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| **MINUTES – NATIONAL REFUGEE PROTECTION WORKING GROUP** | | | |
| **Date** | 25th April 2019 | **Venue** | UNHCR |
| **Agenda** | * Opening remarks * Review of previous minutes * Protection Updates * Presentation on the PSEA TF Action Plan * Presentation on “The Heroes Journey” (a pilot program to help address MHPSS needs of young people in Rwamwanja settlement) by Tutapona * Presentation on the Access to Justice Policy Paper by International Justice Mission (IJM) * All Sub WGs and Task Teams to provide strategic updates * AOB | | |
| **Attendance** | UNHCR, OPM, IJM, UN RCO, Tutapona, CRS, PLAN International, TPO, NRC, HI, ARC, UNICEF, DRC, Save the Children, CAFOMI. UNDP, BRAC, OXFAM, UN WOMEN, CRRF | | |
| **Chair** | Yoko Iwasa (UNHCR), Muhammad Hussein (OPM) | | |
| **Note Taker** | Duncan Mato | | |
|  | **Review of previous minutes of meeting** | **Recommendations/Action points** | **Responsible** |
|  | * From the previous action points, FRRM newsletter, ActivityInfo SOPs, and link for partners to access PSEA training were shared with invitations for the meeting * SPO SGBV to be the focal point to provide updates from PSEA task team meetings to the NRPWG * The Protection Advisory Group (PAG) has provided inputs on the CRRF roadmap, the Jobs and livelihoods response plan (JLRP) and the Vulnerability and Essential Needs Assessment (VENA). * The IM team shared the final versions of all relevant documents to fully prepare partners for the first online reporting for the Activity info tool. * It was highlighted that despite the various trainings on the activity info tool at Kampala level, partners at the field (West Nile in particular) expressed that they had not received particular training on the tool. | * Reach out to UNHCR IM team on activity info training   **MINUTES ADOPTED** |  |
|  | **Protection Updates** | **Recommendations/Action points** | **Responsible** |
|  | * Although there has been a decrease in the number of new arrivals from DRC between Feb and March, the situation in North and South Kivu remains highly volatile due to continued armed attacks, threatening civilians’ security and hampering the Ebola response. * There has been a slight decrease in the number of arrivals from Burundi (458 in Feb to 361 in March). * The number of SSD new arrivals in March dropped slightly from 4635 in Feb to 4101. * UNHCR issued an updated non-return advisory that maintained that the conditions in SSD are not yet conducive for voluntary return. * There have been reports of cross border back and forth movements of SSD refugees. * Members requested an update from UNHCR on the claim that there were about 7,000 Congolese stuck in primary school in DRC, 1km from border. * The Parliamentary Forum on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (PFR-IDPs) was launched on 27th March 2019. * The data collection phase of the new food distribution SOPs was completed. The final report is expected to be completed in May. | * UNHCR paper position on returns to South Sudan was shared with the group * Provide Update at the next meeting | * Zainab   (UNHCR)   * UNHCR |
|  | **Presentation on PSEA TF Action Plan** | **Recommendations/Action points** | **Responsible** |
|  | * The purpose of the Action Plan is to define a time specific set of actions based on a shared and coordinated approach by the UN in Uganda to address sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA). * The action plan promotes a coherent, harmonized and coordinated approach to prevention and protection against SEA across all partner organizations in communities where UN operates. * The scope of the plan spans four years (2017 to 2020) and will be reviewed periodically. It links to the UNDAF as well as other programming and response frameworks. * The Uganda specific action plan emphasizes higher standards of accountability than that prescribed by the Secretary General’s Bulletin. * The plan emphasizes that community based reporting mechanisms are established in all locations to facilitate a system wide approach to reporting and grievance management. * SOPs at the Inter agency level are yet to be formulated. This is a key action point to be tracked following the task team meeting on 10th April. * A work plan had been developed. However, much of it was not undertaken prior to the task team meeting in April. It is hoped that the action plans will be taken up by the task team. * Training on community based complaints mechanisms have been held in 5 different locations. 4 of the 5 locations are in refugee settings while the other is in a non-refugee setting of Karamojong. Training is envisioned to take place in all locations of UN’s operations. * Local networks have been established in all areas where UNHCR operates. This is also stipulated in the action plan and UNHCR is tasked under the action plan to take the lead. * The national taskforce chaired by the Resident Coordinators office and comprised of key agencies would form a core team. The task force is meant to meet once every quarter and provide oversight, technical support and accountability at the various levels. * The task force also supports the establishment of community based PSEA networks, ensures equal representation of women and men, supporting resource mobilization and supporting unified communication to external partners and donors on PSEA. * It was highlighted by a representative from the RCs Office that there was a gap in coordination of the PSEA action plan as a result of staffing shortfalls at the RCs office. This gap has since been filled with the appointment of a focal point working on behalf of the RCO as a coordinator. | * SOPs will be shared with the group upon completion | Mildred (UNHCR) |
|  | **Presentation on “The Heroes Journey” by Tutapona** | **Recommendations/Action points** | **Responsible** |
