

Minutes of Istanbul Basic Needs Sector Working Group (WG) Meeting

January 17, 2018

Time & location:	17 January 2018, UNHCR FO Istanbul
Chaired by:	Hilary Bowman (UNHCR – BN co-coordinator) and Dina Morad (WFP - BN co-coordinator)
Participants:	UNHCR / WFP / UNFPA / HRDF / ASAM / Save The Children / Mavi Kalem / Sevgi ve Kardeslik Foundation / AAR Japan / Support to Life / WALD

Agenda Item	Summary of Discussions	Action Point/Time Frame
Welcome and Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BN Co-chair welcomed participants and explained agenda points. 	
Outcomes from Sector Coordinator Mission to Istanbul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic Needs Inter-Agency mission team explained the outcomes of their mission to Istanbul. The mission team met with 8 agencies between 15 and 17 January 2018. The points arising from the mission are summarised as follows: The mission team underlined that they witnessed an increasing linkage between basic needs and livelihoods, where basic needs programming decreased and livelihoods programming increased over time. The mission team highlighted the importance of accurate and timely reporting by all active partners for the identification of gaps and prevention of duplication. The mission team noted that some partners are engaged in CBI without reporting these activities due to a possible confusion under which sector to report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sector leads to bring up need for LH working group or group to coordinate LH activities in IST at the Feb STF

