

Livelihoods Working Group (LWG) Meeting Minutes 05.05.2016

Meeting Location:	EMOPS Room at the UN Refugee Agency Branch Office (UNHCR) (BO) Amman, Jordan	Meeting Date:	05.05.2016
Facilitator:	Anna Gaunt (LWG chair)	Meeting Time:	9:00– 11:00
Minutes Prepared by:	Ruba Saleh UNHCR	Participants:	Please see table at the end of document

Agenda Items:

1. Update on livelihoods discussions with Government of Jordan (GoJ)
2. Update on UNHCR awareness raising campaign
3. Update from the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO) LWG
4. Update from the International Labour Organization (ILO) on Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with refugees with regards to work permits and issues encountered
5. Election of the co-chair of the LWG
6. Sector Gender Focal Point (SGFP)
7. Update on meeting with Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) on livelihoods project proposals - potential to submit proposals to livelihoods chair for comments and coordination
8. Updated list on occupations and education and distribution map
9. Draft contract template
10. AOB

Discussion	Action Points
<p style="text-align: center;">1. Update on Livelihoods Discussions with GoJ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An update was shared by UNHCR Representative about the latest discussions with GoJ on livelihoods activities, taking into consideration the political sensitivity with regards to encouraging Syrian refugees to obtain work permits. The importance of taking caution and discretion in the process in order to avoid negative perceptions from the local community was also addressed given the high unemployment rates amongst Jordanians. 	<p>18-59 years old, data to be shared on the portal.</p> <p>In regards to in camp refugees' access to work permits, information will be shared with the LWG group upon</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The collaborative effort of United Nations (UN) agencies and non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with support of donors is needed to encourage GoJ positive initiatives in regards to facilitating Syrian refugees’ access to work permits. - The 3 month grace period in which employers of Syrian workers are exempted from paying fees for work permits started on the 5th of April and ends on 4th July 2016 (inclusive). - Challenges affecting the process to obtaining work permits have been reported. The main constraints are a lack of skills that employers are interested in, having specific conditions by employers, geographical limitation in terms of the location of the employers and the accessibility to Syrian refugees, obtaining and Ministry of Interior (MoI) cards in addition to concerns of Syrian refugees on the effect of obtaining work permits on their financial assistance from UNCHR, Food vouchers from WFP and other assistance. - An SMS was shared by UNHCR to inform Syrian refugees that benefit from cash assistance (30 thousand families), that obtaining work permits is not going to affect the financial assistance provided by UNCHR this year. WFP will assess the possibility of addressing assuring message to the food vouchers beneficiaries. - Recent statistics showed that 350,000 Syrian individuals obtained MoI cards. 94% of them are registered with UNHCR. SMS were shared with Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR to encourage them to obtain MoI card, to re-affirm the new cost of health certificate, and to encourage work permit registration. - Following on a question raised in the previous LWG meeting about the linkages between inability to obtain MoI cards and vulnerability. It was noted that the major reason could be a back log at police stations level where Syrian refugees might wait up to two months to be able to obtain the MoI card. It was agreed to add questions related to MoI card by VAF team to the assessment questionnaire to assess if poverty has an impact on the application of MoI Cards. - The percentage of Syrians in the working age out of the total number registered was MoI requested. UNCHR will look into the profile of registered Syrians with MoI who are among the working age (18-59 years old) and the data will be shared on the portal. - It was agreed to follow a “do no harm approach” with regards to raising the issue of livelihoods activities in camps, in particular Zaatari camp who has a well-established economic mechanism in place. NGOs are encouraged by UNHCR to look into the option of supporting the market in Azraq camp and Emirati Jordanian Camp (EJC). 	<p>receiving updates from MoI and MoI on the process.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - With regards to refugees' access to work permits in camps, information will be shared with the LWG group upon receiving updates from MoL and Mol on the process. - The MoL has records currently approximately 200 work permits per day issued to Syrians since the beginning of the grace period. Unfortunately as MoL data system has been facing technical challenges in the last two weeks, segregated data on the issued work permits are not available yet. - Obtaining work permits is not an indicator of actual work. Data from the social security office could provide a basis to understand who receive regular salaries give an indication of the amounts that people might be earning. UNHCR is discussing with MoL a data sharing agreement to be able to access these information and harmonize with RAIS. Verification of the work permit data is needed for further analysis on the impact of work on household vulnerability. - Capacity Building seems to be required to strengthen the capacity of MoL to handle the new case load and respond positively to the new challenges faced by incorporating refugees into the Jordanian workforce. UNHCR is exploring ways to assist. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">2. Update on UNHCR Awareness Raising Campaign</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNHCR started an awareness raising campaign after receiving the GoJ numerous announcements with regards to access to work for Syrians. Over 140,000 SMS have been sent to Syrian households and Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) sheets have been prepared in Arabic and English to guide Syrian refugees in the process of applying for work permits. Assuring them that receiving work permits is not going to affect their refugee status or financial assistance. - UNHCR will produce an information video for refugees and conduct an outreach campaign in community centres. - A visit will be conducted to the labor directories to disseminate information and to raise their awareness on the difficulties faced by Syrian refugees in obtaining work permits. - Potential to explore if ILO could do outreach to employers. 	<p>To prepare visual messages related to work permits as part of the awareness raising campaign.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">3. Update from the Jordan INGO Forum Livelihoods Working Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The co-chair of Jordan INGO Forum (JIF) LWG provided an update related to the work of the group since it was established in 2015. 	<p>INGOS to come forward with proposals on livelihoods to be presented to the LWG group for discussion and coordination.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mapping current livelihoods activities – including in cash for work, skills development, MSME support as well as job placements/permitting – is a priority of the INGO LWG group and feedback is currently being received from partners. - Development of common protection monitoring approaches in livelihoods, as well as assessment approaches for skills mapping and in beneficiary selection procedures are the first priorities for the LWG. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">4. Update from ILO on FGDs with Refugees with Regards to Work Permits and Issues Encountered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO provided an update and feedback on the FGDs conducted with Syrian refugees in order to understand the reasons behind having low number of work permits issued for Syrians in comparison to the high expectations since the GoJ facilitations. - The FGDs have been conducted as the following; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amman governorate with a target group on the construction sector. • Irbid governorate with a target group on the agriculture sector. • Mafray governorate with a target group on retail and food services sectors. - Syrian participants reported the following challenges that affect their ability to obtain work permits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having to pay the fees required to regularize their jobs from informal to formal that includes paying social security by themselves. Although the process of applying for work permit is free of charge. • Reference to article 12 in the labour law that links work permits to the employer, a challenge has been reported in the agriculture and construction sectors – sectors where labourers tend to have direct linkages with an intermediary supervisor rather than the land owner or contractor. The concept of guarantor (Kafeel) appeared when workers have been approached by land owners who offered to facilitate the work permits process in exchange of commissions. • Access to humanitarian services and the implication of obtaining work permits on financial and other assistance received from UNHCR and other agencies. • Having to pay for a new health certificate, as reported by the participants in FGD conducted in Irbid, where workers have been asked to have new medical test and to present valid passport in the process. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ILO had a discussion with employers from the retail and food services for further information. Challenges reported are related to the cost of formalizing the jobs in addition to meeting the Jordanian quotas in the open sector. - In the construction sector, the employers reported the challenge of having to replace their migrant workers when formalizing Syrians to maintain the quota of 50% Jordanian and 50 % migrant worker including Syrians. - One focus group discussion revealed a potentially high incidence of child labour in the agriculture sector, to be researched further. - The option of having cooperatives apply for work permits on behalf of workers in the agriculture sector have been raised, and the concept of virtual employer was discussed with MoL. Further information to be shared as they become available. - On the discussion related to highly skilled Syrians, it was agreed to follow a project based approach to avoid negative perceptions and backlash from the local community. <p>ILO's presentation for further information related to the FGDs was uploaded on the LWG website.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">5. Election of the Co-chair of LWG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Profiles of the co-chair candidates, CARE and the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) have been shared along with the invitation to the LWG group. Co-chair election to take place during 8th and 9th of May using SurveyMonkey. Results of the election will be shared with LWG accordingly. - Each participant organization has been asked to nominate one focal point to receive the online voting invitation. Contact to be shared by 5th of May COB. - Co-chairs candidates provided a brief presentation on their organization and professional back ground. 	<p>Participant organizations to send focal point contact to Ruba Saleh (Salehru@unhcr.org) by COB 5th of May to receive the voting invitation.</p> <p>Co-chair election to take place during 8th & 9th of May.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">6. SGFP</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TORs for the SGFP were shared along with the meeting invitation. The role of the SGFP is to insure gender mainstreaming in their respective sectors. - SGFP network consists of two focal points per sector. A candidate from UNWOMEN expressed interest and was selected as the first SGFP for the LWG, NGOs have been encouraged to express their interest taking into consideration that the SGFP training will take place during 15-17th of May. 	<p>NGOs interested to be the second SGFP to share their interest with Ruba Saleh (Salehru@unhcr.org)</p>

