



Basic Needs Working Group

National Meeting, Meeting Minutes

Date & Location	17 June 2021, National Virtual Meeting
Chaired by	Ahmet Ünver (UNHCR)
Minutes Prepared by	Elif Eser Mooty (UNHCR) & Ahmet Ünver (UNHCR)
Participating Agencies	
AADHS, ASAM, GIZ, IFRC, IGAM, MSYD, Qatar Charity, Support to Life, TRC, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF	
Agenda	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welcome & introductions2. Review action points and announcements3. Present sector achievements4. Present Mapping of Municipal support by Partners5. Share ESSN Programme Updates6. Discussion: Intersectoral referrals7. Overview: Basic Needs findings in Recent Assessments8. UNFPA Project Update9. AoB	
Action Points	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Partners prepare overview of their appeals and activities for the mid-year review.	
Documents	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• BNWG on the Data Portal.• Mapping of Municipal Support by Partners dashboard• Protection Needs Assessment dashboard• Protection Needs Assessment report	
Review Action Points and Announcements	
<i>Action Points</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Partners assign focal points for the municipal mapping process by 15 April CoB - <i>Done</i>• Partners reach out to IM Officer for questions related with reporting & indicators - <i>Ongoing</i>• Partners continue to share baseline assessments, monitoring products with BNWG - <i>Ongoing</i> <i>Announcements</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In July, the BNWG will hold a mid-year review meeting, including a focus on partner appeals, funding situation as well as progress in activities and targets. This meeting will guide working group and partner expectations for the second half of the year and allow the discussion of upcoming sector activities as well as a review of priorities and tasks. The re-assessment of the situation can allow for developing advocacy points for donors. The invitation for the meeting will be shared with partners in the coming period.	



Present Sector Achievements

- The achievements of the Basic Needs sector in the first two quarters of 2021 have been presented by the BNWG IM focal point, using the online sector dashboard – which is also available through [the Data Portal](#).
- The dashboard includes activities reported to ActivityInfo as of 16 June by 16 Basic Needs partners, with the sector reaching almost 3 million beneficiaries.
- The top five provinces of implementation for Basic Needs activities are Istanbul, Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, Hatay and Bursa. Istanbul is the leading city with almost 800 thousand beneficiaries reached, a significant increase compared to other cities.
- The sector has already reached its targets for CBI and non-food item distribution in the first two quarters. The sector has reached more than 85 thousand people with food assistance, and more than five thousand people with shelter and WASH activities.
- Reporting for monthly CBI assistance activities are shared. There are a total of 3 partners reporting towards these activities. The reported numbers – which include TRC inputs on ESSN, appear more than twice the sector targets, as sector targets don't usually include ESSN assistance. 51 percent of CBI beneficiaries are female and 60 percent are adults.
- There are nine partners providing one-off cash assistance activities, including winterization and COVID-19 cash assistance, reaching around 50 thousand beneficiaries. One-time cash assistance programmes are focused in Hatay and Gaziantep due to the implementation of winterization programmes. February has reported the highest figures on one-off cash assistance. 49 percent of these beneficiaries are female and 54 percent of one-off cash assistance beneficiaries are adults.
- Five agencies have reported against the food assistance indicator. There appears a decrease in assistance figures after March – mostly due to under-reporting in following months. 51 percent of food assistance beneficiaries are male and 52 percent of beneficiaries are children.
- Seven partners have reported on hygiene kit distribution, concentrated in the Marmara region. Most of this progress can be attributed to the UNHCR field unit in Marmara which has reported the distribution of hygiene kits through municipalities in May. 52 percent of beneficiaries are male and 93 percent of beneficiaries are children – due to distribution of baby diapers as part of hygiene kits.
- Partners are encouraged to continue regular reporting of monthly activities against the said indicators.
- Partners have inquired on the availability of nationality disaggregation for the data presented – to include Syrians, refugees of other nationalities and the host community. This disaggregation is available and can be shared with partners in the coming meetings.