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector leads to share reporting guidance on CBI in cooperation with other related sectors, such as Protection.
Basic Needs Activities – Activity Info, mapping of CRIs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above, BN co-coordinator noted the importance and necessity of reporting of transitional cash/stop-gap assistance and emergency funds, which will enable better planning of efforts. • BN co-coordinator proposed collecting information from partners re: the contents of hygiene/dignity/maternity kits being distributed in Istanbul AoR which can later be uploaded to Activity Info. Such a collection of information has already taken place in Izmir. It was also suggested including information on activities around transitional cash/stop-gap assistance and emergency funds, for the same purposes. This will compliment regular reporting on Activity Info. • The same collection of information will be undertaken throughout the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector leads to share spreadsheet to collect info on contents of hygiene kits. To be completed and returned to co-leads by: 16 February 2018.
BNWG Work Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector leads reported that a Basic Needs Sector work plan for 2018 has been prepared at the central level. • This work plan reflects 3RP objectives to improve living conditions, strengthen municipal services and strengthen coordination between IM and reporting. • The work plan also includes a roadmap for guidance, for the purposes of evaluating the success of the activities of the basic needs sector. • To avoid the creation of a parallel work plan, it was suggested that certain activities that are not reflected in this work plan and are Istanbul-specific may be included under a specific section. BNWG are invited to evaluate the work plan and share their feedback. • There is a shelter workshop in Gaziantep on 7 February 2018, which will follow from IOM’s shelter study and their findings, which were shared with BNWG in November 2017. This IOM study was South East specific. Although the crossover between South East and Istanbul is not focused on for now, outcomes regarding shelter in South East may also guide programming in Istanbul as well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BNWG work plan to be shared with participants for their input. Inputs to be shared to Sector leads by: 16 February 2018.
Coordination with Municipalities Workshop Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNHCR FO Istanbul made a presentation regarding the outcomes of the Coordination with Municipalities Workshop. • FO Istanbul has had bilateral relationships with Marmara municipalities and metropolitan municipalities since 2009. They have held coordination meetings 5 times. The latest coordination workshop was held in December 2017, in coordination with WALD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation and report on the outcomes of the Coordination with Municipalities Workshop to be shared with the participants.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FO Istanbul highlighted successful examples of collaboration with municipalities in identification of vulnerabilities and referring them to SHMs. Accordingly, it is important to learn existing municipality mechanisms and support them to include refugees and asylum-seekers as municipalities have the budget and spaces. The presentation also briefly included the legal and administrative background of municipal services to shed light onto the scope of our collaboration with them in the refugee response. • Municipalities are also important for their representation and consultation mechanisms. Accordingly, it would be better to engage refugees in existing mechanisms or establish refugee commissions under municipalities. • FO Istanbul noted that municipalities are also important for the community centres in Istanbul. Having referred to the on-going discussion on whether the law directly obliges the municipalities or not, FO Istanbul underlined that the legislations regarding municipalities in fact enable municipalities to be further involved in refugee response. FO Istanbul noted that issuance of further regulations may clarify the law and the municipalities' sphere of obligations. • FO Istanbul noted that certain municipalities are concerned because if they are to expand their budget to cover refugees, they may face problems with the Council of State where they may face close monitoring. FO Istanbul invited participants to share any examples on this issue that they are aware of. • FO Istanbul underlined that, although municipalities may keep a low profile with respect to their activities due to their reluctance to face backlash from the host community, they undertake a tremendous work and generously extend help to refugees. • FO Istanbul further noted that many municipalities face difficulties either because they do not have enough budget or human resources, or because their services are not harmonised. • Further information on the outcomes of the Coordination with Municipalities Workshop can be found in the report attached hereto. • AAR Japan inquired how to increase refugee participation in decision-making. FO Istanbul replied that there are two opportunities that may be utilised. First is the city councils, who make recommendations to municipal parliaments. Although they have an advisory role, their recommendations are prioritised. Refugees may either be included in the already established commissions or a new refugee commission may be established. These commissions will also be able to give information to municipalities on issues such as basic needs or livelihoods. Second mechanism is the municipal parliaments, which is a part of the decision-making mechanism. NGOs participate and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference to be shared with the participants, so that they will be able to provide feedback and recommendations. • Whether a ToT programme is necessary to cover the gap in livelihoods will be discussed. • Legislations on municipalities may be shared with participants upon request.
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	<p>state their opinions, indirectly voicing the concerns of the refugees. Another example is the representation of Syrian NGOs in AFAD coordination meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sevgi ve Kardeslik Foundation inquired how to involve Turkish citizens in this dialogue. They noted that there are centres attracting both Turkish and Syrian children for them to integrate, where both Turkish and Syrian women also attended. FO Istanbul highlighted the importance of social leaders, such as imams and mukhtars in this regard. FO Istanbul also noted that increasing coordination and referral mechanisms is important. • AAR Japan underlined that ISMEK centres are very crowded and there wasn't space for refugees. They also suggested having a focal point to ensure that someone disseminates accurate information regarding the relevant legislations, especially on livelihoods. FO Istanbul responded that they have partners giving trainings and entrepreneurship programs, which may not be sufficient and there may be gaps. One possible solution may be to divide districts into partners and enhance capacity development. • FO Istanbul noted some crosscutting issues that involve livelihoods. For example, ensuring that SGBV survivors have access to livelihoods is a crosscutting issue and also requires coordination with municipalities, who will be in a better position to provide help. • The necessity of visiting other municipalities and NGOs in order to share good practices and lessons learned and finding ways to bring municipalities together to exchange information was underlined. • FO Istanbul underlined that UNHCR and WALD will share responsibility in undertaking coordination, coming up with action points and discussing for ways to implement them. One challenge that WALD has identified is that municipalities do not have a single unit that may be addressed with respect to coordination. Each municipality has a different unit. Therefore, they are trying to introduce a standard to ensure that solutions are better implemented. • FO Istanbul noted that DGMM's social cohesion and harmonisation department was open to be engaged in a coordination mechanism alongside with WALD and PDMMs. Accordingly, new strategies are being developed to ensure coordination as well as actively engaging municipalities in these mechanisms. • A declaration will be discussed among the participants of the coordination workshop, which will be an important part of the coordination mechanism between municipalities. 	
<p>Updated Meeting Schedule for BNWG and ESSN TF</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is proposed to have the Istanbul BNWG meetings on a bi-monthly basis, coinciding with the ESSN TF to facilitate people's schedules. • The BNWG meetings will be held on the 2nd Monday of every other month. • ESSN TF meetings will continue to be held monthly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next BNWG meeting will be held on 12 March 2018.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If need arises, frequency of meetings may be discussed.• AAR Japan suggested establishing a working group or a platform on health where information, best practices and lessons learned will be exchanged between relevant stakeholders. FO Istanbul noted that crosscutting issues on health are already being discussed during the PWG, where a small task force is working together with PDoH to come up with solutions, identify gaps and prepare a paper on this issue. UNHCR also underlined that they may speak with WHO regarding the possibility of a health working group.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sector leads to bring up need for Health WG or group to coordinate health needs in IST at the Feb STF
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Next BNWG meeting @ 12 March 2018