



Protection Working Group Meeting - Minutes

Meeting			
Name	Protection Working Group	Meeting Date	24 April 2013
Meeting Location	Beirut	Meeting Time	10:00
Chair person	Samuel Cheung	Meeting Duration	2 hours
Minutes Prepared by	Samuel Cheung		
Purpose of Meeting	Protection Working Group Meeting		

Participants: UNHCR (chair), Search for Common Ground, Caritas, DRC, Islamic Relief, UNRWA, NRC, OCHA, IRD, ActionAid, CPIEWG, UNICEF, Handicap International, World Rehabilitation Fund, ICRC (observer)

Summary of discussions and action points

1. General Sector Updates

A. Introduction/Administrative Matters

- Draft Terms of Reference for the PWG at the national level were shared and briefly reviewed. The document will be distributed by email for review and comment by the members and, following revision, will be presented at the next PWG for possible endorsement.
- A PWG Steering Group will be established, comprising the leads of the PWG, CPIEWG and SGBV Task Force as well as interested protection partners. The PWG Steering Group will meet more frequently to assist in guiding the overall strategy and direction of the PWG. An email will be sent out to confirm interest.
- An email will be sent to update the PWG members list and email distribution list.

B. Situation / Operational Updates

Registration

- UNHCR presented and discussed current registration trends across the country. Six-month trends indicate decreases from Homs (60% to 34%) and increases from Idleb, Aleppo and Damascus (7% to 16%, 7% to 14% and 7% to 11%, respectively) on place of origin, slight decreases in hosting (29% to 23%) versus increases in renting (58% to 68%) on hosting condition. It was noted that registration data does not reflect the high amount of internal displacement (some 40%) prior to arrival from Syria.
- The modalities of mobile registration were discussed, noting the preference for mobile registration to be used for individual cases, rather than large populations due to logistical and security difficulties.
- UNRWA presented current registration figures of Palestinian refugees from Syria at 49,500.
- The Group discussed concerns regarding confidentiality of information among partners as well as the need for better understanding of those groups who are not willing or able to be registered.
- **ACTION POINT: PWG members proposed a possible training on confidentiality to partners. The national PWG will also coordinate with field-based PWGs to consolidate our information and better understand the dynamics behind refugee populations that thus far are hesitant to be registered.**

Access to Territory/New Arrivals/Border Monitoring

- DRC shared information on monitoring of new arrivals, particularly from al-Masnaa and noted a 5-7% increase in reported arrivals. DRC will be increasing its capacity. Some concerns were raised regarding the current process of standardizing the newcomers assessment form linked with the NFI sector working group and the lack of protection inputs.
- UNHCR reported that in Akkar, increasing numbers of Syrian families arrive in extremely vulnerable conditions, including 77 newly arrived families after the heavy shelling of their village of origin (Deir Azzar). At Aarida border crossing, UNHCR interviewed vulnerable families including one that left Syria at night because of bombings as well as a family of four separated boys (aged 9, 11 and 14) and girl (aged 12) accompanied by their 22 year-old brother, who was a draft evader. They entered illegally, crossing the river in an inflatable boat. These cases re-affirm the importance of the need for a systematic border monitoring presence and the capacity to respond immediately.
- On 20 April, the Arida and Abboudiyeh border crossings were reported closed. Following border visits, it was confirmed that commercial trucks were denied access but the border remained open for Syrians.
- Caritas confirmed that it has conducted exploratory visits to the border but has not yet established its full-time presence.
- UNRWA reported significant movements at al-Masnaa border point, recording some 200 PRS per day.
- **ACTION POINT: UNHCR will be working closely with partners in border locations to ensure regular presence and monitoring at border crossings and consolidate information.**