Present Mapping of Municipal support by Partners

- The findings of the Mapping exercise for Municipal Support has been shared with partners. The exercise was undertaken in the previous months with contribution of partners supporting municipalities.
- Municipalities have resources to provide a variety of services to communities in their areas of coverage in cooperation with several stakeholders. With nearly 98 percent of refugees in Turkey living in urban areas and using municipal services on a daily basis, there is a significant pressure on service providers, since their capacity is not designed to respond to the needs of the extra population. Yet municipalities have been very resilient in meeting these extra needs, and 3RP partners have continued providing support to municipalities in meeting the extra needs.
- Although support to municipalities in the 3RP is an inter-sectoral area, the Basic Needs sector has taken the lead in the discussion and mapping exercise, as the sector has indicators directly related to municipal support. However, the planning of the exercise involved other sector coordinators.



- The mapping exercise aimed to continue the previous inter-agency municipalities mapping exercise conducted in 2019 and use the results towards coordination efforts as well as identifying needs. The findings of the mapping will be made widely available to a variety of actors including municipalities in Turkish, and will be cross-referenced and complementary with the mapping exercise currently being undertaken by the Union of Municipalities.
- The findings of the Municipalities Support mapping can be found through [an online dashboard](#), which also covers support provided to municipalities by IFIs. The dashboard allows filtering through the results by partner, geography, level of municipality, activities, rounds, sectors and other useful disaggregation areas. The dashboard also provides project details, including programme implementation dates, provinces and focal points per agency.
- The mapping exercise covers a total of 405 projects providing support to municipalities, covering a total of 575 activities. The total budget of these projects is more than USD 76 million. Majority of these activities were reported under the Basic Needs sector, followed by Protection and Livelihoods. Yet it is important to note that municipal support activities are inter-sectoral and can target more than one sector.
- The overall budget for the Basic Needs sector is almost USD 45 million, with majority of the support concentrated in the Southeast, Ankara and Izmir, although municipal support through the Basic Needs sector is available in other cities as well. The particular concentration in the Southeast includes majority of the budget, which could call for dedicated coordination efforts in this area.
- Almost all programs covered in the mapping are appealed under the 3RP (93%) and almost all are reported to the 3RP (96%). 44 percent of all interventions target Syrians, however for Basic Needs this is up to 70 percent. The sector will focus on discussing the inclusion of refugees of other nationalities in support activities targeting municipalities.
- 60 percent of all support programmes target municipalities through needs identification processes which involved municipalities themselves. This demonstrates that needs are identified through participatory processes. This rate is up to 73 percent for the Basic Needs sector – with partners consulting also with local authorities.
- The mapping also covers accountability of programmes. 91 percent of all programmes have an M&E component, whereas for Basic Needs this is 100 percent. Partners are encouraged to share the findings of the M&E analyses through the sector meetings – even through sharing overall findings when possible. 19 percent of all programmes don't have complaint mechanisms in place, with majority of complaints collected through call centers and community focal points.
- In the context of protection mainstreaming a question on PSEA mechanisms and safeguards was presented to partners who joined the mapping, with only 24 percent of programmes including these mechanisms.
- Out of 564 activities supporting municipalities, 20 percent do so through provision of supplies and equipment – most of which are recorded under the Basic Needs sector. For the Basic Needs sector the second most preferred modality is facilitation of coordination and policy dialogue between municipalities and local authorities. This shows that the 3RP continues its strategic engagement in supporting municipalities through coordination fora.
- The level of municipality support in the Marmara region focuses mainly on district municipalities whereas for the Southeast the level of support is a combination of district and metropolitan municipalities. Current programs in Ankara directly target metropolitan municipalities. Marmara region focuses most on facilitation of coordination, whereas the provision of supplies is prominent in the Southeast, followed by coordination.



