

Protection Working Group – 20 November 2018 - Minutes

Date:	Tuesday 20 th November 2018, 10.00-12.00	
Participants:	UNHCR; DRC; MSF; German Embassy; IFRC, GCR, ICRC, Caritas, Help Refugees, HR360/Omnes, JRS, IRC, Solidarity Now, Diotima, Arsis, Church of Greece, CEAR, Spanish Red Cross	
Chairs:	Miriam Aertker, UNHCR, Co-Chair / Petra Samways, DRC	
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review action points 2. Update on the protection situation in the islands and mainland 3. Updates from CPsWG 4. The case of Old Lavrio (Kurdish camp) – FO Attika 5. Review of membership (PWG) – NGOs/UN and beyond (civil society)? Review objectives of the PWG: how can we move beyond an information sharing group (e.g. coordination/more operational) 6. Key PWG advocacy messages 7. AOB 	
		Action Points
1. Previous minutes / pending action points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minutes of 23 October were endorsed by PWG members and placed on the Partner Portal. https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67034 - UNHCR monthly Fact Sheets and latest information products are found here: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/66914 - Aegean Islands weekly snapshot is found here: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/66998 - Ekka dashboard (UAC) is found here: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/66714 	<p>Pending:</p> <p>Follow up with Health WG: SMS and protection participation and vice versa.</p>
2. Update on the protection situation in the islands and mainland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the islands arrivals continue at a high level: 1600 individuals in two weeks. - Evros Land-Border: 300 individuals arrived in three weeks. 1000 more people were transferred from the islands in a week: to mainland sites and ESTIA. - By 11 November approx. 42.500 arrived in Greece this year; from these approx. 42.500, approx. 18.000 are in the islands and approx. 14.500 in the five RICs. Reception and Identification Centers (RICs) operate beyond their capacity, in particular Vathy and Moria - Total number of people of concern according to the MoMP in Greece is 67.000. - The situation in Samos Island is alarming, capacity for 600 people yet hosts 4000 and above. Various advocacy efforts underway addressing severely substandard living conditions, very limited health services and high health related risks, gaps in interpretation and poor security in the UAC safe area The gaps in KEELPNO human resources create delays in the vulnerability screening. - Moria hosts 6500 with capacity of 2000; problems persist in the Olive Grove. SGBV, security and Child Protection concerns persist. Vulnerability screening problems are delaying the asylum procedure. 	N/A

- 'Philos II' programme will start operating in January, according to KEELPNO
- The KEELPNO coordinator in the islands resigned, along with one doctor from Moria site is Lesvos Island, leaving Moria without any KEELPNO doctor. There are discussions by RIS to engage Army doctors in the RICs, incl. in the vulnerability screening.
- 2136 people were accommodated in the mainland in November, in other sites or ESTIA premises.
- Technical assistance has been offered to RIS, through UNHCR in coordination with similar activities by EASO and NORCAP. The Secretary General (Mr. Gougoulis) is aiming in facilitating the procedures of RIS and to enforce structure to the services. Willingness was shown from RIS's side on the mainstreaming of the following issues: needs assessment, gaps analysis, staffing, protection and so on, through a coordinated approach.
- MSF raised a question on the winterization plan for Lesvos Island: UNHCR clarified that it has been raised on many levels. It was further explained that the procurement process undertaken by the Ministry of Defense has delayed the procedure and alternatives are to be identified by Reception and Identification Services (RIS). The efforts focus on decongestion and relocating population from Olive Grove into RIC's accommodation area and continued transfers to IOM hotels on the mainland. Heating inside tents is unsafe and UNHCR stated that advocacy for overcrowded areas is ongoing, along with a priority on mass transfers.
- Out of 14.500 people, 3000-3500 are exempted from the geographical restriction. Overall the vulnerability assessment process is not delayed in all RICs, a situation that further delays the asylum procedures and the transfers to the mainland.

Mainland

- Numerous car accidents in Evros have created many casualties; the issue was raised to the police; there are suspicions that minors are used as drivers by smugglers.
- IOM hotels will continue to open up as the primary winterization solution.
- 6000 places for people from the islands, most in North and Southern Greece, all catered; some locations are remote and services available are unclear. The duration is still unclear (to April/May?).
- More site are going to be in place from the MoMP to host these 6000 people when the hotels close.
- In ESTIA there is no increasing plan after the target of 27.000 places is reached by end year (currently 26500 places).
- Transfers/entries to ESTIA continue by 300 per week.
- Reception capacity will depend on IOM and state premises capacity.
- The issue of recognized refugees who reside to ESTIA and in sites, is still pending and under discussion.

