

Child Protection Sub-Working Group
30.06.2021 Minutes of Meeting

Date:	Wednesday, 30 June 2021 at 10.00-12.00 a.m., via Webex	
Participants:	Special Secretary for the Protection of UAMs/ MoMA, MoLSA, EKKA (National Referral Mechanism), General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality, EKKA, UNICEF, GCR, SOS Children’s Villages, Solidarity Now, Caritas Hellas, IOM, Babel Day Centre, DRC, Faros, NCR, Terre des Hommes, Velos Youth Center, The Home Project, Synyparxis, METAdrasi, The Smile of the Child, MdM, Arsis, Safe Passage, ELIL, HRC, MdM, IRC, Evropaiki Ekfrasi	
Chair:	UNHCR: Theodora D. Tsovili (tsovili@unhcr.org)	
Agenda	Refugee and migrant children Survivors of Gender-Based Violence/ Existing initiatives and the way forward	
	<p>UNHCR welcomed the participants on this important thematic working group, touching upon rrefugee and migrant children survivors of gender-based violence.</p> <p>The representative by the Special Secretary for the Protection of UAMs of MoMA, outlined the prevention strategy of the Special Secretariat, unfolding on the following levels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual • Professionals surrounding the minor • Community • Society <p>The strategy of the SSPUAM includes the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Workshops in accommodation facilities and Day centres on GBV risks and coping strategies. This ankle will involve child-friendly information (including helplines) through workshops for minors focusing on resilience, taking into account language and maturity of target audience. ⇒ Gender equality awareness raising, depicting on dominant prejudices and stereotypes. ⇒ Promoting sexual and reproductive health of minors and particularly girls ⇒ Adoption of child safeguarding standards and child protection policies in every state or non-state actor involved in the treatment of unaccompanied minors. An example of such interventions would be the newly recruited staff signing child protection protocols along with the contract. Professionals should receive specific information upon recruitment i.e on the prevention of trafficking, the operation of the National Referral Mechanism of EKKA, legal framework and related risks. 	<p>Action Points: N/A</p>

- ⇒ Development of a **Codes of Conduct**
- ⇒ **Training of professionals** in matters related to violence and abuse as well as trafficking of minors, in order to professionals' knowledge and skills.
- ⇒ **Development and use of tools and materials** to support the practice of frontline professionals on issues of abuse, violence, exploitation and trafficking.
- ⇒ Ensuring **efficient response** to violence, exploitation and abuse of unaccompanied minors

The intention of the SSPUAM is to create a system of interventions and prevention of GBV, developing a model of support which is rights-based and interdisciplinary. On the individual level, SSPUAM's GBV response will be safeguarded by the appointed Guardian as well as other professionals surrounding the child.

UNHCR noted that planned activities of the SSPUAM on children's GBV prevention and response are quite promising. With reference to the capacity building activities UNHCR mentioned the existing useful resources in GBV material for children survivors produced by IRC, Terre des hommes, Arsis, METAdrasi, NCR, and most importantly EKKA with specialization in trafficking to human beings. Coordination among all related actors is key in capitalizing and building upon existing knowledge.

In response to the point raised by the representative of the General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality, the SSPUAM representative noted that capacity building activities will be materialized in cooperation with NGOs as they plan to utilize upon the expertise of state and non-state actors.

On Terre des Hommes' note related to planned trainings on child safeguarding the SSPUAM noted that exact timeline of implementation has not been finalized yet.

On Home Project's and GCR's points raised, the SSPUAM representative noted that the facilitators of the trainings are not defined yet, but certainly external experts will be considered as well. The purpose of the SSPUAM is to train all professionals who interact with UAC on matters related to GBV.

The representative by the MoLSA noted that the planned actions of SSPUAM should be aligned with the national plan for trafficking to Human beings, undertaken by NRM/EKKA. The SSPUAM representative noted their intention to harmonize activities with NRM.

The representative of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for the Protection of Human trafficking victims of the National Center of Social Solidarity welcomed the planned initiatives of the SSPUAM, and presented the activities of the NRM, depicted in the following categories:

- ⇒ **Processing data on cases of THB victims for statistical purposes:** this activity is considered innovative as Greek authorities did not have systematized data on THB victims. NRM statistical data are not comprehensive, since there are always challenges of under-reporting but it certainly gives a representative idea on the THB situation in Greece.
- ⇒ **Follow-up of cases** through victim-centered and rights- based approach
- ⇒ **Helpdesk for first-line professionals:** NRM supports the navigation of management in cases of THB, especially when provided by authorities which are not specialized in such issues. NRM specialists advise front-line professionals on individual cases of THBs, functioning as help desk.
- ⇒ **Training & seminars of first-line professionals:** so far 3-day seminars of NRM have reached 830 professionals. NRM representative noted that that capacity building activities enable NRM to receive feedback from the field, address identified gaps and as such they build relevant advocacy interventions.

NRM follows the internationally recognized definition of THB and focuses on producing durable solutions for the victims in the long-run. Certain members of the CPsWG participate in the NRM.

NRM representative noted the distinction of human trafficking vs human smuggling, in addition, it was highlighted that all victims have the same right to protection, irrespective of where the exploitation took place.

The 2020 annual data of NRM provided breakdown on children-victims of THB, coming mostly from European countries, usually detected by NGOs through street-work activities. The NRM representative noted that Greece is a dominant location of exploitation for children.

The NRM representative noted that there is increased underreporting of child cases, while one way of identifying potential child victims is the street-work activities in urban settings. Difficulties in underreporting of child cases may be attributed to the challenges in detecting children on the move and understand the purpose of recruitment.

Strengthened collaboration with SSPUAM and direct communication with accommodation facilities would tackle the challenges related to underreporting, since UAC tend to feel more confident to disclose such sensitive information after their placement in a safe shelter and not prior to that.

The Child Protection specialist of UNICEF, presented the their organization's engagement in GBV prevention and response, noting that in 2017 UNICEF started implementing GBV response in child protection interventions. UNICEF integrated GBV prevention and response through numerous activities, with the *Child and Family support hubs* along Greece being among them.

	<p>UNICEF's Facilitators' guide was developed in 2020 in the purpose of targeting teachers in secondary education. UNICEF is in process of developing a guide on GBV against boys, depicting on issues of masculinity.</p>	