- The most supported area amongst municipalities is towards social services, followed by support to municipal facilities, basic municipal services, and support to governance, policy development, strategic planning and coordination. Further breakdowns for each of these areas are provided in the dashboard.
- Further data cleaning will be done on the findings of the mapping in the coming period. Partners are invited to share any feedback until June 30, after which the product will be sent for translation. An overview report will also be prepared which can be used for advocacy.
- A third round is not planned yet but might be planned based on ad-hoc needs.
- The Basic Needs sector will focus on the following areas regarding municipal support in the coming period:
 - Increasing inclusion of nationalities other than Syrians
 - Expand geographical coverage of BN-Municipality activities
 - The social cohesion gains of the BN-municipality projects
 - How can coordination help to ensure complementarity of 3RP and IFI projects?
 - Need for dedicated coordination efforts for municipal support in SET
 - Lessons learned of providing social assistance through municipalities
 - Higher integration PSEA safeguards
- One important area to continue focusing on is the measurement of impact of the mapped programmes – across sectors.

Share ESSN Programme Updates

Latest Figures:

- As of 14.06.2021, ESSN has received 609,815 applications, out of which 329,828 applications were considered eligible for the assistance. May 2021 payments were delivered to 1,847,218 individuals nationwide; out of this number, 99,132 individuals are based in Ankara. A total of 5,199 cards were distributed; the Ankara share of this figure is 261 cards.
- 11,573 Eligible individuals have received the Severe Disability Allowance across the country; 793 in Ankara. On the other hand, 35,990 individuals (1,340 in Ankara) have received the ESSN assistance through the SASF Discretionary Allowance.

M&E Activities:

Monitoring & Evaluation Teams have carried out their on-site and card distribution monitoring activities, visiting 69 institutions in 6 provinces in Central Anatolia between March and May. Those visits included Halkbank branches, SASFs, DDRCs (District Directorate of Civil Registration and Citizenship), and PDMMs.

R&OR Activities:

Meanwhile, Referral and Outreach Teams have made 5 card deliveries, 38 basic needs and 6 SASF Discretionary Allowance referrals and conducted 51 institution visits in 6 provinces of the Central Anatolia region.

Announcements:

- SASF HH Visits: MoFSS has extended its emergency measures until 31.07.2021 with the ongoing COVID-19 outbreak, during which the SASFs are not obliged to conduct HH visits.
- DHR Validity Period: As a part of its COVID-19 measures, MoFSS considers the expired Disability Health Reports valid until 01.09.2021.



Complementary ESSN (C-ESSN) Programme:

- The agreement was signed among the MoFLSS, the Turkish Red Crescent, and the European Commission Directorate-General for Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR), and the program commenced this year in January.
- The goal is to assist the most vulnerable individuals currently benefitting from the ESSN Programme; however, cannot be referred to livelihood opportunities by transferring them to the C-ESSN Programme.
- The assistance amount will be 250 TL/individ.

Q&A:

- Will the C-ESSN beneficiaries coming from the ESSN programme continue to receive their original ESSN assistance?
- Once the target group is moved from the ESSN to the C-ESSN, they will be just C-ESSN beneficiaries and only receive its assistance. Both programmes' beneficiaries will be completely separated. So, there won't be common beneficiaries between ESSN and C-ESSN, in other words; any matter of duplicate assistance.
- Is there a current estimation about the number of the C-ESSN beneficiaries?
- C-ESSN beneficiaries will be those who were the most vulnerable segment of the ESSN whom could not be referred to livelihood opportunities. The project is still in its initiation phase. Data analysis is still processing with the Ministry. But we will be sharing some exact figures in the future meetings after we make the first payment.