Protection Working Group – 20 November 2018 - Minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Also, it is not yet clear whether there are going to be more sites or more places in the existing sites. - RIS role in the mainland is on the top of the Secretary General's agenda. - With regards to transfers to IOM hotels, 300 were taken in Aghoi Theodoroi and 236 in Marathonas. In total more than 1000 people already moved. - There is a transitional period for the hand-over to the government; 2019 will be the last year that UNHCR will run the ESTIA programme, since from 2020 it will pass to the government; - Also, sites are greatly affected by the recent transfers. In some there were security incidents, while in others the transfers were implemented smoothly. - Things are still unclear budget-wise; the model will be one actor per site offering a minimum package of services; there are concerns regarding the SGBV prevention and response from KEELPNO; 	
<p>3. CPsWG updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than 40 per cent of asylum seeker/refugee children are hosted in UNHCR accommodation. The rest are in RICs, sites etc. - 3640 UAM according to EKKA; 1200 in shelter. - Many NGOs are in risk of being bankrupt due to AMIF funding; new NGOs on-board for 15 places for girls. - Up to 300 places in 10 safe zones. - 15 places in pilot projects. - 90 in detention/protected custody (Amygdaleza, other police stations, etc.); five to ten transferred to safe zones. - 20 children detained by the Hellenic Police, from Evros borders. - More than 600 in RICs and approximately 200 around RICs. - One IOM hotel will be devoted for unaccompanied girls. - The implementation of the new law is ongoing, with major change the concept of the 'best interest'; by the end of 2019 there will be Ministerial Decision for an open call for 500 places in SIL. A best interest panel is established (EKKA). EKKA is willing to coordinate with Metadrasi until the law is fully in place. - UNICEF is completing a report on minimum standards in shelters; the funds for IOM are temporary; it's under discussion how IOM UAC hotels will become permanent safe zones. 	<p>N/A</p>
<p>4. The case of Old Lavrio (Kurdish camp) – FO Attika</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lavrio is a Kurdish site, one of the very first established in Greece. The Hellenic Red Cross was operating there from 2015 until 2017, which was supposed to be its closure date, due to the bad state of the buildings; close to 500 people were residing in all three buildings of Lavrio site including Neraki site with containers. - Only volunteers currently operate in Old Lavrio and since there is no SMS at the site, cash assistance is no longer provided to the majority of residents, only to 43 currently. - There has been no alternative for relocation so far while the building is announced unsafe for residence. - People are accessing some off-site services, but the cost to reach the city is high. 	<p>Advocacy for cash assistance in case the population remain in Lavrio.</p> <p>PWG members to revert with additional suggestions.</p>

Protection Working Group – 20 November 2018 - Minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No official actor is assigned to the camp while the status of the camp is unclear and any kind of intervention is on a voluntary basis. 	
5. Review of membership (PWG) – NGOs/UN and beyond (civil society).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PWG members agreed that UN; NGOs; ICRC; Embassies; EASO can be members of the PWG (information meetings). - Whenever specific thematic or advocacy meetings will be organized, civil society organization will attend only. - Generally, the PWG meeting could be structured in two parts: first information and then advocacy/operations/SOP reviews/procedures etc. (if needed). - A planning meeting will be organized to brainstorm about challenges, priorities and advocacy messages in December. - For some actors it would be better to participate in the Inter-Agency Consultation Forum. - Ensure that meeting minutes are also shared with donors and more widely. 	<p>To create a list with potential state participants and on how to proceed to seek their involvement.\</p> <p>Re-circulate the ToRs for revision (attached)</p> <p>Follow up with the Inter-Agency coordinator if Inter-agency meetings will be held again and when.</p>
6. Advocacy points for PWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advocacy points for the PWG could cover transportation issues, access to health and other services, decongestion on the islands, winterization etc. They will be formulated during the upcoming PWG practical special session. - The PWG aims to focus more on advocacy of key issues and will compile advocacy messages with all sub working groups in Athens and in the field. 	<p>Special session to be organized (see below).</p> <p>Enhance coordination with SMS WG and SMS agencies.</p>
7. AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Legal Aid actors will join the meeting with the Asylum Service Director on 21 Nov. Legal actors agreed on questions in advance, questions cover the main headlines. It will be clarified in the beginning what will be public and what will stay internally regarding operational activities. The thematic areas have been shared, any additional questions can fall under AOB. - Results of the Protection monitoring tools (sites/mainland) will be discussed in January 2019. - A special meeting could also be arranged on vulnerability screening (islands). - Members also mentioned that it is essential to aim at attracting more national government representatives to participate and/or to chair the PWG in the future. 	<p>Questions to be shared with PWG members before the meeting with the Director of the Asylum Service</p>

NEXT MEETING: The PWG practical session will be on **9 January at 10am (conf. room 2)**. The next regular PWG will be on **15 January at 10am (conf. room 2)**.