<p>7. Update on Meeting with MoPIC on Livelihoods Project Proposals - Potential to Submit Proposals to Livelihoods Chair for Comments and Coordination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - On the 25th of April, a meeting with MoPIC took place regarding the revision of the current Jordan Response Plan (JRP) following the London conference in terms of livelihoods and education. - MoPIC is internally discussing two options: the first is to have an annex to the existing JRP 2016 to include livelihoods for refugees and new education projects. The second is to have a comprehensive review of the existing JRP for all sectors. Clear guidance from MoPIC on the preferred option and process is yet to be received. - New project proposals related to livelihoods activities are being submitted directly to MoPIC and not through the Jordan Response Information System for the Syria Crisis (JORISS) at the time being based on the feedback form the participants of the meeting. - Organizations are encouraged to present their approaches regarding livelihoods proposal during the upcoming LWG meetings. Feedback and guidance from sector chair and co-chair are available to the NGO if needed. Ensuring coordination is of outmost importance to guarantee that no overlap occurs and that targeting happens in accordance with VAF and important criteria. 	<p>NGOs wishing to present their approach in the upcoming LWG meeting are to contact</p> <p>Anna Gaunt (Gaunta@unhcr.org) or</p> <p>Ruba Saleh (Salehru@unhcr.org).</p>
<p>8. Update List on Occupation and Education and Distribution Map</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As agreed during the previous LWG meeting. The lists of occupation and education have been segregated to include further analysis in terms of geographical location and gender. Lists are available and to be shared with NGOs on individual request. - Occupation and Education fact sheets have been produced with general information. And will be available on the portal. 	
<p>9. Draft Contract Template</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ARDD (UNHCR legal partner) presented draft unified labor contract templates, definite and indefinite, that have been prepared with adherence to the Jordanian labor law. And have only 8 articles to make it easier for worker and employer to use. - A specific article was added to the contract to allow Syrian refugee employees to take a leave of absence in order to appear for appointments at UNHCR. This leave would can be deducted from their annual leave. 	<p>Draft contract to be reviewed and uploaded in UNHCR portal.</p> <p>ARDD to review car license requirements and the regulation in place to obtain them</p>

- Article 12 from the labor law has been explained. A fine no less than 50 JD no more than 100 JD is to be paid by the employer, if work permit was used in different sector or for different employer. In addition it states that work permits are tied to a specific employer, and mobile work permits are hence not possible.	
10. AOB	
Next meeting date: 2nd of June (2-4 pm) EMOPS Room UNHCR BO	

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