Minutes of Health Working Group Meeting

Beirut-Mount Lebanon

Location: Virtual Meeting via Webex

Time/Date: 10:00-11:30, April 7th, 2020

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| **List of participants** |

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| Name | Organization |
| Hanan Bou Dart | AEC |
| Naya Ezzedine | IMC |
| Iman Khalil | IMC |
| Layal Shaya | MF |
| Linda Fakhredine | INARA |
| David Tabbara | IMC |
| Jean Pierre El Khoury | IOM |
| Fedaa Al Fakih | MoSA |
| Rana Amer | PU-AMI |
| Serop Ohapian | Karagheusian PHCc |
| Joyce Hayek | IOCC |
| Mohamad Al Shwike | URDA |
| Mohamad Al Zayed | Amel |
| Fadi Martinos | Restart |
| Sara Bakri | Islamic Relief Lebanon |
| Cynthia Feghaly | UNHCR |
| Maguy Bou Tayeh | UNHCR |

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|  | **Issue** | **Actor (focal agency)** | **Deadline** |
| 1.  2. | **Updates from partners on response to COVID -19**   * **UNHCR COVID-19 Response**: **Step 1- Prevention: Community engagement and awareness raising.** - Precautionary measures were disseminated via SMS to refugee families. Communication campaign through social media platforms on hygiene promotion and key updates from MoPH, UNICEF and WHO. Dissemination of COVID-19 information material through awareness sessions in all refugee tented settlements and collective shelters.  - Trainings provided in March to humanitarian staff and refugee population. More than 400 UNHCR staff and frontline workers trained and mobilized. Continual trainings of health and non-health partners. More than 6000 community members trained and trusted.  - Ongoing distribution of soap and hygiene kits to refugee families in informal settlements and collective shelters across the country.   **Step 2- Containing Transmission: Reduction of movements and isolation procedures in overcrowded settings.** - Guidance on home isolation and treatment include: 1) Level 1: Self-isolation at household level: when the number of cases identified within the Informal Settlements (IS) by MoPH team to home-quarantine is considered minor.  2) Level 2: Community isolation at the community level: when the number of cases identified within the IS advised by MoPH team to home quarantine is considered major.  3) Level 3: Municipality isolation at municipal level: when the number of cases identified within the IS is both major AND affecting clusters of informal settlements in close proximity. 4) Level 4: Full quarantine: when the number of cases identified within the IS advised by MoPH team to home-quarantine is major and affects more than 50% of the individuals.   **Step 3- Treatment and Case Management: Supporting the expansion of existing capacity for hospitalization and intensive care to ensure that COVID-19 infected persons in need can be given treatment and avoid competition for care.** - Support to refugee population for improved COVID-19 detecting and reporting through: 1) Technical support to the MoPH COVID-19 call center. 2) Human resources (9 nurses) support to MoPH COVID-19 call center.  - Support to public and private hospital service delivery in the COVID-19 response: 1) Extend existing in a selected number of COVID-19 hospitals, including additional beds and intensive care units. 2) Establish stand-alone facilities to treat refugee population if the national capacity in reached, including additional beds and intensive care units.  3) Provide staffing support. 4) Provide additional equipment. 5) UNHCR will cover 100% of test and treatment for refugee patients.   **Intervention requested from partners willing to intervene in level 1 and 2:** 1) Identify and train caretaker and family on measures of self-isolation and use of PPE. 2) Assess if family members or individuals at site are presenting symptoms. 3) Inform the family on how to report if new family members showing symptoms or if the patient’s condition deteriorated.  4) Monitor the patient’s health condition. 5) Refer or provide MHPSS.  In BML, UNHCR is identifying potential sites for level 3 isolation which will need to be assessed and cleared by the government.  **Action points:** - Health Partners interested in the operationalization of the isolation in overcrowded setting are kindly requested to inform UNHCR . Another meeting will then be held to agree on interventions, roles and responsibilities and the areas/sites division assigned after coordination with Shelter/Wash. - Partners involved in food and hygiene kits distribution are advised to coordinate with UNHCR BA (Nour Fakih on [fakih@unhcr.org](mailto:fakih@unhcr.org) and Tarek Hamatto on [hamatto@unhcr.org](mailto:hamatto@unhcr.org)) and Shelter/Wash (Dima Jamileh on [jamileh@unhcr.org](mailto:jamileh@unhcr.org) and Samer Ismail on [ismailsa@unhcr.org](mailto:ismailsa@unhcr.org)) to avoid duplication.   * **IMC:** - Field activities are ongoing and IMC is focusing on how PHCcs are screening for COVID-19 and if the procedure followed is based on MoPH training received on infection prevention control. IMC is monitoring use of PPEs and availability of isolation rooms within the PHCcs for suspected cases.  - IMC procured and distributed PPEs and thermometers to supported PHCcs in BML.  - PHCcs staff is being trained on how to refer suspected cases.  - At to community outreach level, outreach activities were suspended. IMC is raising awareness sessions on COVID-19 to beneficiaries approaching the PHCc and is distributing hygiene kits. Moreover, the team is contacting beneficiaries who were reached by IMC and sharing key messages on COVID 19.  - IMC is facing challenges related to PPE budgeting and procurement.  - IMC is willing to intervene in BML COVID-19 response level 1 and 2. * **Amel:** - PHCcs staff were trained on IPC and PPEs usage. Patients in PHCcs are being screened at entry level and suspected cases are referred as MoPH guidance.  - Awareness sessions and IEC materials are being provided to beneficiaries approaching the PHCcs. - Key messages on COVID-19 are being disseminated to beneficiaries through WhatsApp.  - Support is being provided for the MoPH COVID-19 call center under UNHCR funding. 9 nurses were recruited by Amel to cover 3 shifts (24/7). The call center response capacity was increased from 1 call to 8 phone calls at a time. The expected number of calls is 200-300 calls/day. TORs, SOPs and establishment of a reporting system are in still process.  - Amel is facing challenges related to PPE budgeting, payment methods, availability and procurement.  - Amel is willing to intervene in BML COVID-19 response level 1, 2 and 3. * **MF:** - MF PHCc is still operational, patients approaching the PHCc are being screened at the entry point, the appointment are scheduled in a way to reduce and limit the number of patients in the waiting area, awareness sessions on COVID-19 are being provided in the waiting area.  - Key messages on COVID-19 are being disseminated to MF beneficiaries, especially those who are living in IS in Beirut area, through phone calls and WhatsApp. * **INARA:** - Ensuring continuity of care to patients who underwent surgeries. However, cold surgeries are being postponed and put on hold.  - AUBMC was requesting COVID-19 PCR tests for all patients prior to any surgery.  - Key messages and videos on COVID-19 are being disseminated to INARA beneficiaries through WhatsApp. - Parcels including food and hygiene kits are being distributed to 1250 family residing in Lebanon (Bekaa and Tripoli) and Turkey with collaboration with Molham Volunteering Team.  - INARA submitted a proposal in order to support elderlies with the chronic mediations and medical tests. * **PU-AMI:** - All contracted PHCc are still operational, PU-AMI is procuring PPEs to be distributed to PHCc. The team is providing awareness sessions inside PHCc and by contacting refugees. - An isolation room was established within the supported PHCcs.  - PU-AMI submitted a proposal to intervene in COVID-19 isolation centers. * **Karagheusian PHCc: -** The PHCc is currently operating with 2 family medicine physicians and the pharmacy unit.  - Challenges are faced with distribution of chronic medications received from YMCA. Karagheusian reported shortage in YMCA medications. Elderlies received kits under IMC PwD project.  - PHCc staffs were trained on PPE usage. Moreover, COVID-19 suspected cases are being referred as per MoPH guidance. * **IOCC:** - Lactation specialists are still providing consultations through phone calls. Urgent cases are being visited with respect to precautionary measures.  - IOCC is coordinating with municipalities at the national level and in BML as well for support in raising awareness, flyers distribution, and key messages dissemination via social media and WhatsApp. - In BML, hygiene kits including soap, liquid chlorine, sanitary pads and disinfectant are being distributed under UNICEF project.  - Concerning WFP schools snack project, IOCC is coordinating with the Ministry of Education for distribution of snacks at household level. * **AEC:** - The response is focused on the PwD community. AEC’s awareness campaign is being disseminated targeting persons with disabilities and specific needs.  - Hygiene and food kits were distributed to AEC beneficiaries.  - Beneficiaries are facing challenges related to chronic medications. Some medications are being distributed by AEC.  - Home care services provision for vulnerable persons is under study. Online paramedical services are in process and a platform is being developed for online consultation including speech support, psychomotor support and physiotherapy support. * **IOM:** **-** TB protocol was adjusted based on MoPH guidance related to COVID-19.  - IOM is performing close follow up on TB cases and medications are being delivered with respect to the precautionary measures.   **Updates on MHPSS :**   * **Restart:** - Psychological, neurological and psychiatric consultations are being performed over the phone. Children related services including speech therapy sessions and special education sessions are also being provided over the phone. Urgent neurological consultations for new cases will be provided in the clinic.  - Restart will compensate the megabytes used by refugees instead of the support with transportation that used to be provided.  - Medications are still being provided by Restart with respect to strict precautionary measures. - A COVID-19 call center will be launched by Restart and will target frontline workers of all nationalities, ethnicities and backgrounds, who work in hospital settings across Lebanon (including doctors, nurses, hospital staff and journalists). The call center will specifically target individuals working with, or in close proximity with, COVID-19-affected populations. * **IMC:** - Psychologist and psychiatrist are performing consultations over the phone   - Psychotropic medication is being provided.  - Challenges related to psychiatric admission to La Croix Hospital are being faced since the hospital suspended psychiatric admissions while Saydet Zgharta hospital is requesting PCR test to be preformed prior to the admission.   * **MF:** - MF beneficiaries are being followed up by the psychologist over the phone. * **AEC:** - Mental health services are being provided for AEC beneficiaries over the phone. |  |  |

**For enquiries please contact:**

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