MINUTES OF IMWG MEETING -25/03/2015

Name	Information Management Working Group	Meeting Date	25/03/2015
Meeting Location	UNHCR, Lea Building	Meeting Time	10:00 A.M
Chair person	Wali Ahadi, Information Management Officer Jad Ghosn, Information Management Officer	Meeting Duration	2:00 hours
Minutes Prepared by	Mitch Levine, Associate IM Officer		
Purpose of Meeting	1. Presenting the IMWG revised ToR – by Jad/Wali 2. Presenting the new Vulnerability Map – by Hrayr/Wali 3. Regional Food Security Analysis Network – by Pardie 4. How and Why to use sponge base – by Jad 5. Presenting Dynamic dashboards – by Aung Thu 6. AOB		

Summary of discussions and action points

1.	Presentation of the IMWG Revised ToR
	Overview: Revised ToR of the IMWG presented. *See document: Information Management Working Group –revised ToR March2015.doc* The document will be sent around for review, open for comments until COB next Friday (4 April). Largest change is that Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) will co-chair the IMWG, also IMWG meetings will most likely be held at MOSA. LCRP terminology and language added to open the group more widely to development partners. Objective is aligned with IMWG global and IASC guidelines. IMWG reports to the Inter-Sectoral Coordinators (Kerstin from UNHCR and Afke from UNDP). ToR will be revised every 6 months and final version will be circulated. Assessment Working Group (AWG) was originally created under the IMWG, but there is some discussion about whether the AWG should fall under the IMWG or just operate alongside it. The ToR reflects this discussion as it no longer includes any assessment related information. The Data Task Force (DTF) is still going to be under the IMWG. The DTF is open to people to join, but it is a highly technical group, so attendees should be aware. **Discussion:** The AWG has a technical team. Was suggested that the relationship between the DTF, AWG and IMWG be clarified directly in their relative documents (ToRs). More explicit discussion is needed about what's in the field to avoid having standards not being implemented at the field level. This was raised specifically regarding excel based 4Ws in the field versus using Activity Info. Rotating locations for the IMWG in the various field offices was raised and more or less agreed upon as a good idea, but unclear how it would work logistically especially with MOSA's new role. Jad agreed to look into it with MOSA. Notification of the meeting time and place, and proposed agenda to be circulated at least a week in advance to allow for better field attendance.

	Actions:
	- All WG members to review the ToR and provide feedback by COB next Friday (3 April)
	- Future IMWG invitations and agendas to be sent one week in advance to try to get better field involvement
	- IMWG co-chairs will discuss with Inter-Sectoral coordination unit the feasibility of rotating locations for the IMWG monthly meetings.
2.	**Vulnerability Map**
	Overview: Revised vulnerability map was created in partnership with MOSA, UNDP, UNHCR, OCHA and UNICEF. Proposed maps were circulated previously, this is the result of that exercise. Vulnerability is determined by the Multi-Depivation Index (MDI), Lebanese Population data (2002 CAS), and Refugee Population (Syrian refugees, as well as PRS and PRL from UNHCR and AUB/UNRWA). These indexes are combined using a geomean, broken into quintiles to have the 5 different rankings for the all cadasters. The top quintile in terms of vulnerability (251 cadasters) was taken and then broken into a further 5 quintiles to measure vulnerability amongst these 251 most vulnerable. An index measuring pressure (specifically on resources) was added on top of this ranking based on UNDPs calculation measuring the ratio of Syrians to local population. That value is broken into two categories: the High Pressure category is above a 1:1 ratio, and Substantial Pressure is 3:1 to 1:1. **Discussion:** Was NTPT data still included? No, changed to be more broadly based in terms of vulnerability. Pressure is not in all areas that have a lot of refugees, only in those which have few Lebanese compared to Syrians. This is flawed, but is the only available data. Need to use qualitative methods for incorrect areas. However, these 251 cadasters cover 87% of refugees. UNDP suggests that the limitations just need to be made very clear, and laid out up front. This includes the issues of breaking down the vulnerability at the cadaster level. This is partly because of the non 1:1 relationship between cadasters and municipalities (upon which the Pressure index was conceived as a measure of pressure on services which are delivered mainly through municipalities). The information is also out of date and filled with many complex and different measures that are difficult to combine. The UNRWA figure is from a survey 4 years ago, plus information on PRS. The map needs to include a date for the PRS figure. Question about whether there is a document that explains the methodology in more detail. There is a full book on the MDI, which was derived in 1998. The data in the book isn't there in English, but the methodology from 1998 is the same. Previous versions of the map also indicate more details on the methodology, but is unclear if there is a specific methodology document. Question about the rationale of moving away from the poverty line toward this index. It was based on recommendations from MOSA. The poverty divided the country into 8 groups, MDI is into 15, so is more refined. Also the MDI uses a multi-sector approach to vulnerability, not just socio-economic vulnerability. Comparison between the poverty and MDI show that the difference between them is pretty limited. Also the data source remains the same (2004 study by MOSA). Disaggregation should have been the same, since the information is from the same source. Unclear then why poverty could not just have been disaggregated at the same level, but point about multi-sector approach to vulnerability remains. Has there been any actual review of whether this is explaining the real vulnerability situation better than poverty? Yes, multiple versions of this data were circulated, and the recommendation from the team as well as MOSA were to use the MDI and current vulnerability map. Additional issue raised regarding using cadaster data that is taken through a non-representative sample. Most convincing argument (from UNDP) to use this data is that while there are possibilities of getting better data, doing so would skew data in ways that are unpredictable based on localized data conditions (i.e. how well the municipality keeps track of their information). The dataset used is a national dataset

