

Protection Working Group – 23 October 2018 - Minutes

Date:	Tuesday 23 rd October 2018, 10am	
Participants:	Ministry of Health-EKEPY / Health WG chair; MSF Brussels; UNICEF; Intersos; UNHCR FO Attica; Solidarity Now; Human Rights 360/Omnes; IRC; Metadras; IOM; German Embassy, Diotima, GCR, ACSAR Foundation, EASO.	
Chairs:	Miriam Aertker, UNHCR, Co-Chair / Petra Samways, DRC	
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review of pending Action Points (11 Sept) 2. Update on the protection situation in the islands and mainland 3. Update on the asylum procedure from the islands 4. Updates from Health WG chair 5. Updates from PWG WGs (CWC, SGBV, CP, Evros) 6. AOB (Participatory Assessment report, Protection Monitoring Dashboards) 	
Pending Action Points (11 September):		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IA protection referral form and PWG TOR: no further comments by PWG members. Endorsed. - Lesbos/Moria concerns (11 September meeting) were communicated at the Inter-Agency plus meeting. 		
		Action Points
1. Review of last meeting's action points (11 Sept)	The last meeting minutes were endorsed and placed on the Inter-Agency portal (Greece): https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66471	N/A
2. Update on the protection situation in the islands and mainland	<p>Islands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approx. 1600 arrived to the islands from 1-14 October; more than 900 people to Samos, though these figures are lower than in October 2017. Currently, the RIC in Vathy hosts more than 4,000 people while its actual capacity is for approx. 600 persons. - The situation on Samos highly problematic since arrivals continue while departures from the island to the mainland have been less than required, mainly due to the processing capacities of RIS (vulnerability screening) and Asylum Services (asylum procedure and lifting of geographical restriction). - Critical health concerns due to skin infections/bedbug bites etc. require urgent attention. The medical services in the RIC and the local hospital are not adequate to address the needs; an inter-ministerial response is needed to address the needs for thorough disinfection against bedbugs, medical treatment and clean shelter/NFIs. - RIC populations remain extremely high in spite of the decongestion measures taken. - Population: Moria: 6,500; Vathy: 4,305; Vial: 1,588; Pyli: 1,165 (as of 11 Nov) - Capacity: Moria: 2,000; Vathy: 660; Vial: 1,100;- Pyli: 670 (as of 11 Nov) 	To discuss at the next meeting if the PWG wants to develop joint Key Advocacy messages

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due to overcrowding, services are and will remain inadequate (number of toilets as of end October: Vathy: 102; Vial: 73; Moria: 168; Pyli: 108). - Even the increase in doctors and nurses up to a reasonable number may not be enough to respond to the needs of thousands- the majority of them vulnerable or being vulnerable in such conditions- in particular in Moria. - Decongestion of the RICs should continue to be a strong advocacy point and the only possibility for applying improvement measures in the provision of services for the remaining population staying in the RICs. - Following a peak in October, the pace of transfers begins to slow down again as the capacity on the mainland has been used. 1,300 people were transferred so far in October from islands (mainly Lesbos and Samos) to mainland sites, majority to Grevena hotels and Volvi site, approx. And 350 went to ESTIA accommodation. <p>Mainland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting recently held in Attica with heads of Regional Asylum Offices in Attica, RIS representative, UNHCR, IOM, DRC: to establish a referral pathway from sites to RAOs, as is already being instituted in the north to facilitate access to the RAOs. 	
<p>3. Update on the asylum procedure on the islands</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Geographical restriction is lifted for key categories on the islands: following annulment and amendment of previous decision of the Asylum Service Director, vulnerable asylum seekers and Dublin cases are exempted from the imposition of geographical restriction. - Accordingly, asylum card permits movement for these categories, however the asylum interview remains scheduled on the islands (i.e. must return to the island for their interviews). - Although lifting of geographical restriction comes earlier in the process on the islands and the asylum seekers are “transferable”, transfers are obstructed by the shortage of reception places in mainland. - It should be noted that no plan is in place (nor funds allocated) for travel nor accommodation for those to be interviewed on the islands after their transfer to the mainland. Point was made as to being non advisable that actors advocate for return of asylum seekers on the islands. - UNHCR made written intervention to relevant authorities, advocating for interviews to be scheduled on the mainland instead. - Backlog on the mainland extends to 2021, meaning that interviews are scheduled up to that year too, which is also problematic. Re-scheduled interviews from the islands though will be conducted earlier as additional case-workers capacity will be dedicated to them (new/additional EASO staff working in Thessaloniki RAOs to be followed by Ioannina RAO and then Attica RAO). - Scheduling interviews on the islands continues so as for those who will not be transferred before interview, they can conclude their interview on the islands earlier than in mainland 	<p>N/A</p>