|  | * It was highlighted that there is a gap in targeted mental health support specifically for children. This is the primary motivation for the program. * The “Heroes Journey” program is child focused and based on post traumatic growth theory. * Tutapona has worked towards getting a modified MoU with OPM to expand its work to children. Tutapona is also in contact with UNICEF, UNHCR and other partners on the ground. * It was highlighted by Tutapona that working with children is a new focus. As such, the organization is open to learning and therefore, members of the working group can share contacts of other partners that are known to be conducting similar programmes. * Currently, Tutapona operates in four refugee settlements (Rwamwanja, Nakivale, Oruchinga and Adjumani) and is looking to expand the program to each of the sites where it has field offices. Organizations that are interested in collaborating in the roll out and scaling of the program are welcome. * There have been some promising results from the program. So far, one program has been conducted and a second will be concluded soon. Using the Child post-traumatic stress symptoms scale, there has been a 48% reduction in self-reported trauma symptoms. Further, using the post traumatic growth index for children there has been a 168% improvement. * It was highlighted that Tutapona is working with Save the Children’s child friendly spaces which is a mix of school going and non-school going children. * Tutapona is also engaged in adult programmes that have a similar theme. The Organization has not employed the training of trainers (TOT) model as it is difficult to ensure that standard of service is maintained in delivering mental health assistance. * With regard to the potential for relapses, it was highlighted that in the adult programs, refresher programs are conducted three months later. It was emphasized that staff are always available for follow-up and individual sessions. | * Share contacts of partners conducting similar programmes * Organizations interested in collaborating should reach out to Tutapona | * All * All |
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|  | **Presentation on Access to Justice Policy Paper** | **Recommendations/Action points** | **Responsible** |
|  | * The paper highlights the importance of access to justice for refugees, identifies key gaps and makes recommendations for the CRRF steering group. The assumption here is that the steering group has the mandate to see these recommendations through. * It was highlighted that conversations held in 2018 were encouraging a legal aid bill to be tabled at Parliament. The legal aid bill stipulates that Uganda will provide legal aid services to all vulnerable persons in Uganda. It was therefore emphasized that actors involved in the refugee response should advocate for the inclusion of refugees into this bill. * It was noted that institutional challenges such as case backlog, corruption and non-operational courts persist. A number of courts are not operational and a good number of these are located in refugee hosting districts. * It was highlighted that there is a bill on witness protection that members of the group could speak towards to highlight key issues.   **Recommendations in the paper**   1. Inclusion of JLOS into the CRRF. 2. CRRF steering group prioritises funding for projects and initiatives that enhance access to justice. 3. CRRF steering group engages with relevant actors to ensure that refugee law is incorporated in the curriculum at the police training schools and law schools around the country. 4. CRRF steering group engages relevant government institutions to expedite the passing of the legal aid bill and the law on witness protection. 5. CRRF steering group, through JLOS, lobbies for the operationalization of magistrates’ courts that are currently non-functional in refugee hosting districts. 6. CRRF steering group lobbies government to operationalise mobile court sessions as an interim measure to meet the current pressing access to justice needs. 7. CRRF steering group engages the Government to devise avenues for victims of crimes committed in home countries to access justice; this could be through advocating or supporting the roll out of transitional justice processes.   **Comments:**   * It was highlighted that much of the paper focused on formal justice systems. As such, there is need to focus on informal justice systems and appreciate traditional mechanisms of dispute resolution. * It was highlighted that it would be helpful to qualify the types of crimes committed in the countries of origin. It was noted that it is difficult to involve international jurisdiction in regular crimes unless those crimes effectively amount to an infringement of customary international law. It was recommended that further research on how international legal jurisprudence can help in prosecution may be required. * It was noted that in the context of emergency responses (often short term) and long term court processes, we need to be realistic on what can be achieved. It was also suggested that we need to work with development partners in order to understand the complexities around access to justice. * It was suggested that the sustainability of mobile court sessions needs to be looked into. As such, building the capacity of the JLOS should be emphasized. The paper should strengthen the idea of building the whole justice system. * Cross border issues are a grey area and the paper should expound further on these issues. * It was highlighted that issues of under reporting and stigma should be emphasized in the paper. As such, the paper should not only consider systemic challenges but also communal level challenges.   (The IJM team called for members of the working group to share statistics on stigmatization and specifics to feed into the paper)   * It was noted that there was a lack of understanding of basic concepts of the Ugandan legal system. It is therefore important to encourage JLOS to engage non-formal justice systems and raise awareness on the legal system. * It was suggested by a representative of the CRRF Secretariat that the IJM team should invite OPM to the next JLOS meeting and brief other Government entities on the paper. The CRRF road map would also be shared with the IJM team. | * Advocate for the inclusion of refugees in the legal aid bill. * Share the legal aid bill * Share statistics and specifics on stigmatization if available. * Share CRRF road map | * All * IJM * All * Leslie   (CRRF) |
|  | **Updates from Sub working Groups** |  | |
| **Child Protection SWG**  **(CPSWG)** | * A meeting is due to be held with the SGBV and Community-based protection sub sector leads on 26th April to look at the potential to integrate provision of protection services. * The CPSWG is looking at reviewing the paper on alternative care to come up with a revised version. A 1st draft was developed last year. * The family tracing and reunification taskforce for unaccompanied and separated children has been created and will hold its first meeting on Thursday May 2nd. * There will be a joint meeting in May between Child protection and Education to discuss Safe school programming by Child protection and education actors. * The CP SWG will begin developing the child protection strategy for refugee children in May * The Kampala CPSWG publishes minutes of its meetings on the portal. |  | |
|  | **NEXT MEETING 30th May 2019** |  | |