that has flaws, but has these flaws applied evenly across all of Lebanon without localized issues, which are much harder to understand and take into account.

Social Stability WG representative (Bastion): Need to use more qualitative data. The REACH/OCHA/UNICEF survey is almost finalized and will help add a lot of qualitative data. This is critical to better understand pressures and tensions. The SS group will keep the IMWG updated as this develops and in the spirit of the vulnerability index being a "living document".

Final practical point is that there are more than 5 groups, as pressure is added on top of the 5 quintiles. This should be reclassified and somehow indicated. Raw data sheet will be shared in which this is done.

UNRWA is redoing the AUB survey on the 270,000 PRL so this will get better in terms of accuracy once it is put into the vulnerability index.

Generally agreed that this is just a starting point. It's a living document and should not be considered final.

Needs to be explained to donors in a cautionary note that direct targeting should not be based on this. So "Given the various data limitations, the recommendation is to use this as potential guidance, but there may be exceptions…"

Action Point:
- Multiple fixes to the map, most notably better data sourcing and a kind of "waiver" expressing the know limitations of the index, and non-recommended uses.
- Will be circulated for comment by the group, and presented at the next Inter-Sectoral meeting.

3.	**Regional Food Security Analysis Network**

Overview:

iMMAP and FAO joint project funded by USAID. Looking at the sub-region of the Syria Crisis. Bringing all the various stakeholders and with networking, capacity building, and information based decision making. Going identify the population in need, stronger evidence based programming and improved network of food security specialists.

Regionally there is a large team of IM and food security specialists.

Will contribute to a variety of different aspects of food security with all the big food security stakeholders. The scope is on food security. Will produce situation analysis and monitoring reports, special studies, knowledge management platforms, etc…

Discussion:

What will the mapping be of? Where is food? No, the focus will be on different themes and will come out regional and national work plans based on needs and gaps. There will be regional and national level products and analysis. Raised that more localized projects are needed, this was well received and will be considered by the project managers.

The situation analysis is being worked on now and is effectively a secondary data review and analysis. The Country Plan will be the next major product and will be shared in this group. Workshop next month will help to identify priorities and the game plan moving forward.

How does this link into the Joint Analysis Unit? There is no link yet. What is the plan? They are sure there will be collaboration, but the project is just getting started.

FAO and the ministry of Ag will work closely together

Action Points:

FAO to keep IMWG posted.