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<p>4. Updates from the Health WG (Chair)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re: Samos RIC health concerns, no updates available during the PWG. However, a KEELPNO delegation will likely visit this RIC to assess/plan the appropriate intervention. - KEELPNO: MoH working with MoD to place doctors in island RICs, as an interim measure during the transition from PHILOS I to II, as recruitment takes places. - Jan 2019: the staff are anticipated to be in place. - PHILOS II to be structured as PHILOS I: primary health in mainland and islands, gynecological healthcare, psychosocial support, transport from mainland sites to hospitals, 40 centres planned for (expansion on PHILOS I allocations). - Vaccinations undertaken with partners MSF, HRC and MDM: 11,000 vaccinations conducted. 23,000 MMR donated by UNICEF. - High needs in both mainland sites and on islands with huge gaps with military and KEELPNO medical provision, lack of access to public hospitals, language needs unaddressed. - IOM establishing many hotels which have high medical needs and unclear what KEELPNO's plan is to connect with these scattered populations. - Epidemiological surveillance since 2016. - The importance for better linkages between Health WG and PWG highlighted by participants. 	<p>SMS WG representatives will join Health WG meetings, to try to address health gaps in the mainland together.</p> <p>Health WG will attend the PWG as well.</p> <p>Advocacy WG to share the MOH letter with HEALTH WG. Chair.</p>
<p>5. Updates from PWG sub WGs (e.g. CWC, SGBV, CP and Evros sub-WG)</p>	<p>Evros WG:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a small coordination group to focus on Evros monthly. - Objective: to improve coordination and services available for Evros entry point. - Actors in Evros: UNHCR (since 2011), Metadrasi, IOM, MSF, UNICEF, ARSIS, HR360, GCI, GCR, ICRC, IFRC. DRC participates as well. - Central focus on CP matters: UASC concerns, especially strengthening family links mechanisms, age assessment, also families with children. - Medical care serious gap, currently filled by MSF though this service is not guaranteed ongoing funding. - NFIs for winter; additional containers allocated to the RIC (for improved accommodation, services, WASH). - Arrivals trends: 13,000 arrived through Evros since Jan 2018. 5700 in 2017 in total. With higher flows, it is essential that the humanitarian infrastructure is in place to respond to the needs. - Minors placed together with adults. UNHCR CP and legal aid/detention specialists on mission to Evros this week to assess the situation. <p>CWC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Survival guide in Arabic/Farsi was distributed and added on the UNHCR HELP website. 	<p>Next Evros WG meeting Friday 26th 10am.</p> <p>PWG members to provide feedback regarding PSEA SOP.</p>

	<p>SGBV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PSEA SOP was shared for any feedback (SGBV WG product) - Shared: Revised Guidelines for Protecting Women and Girls during reception and Asylum procedures in Greece 	
<p>6. AOB (PA report, Feedback Protection Monitoring Dashboards, Advocacy working group updates, upcoming meeting with Asylum Services)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Participatory Assessment</u> report and overall advocacy dashboard (external) was shared with PWG members and added to the Inter-Agency portal. Any ideas welcome and how to use the results for advocacy. - <u>Protection monitoring</u> dashboards (sites/mainland) will become inter-agency protection monitoring dashboards and shared with SMS actors for the revision as well as PWG WG and Sub WG members (revision until the end of the year, roll out in January 2019). Reducing questions in the tool (in consultation with sector members) and also: what advocacy can we use the protection dashboards in? - Forthcoming meeting will be organized with Mr Karavias, Director of the Asylum Service with PWG and legal aid actors (sub-group of PWG). Agenda points so far include: access to asylum procedures, including for people in detention; asylum procedures; involvement of EASO staff in asylum processes; UASC (see below). 	<p>PA dashboards (locations and thematic) will be shared in October/November.</p> <p>Survival Guides ready for distribution in Arabic/Farsi.</p> <p>Questionnaire (protection monitoring) will be shared with WGs and SMS actors in early/mid-November for a full revision.</p>

Next PWG meeting scheduled for **Tuesday 20 November, 10 AM (conference room 1)**.

Agenda:

The agenda for our next meeting on 20 November 2018 (10 am UNHCR conference room 1) is as follows:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of action points (23 October) - Update on the protection situation in the islands and mainland - Discussion on the objectives of the PWG: how can we move beyond an information sharing group (e.g. coordination/operational) - Review of membership (PWG) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key PWG advocacy messages - Updates from CP, SGBV, CwC and Evros sub WG - Protection monitoring inter-agency tools (sites/mainland) – revision of questionnaire/indicators (timelines/practical steps) - AOB |
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Agenda points for the meeting with the Asylum Service Director (date/time to be communicated):

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Challenges faced with the asylum procedures - Role and procedures undertaken by EASO in asylum processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UASC - Provision of free legal aid services by the Greek state |
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