UNHCR
Easter	UNHCR
Baha	Mercy Corps
Lina	ARDD
Maria	ARDD
Tariq Mal	DRC
Sahadeo Rawoot	ICRC
Rula Dajian	Netherlands Embassy
Colfax Philips	IOM
Alaa Shadfan	UMR
Yumn Jassim	UNDP
Aseel Kubbaj	UNDP
Yasmine Tanjeer	UNDP

Background
The Economic Empowerment Working Group is a collective that meets once a month to share projects, ideas, and challenges they are facing or have faced. The group includes representatives from international organisations, NGOs, and other stakeholders, collaborating to develop strategies and implement programs that align with the 3RP framework and Jordan's Response Plan (JRP).

Items	Notes
Welcoming and around of introduction of members.	Aseel started the introductions and then we went around the table and online participants.
Update on JOSH and inter-sector working group meeting.	JOSH Update: - Date Held: December 9th, 2024. - Common agenda focused on the Syrian refugee situation: - Services need to be maintained and continued. - Questions and feedback collected via hotline from 200 Syrian households. - Updates from the Durable Solutions Working Group emphasised that despite the situation in Syria, Syrian refugees in Jordan prefer to remain and still require organisational support. - Lina committed to sharing statistics on hotline usage and Syrian services.

	Presentations of Projects and Achievements from different representatives were presented: - Magna (Danish Refugee Council) Operates projects in camps and communities with interventions targeting home-based and micro-businesses. Specialised trainings delivered in Azraq Camp via the Souqfan online platform. Launched 27 businesses, marketing 1-5 products per business locally and internationally. - Aseel (UNDP) Green Growth and Jobs Accelerator Project Built capacity for 25 entities per cohort. Conducted needs assessment for SMEs and facilitated connections with banks and donors. Launched the second cohort to support SMEs with 5+ employees and 2+ years in operation. Challenges include attracting financial aid. - ICRC: Provides legal, protection, and economic services for Syrians in distress. Support businesses, with 85-90% sustaining operations, reflecting positively on community resilience. Works with Flat6Labs to support tech startups but faces challenges including Syrian entrepreneurs. - Alla (UMR): Provides free medical treatments across Jordan using university youth in medical courses. Focuses on economic empowerment for youth through job opportunities in the medical field and experience in the medical sector. - Laith (GIZ): Completed GBV projects in Wadi Musa and Petra, targeting PWDs. Integrated training programs, internships, and employment opportunities. Sustainability plans affected by the Gaza conflict, reducing tourism activity. Highlighted challenges for women, especially those with disabilities to access these training and employment activities.
JRP update from UNDP and feedback from members.	JRP Plan and Progress: Lina: - A working group meeting in October collected information and discussed indicators and activities for the year. - MOPIC to review indicators in a subsequent meeting. - UNDP is working on a report summarising activities and indicators to align with sector goals. The report will be

	finalised by January 2025, with all updates to be implemented by the end of 2025. Aseel: - A JPR meeting held at UNDP two months ago requested budget updates from participants. However, responses have been slow, delaying the report's finalisation. - UNDP will meet with MOL (Ministry of Labour) and MOPIC (Ministry of Planning) on Sunday to finalise and review the report. - Partners who have not submitted their budgets or summarise must do so before the meeting with MOPIC. Samira: - Task forces have met with all line ministries, with progress ongoing. - Partners must confirm plans for the next two years to address any changes in budgets or activities. - Reporting under the 3RP framework for 2024 has been low, particularly from the EEWG. - Issues highlighted include data on project funding, overfunding, and inadequate handovers between focal points.
UNHCR VAP presentation.	Socio-Economic Surveys on Refugees in Jordan: Lina/Ester: - Presented surveys conducted this year, renamed as: - Socio-Economic Surveys on Refugees in Jordan - Socio-Economic Update on Refugees in Jordan (telephone survey conducted every six months). - Both surveys represent the entire refugee community in Jordan. Key findings: - Increased poverty rates, especially in camps - Worsening food consumption levels among refugees in camps and host communities. - Refugees remain heavily indebted. - Access to public health and other services is adequate. - Employment: - Quarter of camp residents employed, primarily through IBV opportunities. - Common employment sectors include construction, agriculture, and food services. - Refugees face abuse and poor working conditions. - Income from work is a crucial source of livelihood. - Challenges to employment include household chores and family obligations. Additional notes: - Data from Quarter 2 of 2024; Quarter 4 results expected by March 2025.

	- Cash-for-work exemptions exist for Syrian refugees until June 2025, allowing for reconciliations of legal status without fees or fines. Discussion: - Online work opportunities noted as limited in uptake. - Employment for refugees requires work permits, with ongoing challenges in compliance and accessibility.
Conclusion and Next Steps	Strategy Development: - The working group aims to advocate and influence decision-makers through the 3RP framework. - Reflections on 2024 achievements and gaps will shape the 2025 goals. - If anyone has any materials of their studies or research efforts they should share it for everyone to read, maybe some participants can benefit from others findings. Challenges Identified: - Inclusion of Syrians: Systemic barriers limit Syrian participation in projects. Employment opportunities for Syrian remain scarce. - Women's empowerment: Women face significant challenges still in breaking traditional stereotypes and starting businesses. - Funding constraints: Shrinking fund limit the reach of projects and the capacity of working groups. - Localisation: Need to empower local sectors and organisations while ensuring sustainability and leadership. Recommendations and Next Steps: - Gather and share learning materials and insights for better planning. - Conduct meetings in Arabic where needed. - Build a comprehensive strategy for 2025-2026: - Incorporate reflections and achievements from 2024. - Address identified gaps and challenges. - Strengthen the motivation and incentives for joining the working group. Focus on women's empowerment and localisation efforts in future projects.