4.	**Sponge Base Mapping Platform Presentation**

Overview:

	Why Spongbase? To absorb all the data that is available like a sponge and put it into a central database. Links common operation datasets (Administrative Units mainly) to multiple datasets (i.e. Activity Info). Everything is directly linked to updated systems (latest IAMP, latest AI data, etc…). You can search by names or pcodes, and then bring up multiple datasets of information. When you bring up the multiple datasets, you can also filter down the pieces of information by sector, keywords, etc… Multiple geographic levels are possible including informal settlements, schools, PHCs, Villages, etc… It will also be able aggregate at the higher levels. It will display information at cadaster level, for instance, not just by what has been reported directly at the cadaster level, but also what was reported at sites within that. Link: spongebase.org **Discussion:** How often will it be updated? It's live linked to all data sources, so it's always up to date. Soon will also link to RAIS. Is it possible to integrate with the HH assessment by Area? Yes, but it needs to be done through the aggregation tool. Hopefully will be done today. Would be great to link to municipality data (from UNDP). Refugee population to cadaster will also be available per cadaster. Will have an additional menu that can add additional visualizations on the same map. For instance WASH actors, or vulnerable cadasters. Will soon be linked to a dropbox that people can put excel sheets which will be absorbed. What quality control will there be? There will be one, basically the community of the IMWG. Either going to be rigid, or going be flexible in terms of allowance, currently learning toward flexibility. Discussion on the filtering for this is necessary, but as it's not online, that will come later. Need for more analysis tools to be integrated Need for more help on this project (specifically people with Python, PhP, Javascript, and HTML skills). Can add filters to the table results that pop up per site. Are categories limited to what has already been shown? No, only limited to geographic codes that exist. There needs to be a body to help manage some of the issues that will come up as this develops. This relates to cleaning datasets as well as managing issues like metadata documents. **Action Points:** • Anyone with coding friends should refer them to this project (James Cranwell Ward and Jad Ghosn). • James (Unicef) to send out a forum to allow comments on the project so they can collect in the same place. • Lots of suggested changes to the tool which need to be done, but acknowledged that limited human resources to work on this. • IMWG will remain informed as this develops and changes.
5.	**Interactive Dashboards**
	Overview: Sector Dashboards will be created for all sectors and published (not yet). Only protection has been created as an example. The dashboard takes information directly from Activity Info, which is taken from the LCRP reporting frameworks. The Dashboard visualizes the information per single indicators in graphs, maps and charts. Can be filtered down to Area of Operation, Funding Agency, LCRP result, and Month. The system also shows targets and achieved results. The map will link to a more detailed map which shows information down to village and other site level.

	This is a really powerful tool to complement the other tools (like Spongebase) because it's used to approach the same data from a different angle (indicator vs. geographic unit).
	This, along with everything else being developed by the interagency IM Unit is open source and available on GitHub.
	The interactive dashboard also takes highlights from monthly produced static dashboards which provide a narrative approach to the data.
	Discussion:
	Needs to be further clarification between the various products and whether they are dynamic or status in terms of their link to ActivityInfo. This is particularly critical because until the middle of every month, the data is not considered "validated" and so may not be correct.
	Action:
	- Feedback on the tool to be sent to IM Unit - IM Unit to finish the remaining sectors - IM Unit also to change the map to go to larger geographical scales for more possibilities to use in the field.
6.	**AOB**
	Overview:
	Alison Ely, the founder and visionary behind the IAMP project is leaving. She is being replaced by Naomi from Medair.
	IAMP SOPs are still in draft phase. Funding has been secured and mapping activities will resume throughout the country shortly. SOPs should be finalized soon, shortly after which there will be an SOP workshop for everyone to attend.
	Bastion: Congrats on the Host Community Tracking Document launch, updated through the end of the year. Promote use of the document. There was a report on TV on this, and has been included in the press briefing for the LCRP.
	James (UNICEF): Governorate layer was changed, is there new official coding? No, will be sorted by OCHA and government.
	Difference in Shapefiles we use (local) vs. international UN standards. Jad will produce a footnote on this and share.
	VASyR 2015 was discussed at last AWG. Idea is to collect the same information as last year, will be discussed in AWG.
	CSMC is trying to track registered versus unregistered.

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