

Inter-Agency Group (IAWG)
Syrian, African and Iraqi Refugee Response in Egypt
Meeting minutes

Date: 28th July 2015

Time: 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Venue: UNHCR Cairo- Zamalek Office, Conference Room

Chair: Sajal Gupta- (UNHCR)

Participants:

(Soheir Fawzy), (Magdy Francis), (Mariam Tharwat) – **Caritas**; (Lucia Oliveira) - **ACF**; (Kris Ozar) – **CRS**; (Fr. Jemil Araya)- **Sacred Heart Church**; (Sarah Elaraby)- **UNFPA**; (Hans Vikoler) – **WFP**; (Magdy Eissa) – **AMU**; (Mai Gaballah)- **Save the Children**; (Ragnhild Ek), (Maria Bances), (Steven Choka), (Mohamed Shawky), (Amr Osman), (Jessica Gulhane), (Nawar Rifaah) - **UNHCR**

Agenda:

1. Updates on protection;
 2. Update on the socio economic assessment;
 3. Presentation on the African/Iraqi assessment on the final report (UNHCR consultant).
 4. Updates on 3RP:
 - 3RP progress report (a call to action) and media background.
 - Brief on the process for detailing and planning to 2nd year of 3RP.
 - Update on the 3RP interagency funding levels.
 5. Update on Food Security;
 6. AOB.
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Summary of the Minutes:

1- Updates on protection by (Maria):

- In terms of refugee figures in Egypt, as of 30th June 2015 around **190,000** PoCc are registered with UNHCR. A decrease in the Syrian population and an increase in the African and Iraqi caseload.
 - Out of **132,000** Syrian refugees registered with UNHCR, **4000** registered in the first 6 months of the year. We are aware of a **1000** new arrivals and we are still advocating for family unity with the government and to date **54** cases were reunified with their families.
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- UNHCR is expecting a total of **7000** new registrations of Syrians refugees by the end of the year.
- A collaborative approach on implementation of the contingency plan regarding mixed migration is needed.
- Common messaging to refugees, donors and media should be elaborated in the CwB WG on how to address the issue of mixed migration.
- To date, **295** refugees/asylum seekers (potential) are in detention including **37** children while **111** were deported to third country this year including **100** children that represent an increase in the trend of detention and deportation of children.
- UNHCR noticed that the government differentiates between Syrians and non-Syrians as most Syrians registered with UNHCR were released.
- An increase of the number of persons arrested coming from Libya and coming from Sudan through Aswan.
- Save the Children will share a needs assessment for Libyans migrants that can be used as an advocacy tool.
- UNHCR shared a work plan on birth registration to prevent statelessness. Feedback and comments are much appreciated.
- UNHCR now have a policy on Unaccompanied African minors. These minors get the yellow card directly and are entitled to cash assistance until they are 18. Partners should advise PoCs to approach UNHCR in this case. Only those with expired white papers or white papers still valid with 1 month left should go to 6th October as well as those with expired white papers. This message should be shared clearly.

2- Update on the socio-economic assessment by (Steven):

- *Steven Choka, UNHCR Livelihoods Officer* made a presentation on the situation of the socio-economic assessment. The presentation is attached for ease of reference.

3- Presentation on the African/Iraqi assessment on the final report (UNHCR consultant):

- *UNHCR consultant Sarah Sadek* gave a comprehensive overview on the findings in the African/Iraqi assessment on the final report. The presentation will be shared.
- Looking at viability for support in terms of employment rather than just the vulnerability factor is important according to experiences from CRS.

4- Updates on 3RP:

- *Sajal Gupta*, briefed on 3RP interagency funding level as of 30th June 2015 (Amount Received by Agencies/Sectors for 3RP Funding Appeal will be shared). Sajal gave an overview of the challenges that UNHCR & partners face in regard to the 3RP interagency funding status.
- Brief on beginning of the process for further detailing the second year of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP). A drafting committee at the regional level will start early September to help translate the list of strategic consideration on 3RP into practical planning advice and tools, as well as guidance on results reporting.

- Need to ensure that a mechanism is in place for donors to understand the importance and function of resilience funding.

5- Update on Food Security by (Hans, WFP):

- July distributions to total **69,100** (66,250 Syrians + 2,850 PRS) with a total voucher value of **\$ 1,087** million and with total **67,700** (98% redemption) assisted, as close to **1,800** cases mostly of family size one did not show up for voucher collection and redemption / **77,200** were targeted in June;
- After removal of cases that had not undergone the vulnerability assessment, WFP team in 6th of Oct faced about double the crowd expected and the Falcon security guards, which led to tensions and some risk incidents.
- Close to **2,000** appeal forms were collected and recorded by WFP with reviews still ongoing / for July distribution the non-assessed beneficiaries removed from the list that had not undergone the vulnerability assessment interviews. The appeals review will be a lengthy process if done manually and would need to be done in support by the VAM unit. Total 800 appeal forms were prioritized for July re-inclusion according to 3 categories: 1. New Born in family / 2. Lactating + pregnant woman / 3. Disabled + sever illness.
- To understand the impact of prolonged reduction of vouchers' value and in view of foreseen further cuts in the assistance, in June 2015 WFP conducted rapid field surveys of beneficiaries at the distribution sites with main findings indicating that: a) if food voucher value is reduced to **\$12, 17** percent of interviewed would consider emigration to another country, 2 percent would attempt return to Syria; b) if food assistance is suspended, 28 percent would consider emigration to another country, and 5 percent – repatriation; c) close to 30 percent of Refugees who would remain in Egypt stated that they have “no other choice” as they have no means to travel abroad (lack of funds, visa restrictions, etc.) – to note that the main destination for potential immigration is Europe.
- June market monitoring results indicate that average cost of food basket items is **EGP 179** at the WFP contracted retailers against **EGP 174** at the non-contracted shops (compared to the current reduced WFP food voucher value of EGP 120), while there has been a general increase in prices during the reporting period.
- In June, headline annual inflation has increased to 13.5 percent, the highest reached since January 2010. Prices are 1.3 percent higher than the previous month.
- Food prices are the main contributor to the inflation in June, whereas food price index increased by 15.1 percent since May 2014. Food prices are 2.5 percent higher in June compared to May (CAPMAS). Prices of vegetables are the main trigger, having increased by 7.7 percent since May, and 43.3 percent from their 2014 level. Prices of meat and poultry have also increased since April 2015, while prices of cereal, seafood, milk products and eggs, oils, fruits and sugars remained relatively stable in June (CAPMAS).

- Actual resources and funding status indicate shortfall in Nov despite outlined scenario with further reduction in target vulnerable caseload (gradually by 20% in Aug and 10% in Sep and Oct) and by maintaining voucher value at current \$17.

6- AOB:

- ACF is now authorized to work with Syrian and non-Syrian refugees.
- Infoline Update - *Sajal Gupta and Ragnhild Ek* (UNHCR) provided an update on the UNHCR info-line which has been implemented and is currently in testing phase and receiving large volumes of calls, up to **1,100** on one day. It was suggested by CRS that the lessons learnt should be trickled down to inform micro-models that can be implemented in smaller offices. Alexandria office will be linked eventually and call attendants will be trained with interchangeable knowledge. The issues on food vouchers and resettlement are the most popular query topics. An accounting mechanism for implementing partners was also suggested in order to centralize the phone lines amongst partners.

Agenda items for next meeting:

1. Presentation on lessons learned of the socioeconomic assessment project and its main results by Save the Children.

Others:

Next IAWG meeting will convene on:

Date: Tuesday, 18th August 2015

Time: 10:00 am

Venue: UNHCR office in Zamalek.