Legal Documentation & Freedom of Movement

- The Group discussed ongoing reports of curfews imposed by municipalities and confiscation of documents, including in Mt Lebanon and the Bekka. This can be seen in the backdrop of a separate, although possibly related, initiative of security cells in coordination with municipalities to register Syrians for census and monitoring purposes.
- It was noted that confiscation of documents by hospitals for lack of payment was frequently reported, including in some instances not releasing newborn babies.
- The Group discussed ongoing regularization activities, including those Syrians able to regularize their stay after payment of the fee and the current extensions for PRS.
- **ACTION POINT: Members of the PWG agreed to participate in a mapping of current restrictions on freedom of movement, curfews and instances of confiscation of documents. This will be coordinated through field-based PWGs.**

Community Outreach, Empowerment & Self-Reliance

- The Group briefly discussed outreach to communities and ongoing initiatives at community centers and SDCs. NRC noted the establishment of two new centres.
- In Tyre, it was noted that tensions between local communities and Syrians are on the increase and observed that both communities are showing less tolerance towards each other as well as concerns over prostitution in the facility.

C. Child Protection Update

- The national CPIPEWG meets on a fortnightly basis in Beirut (2nd and 4th Friday). A field-based CPIPEWG exists in Bekaa and North Lebanon.
- The CPIPEWG is in the process of finalising TORs, improving communication lines with field CPIPEWGs and developing coordination tools eg. 4Ws and referral charts.

- MOSA has recruited 52 social workers with the technical and financial support of UNICEF and UNHCR. The social workers will be located in 26 Social Development Centres to scale up the protection response and be active in referring cases. One social worker per SDC will focus specifically on child protection related cases.
- Reports of increasing incidents of child labour amongst refugee populations as families resort to negative coping mechanisms to cope with their economic hardship. Families are also marrying off their daughters at a younger age for economic reasons.
- UNHCR disaggregated data on registered SR identified as 'children at risk':
 - proportionally higher numbers of separated and unaccompanied children, children engaged in child labour and children with disabilities.
 - adolescent boys compose the majority of separated and unaccompanied minors (SUAM)
 - proportionally more cases of SUAM in North Lebanon

D. GBV Update

- Most PWG members involved in SGBV were attending the SGBV Emergency Preparedness and Response trainings occurring across the country. A reminder was made to RSVP to the 'Working Lunch' with the SGBV Task Force on 30 April at Le Commodore.

E. Contingency Planning

- As announced at the Inter-Agency meeting, there will be a workshop Refugee Response Contingency Planning to be held on 30 April. A task force of some 8 persons representing the Government, UN, INGOs, and national NGOs will address a proposed scenario of 50,000 arrivals either in one day or in one location. An ad hoc meeting will be called to present the contingency plan on 15 May. Meanwhile the UNCT will be holding a meeting to update the UNCT Contingency Plan on 8 May, which will be harmonized with the overall refugee response plan.

F. RRP5 Update

- A brief update was provided on the status of the RRP5 and the overall funding requirements and the upcoming process of review and finalization.

2. Identified Gaps or Issues

A. Protection in Tented Settlements

- The Group reviewed the current protection and coordination situation regarding: a) collective shelters, which currently is in the process of mapping with 62 collective shelters and 3,873 persons; and tented settlements, where a mapping has begun in Bekaa covering 203 settlements and 27,759 persons.
- It was noted that more systematic protection monitoring and assessments were needed in these areas due to heightened vulnerability and visibility.
- Questions were raised regarding the admission criteria to collective shelters as well as the coordination between the Shelter Sector and protection actors.
- **ACTION POINT: It was agreed to call for a separate meeting with the Shelter Working Group to develop strategies linking protection, shelter as well as possibly WASH and health.**

3.	Agreed Action Points :			
	Issue	Deadline	Responsible	Comment

	Distribution, review / comment and finalization of PWG TORs	22 May	UNHCR + all	
	Establishment of PWG Steering Group	13 May	UNHCR	
	Meeting on Protection in Tented Settlements with Shelter Sector	29 April	UNHCR + Shelter	
	Mapping of Curfews, Confiscation of Documents	22 May	Field-based PWGs	
	Consolidate Field-based Analysis of Populations Not Willing to be Registered	22 May	PWG Steering Group + Field-based PWGs	

Attachments

Document	Location
PWG Meeting 24 April, Powerpoint Presentation	
Draft Terms of Reference for Protection Working Group	