Discussion: Inter-sectoral Referrals

- A discussion was held on inter-sector referrals with a focus on the Basic Needs sector. Inter-sector referrals was one of the top priorities selected by partners in the prioritization exercise conducted in February.
- Due to their interventions, Basic Needs sector partners usually face the most vulnerable refugees and are the first responders to their needs. This provides a good opportunity to partners for informing refugees and referring them to other services they might be in need of – towards more sustainable solutions.
- TRC has a very systematic approach towards referrals of refugees who face barriers in reaching assistance. TRC's referrals aim to overcome ESSN registration and application barriers of target population, remove barriers in reaching assistance, and refer non-ESSN related cases to relevant protection and livelihoods actors for sustainable solutions.
- In the TRC referral cycle, firstly the cases are identified, then registered, referred and followed-up. The types of referrals include protection, livelihoods, in-kind assistance and ESSN access issues, and at times are made to public institutions depending on the needs.
- IOM also has a very structured referral system. Initially identification is done through help centers, local actors, community centers etc, and the cases are registered through the IOM Turkey portal. Following this internal and external referrals are done, also using the IARF to other humanitarian agencies. The follow-up is done through the MEAL team and program staff.
- Basic Needs partners outreach to the most vulnerable refugees in Turkey and this is a good entry point to identify other needs of individuals. Basic needs partners also work on a multi-sectoral level, have a capacity for identification, have access to IA/IM coordination tools and internal M&E tools. Despite these opportunities, lack of preparedness and capacity, different modalities, legal barriers, lack of knowledge and guidance may cause challenges.
- Inter-agency referrals are already taking place in the field and the sector is looking into expanding it. The inter-agency referral form as well as the Services Advisor are useful tools for referrals.



- The sector aims to enhance inter-agency referrals and partners were asked for their suggestions in line with this.
- One way to enhance referrals is to ensure that different focal points amongst the sector's partner agencies are well aware of available service providers, through platforms such as the Services Advisor. It is important that new colleagues in these agencies are made aware of the platform, and that the information provided in the Services Advisor is regularly updated.
- WHH has informed that they usually do referrals to SASFs and public institutions in Hatay. Although currently there is no standardization of referrals in our work, WHH is reaching out to SASFs to introduce the IARF with the aim of standardization.
- Field partners stated worries regarding the follow-ups of referrals, especially regarding follow-ups with public institutions. This is a concern which was stated by Protection partners as well. However the IARF allows for following-up with case referrals between NGO partners.

Basic Needs Findings in Recent Assessments

- Basic Needs related findings in recent assessments have been compiled.

UNFPA Monitoring Report No.4

- The UNFPA monitoring report is based on KRG project beneficiaries between Jan 2018 and Feb 2021 in Istanbul, Ankara, Eskisehir, Mersin, Yalova and Denizli. Out of 11862 beneficiaries, 932 (8%) of these beneficiaries were trans. (72.7% trans female, 27% trans male, 3% non-binary). 31% of the trans beneficiaries were Syrian and 69% were non-Syrians.
- The report finding indicates that trans refugees need financial assistance due to inability to access livelihood opportunities and very limited access to job opportunities due to their gender identity. This situation has increased with COVID-19.
- Some trans refugees have to do sex work to survive, as they are discriminated against in employment due to their gender identities. They don't feel safe in Turkey due to hate crimes and anti-LGBTI rhetoric. Trans beneficiaries were referred to UNHCR & IOM CBI programs, ESN and SASFs. Many trans refugees cannot access ongoing cash assistance due to administrative sanctions.
- UN Agencies: Continue/enhance basic needs support to trans refugees. I/NGOs: Conduct evidence-based needs assessment to design trans supportive services.

IA Protection Needs Assessment Round 3

- 3rd round was carried out via 16 sector partners and 10 Municipalities in January 2021 with a sample size of 1,173 individuals (representing 5,862 persons at the household level). The sample size is proportionate to population of refugees.
- The findings indicate that access to essential services (health, administrative, education etc.) deteriorated: 43% were unable to access compared to 36% in previous round. Female, Afghan and Iranian face more challenges.
- 3rd round brings out that working status 76% has changed negatively. The assessment indicates that female headed households have been impacted more by this change.
- Income resources of the households include 39% who depend on work, 30% humanitarian assistance, 9% remittances, 7% community support. 55% of respondents receive assistance through public institutions, local authorities, I/NGOs and UN agencies; 80% is cash assistance.



- Findings indicate that 85% of respondents are not fully able cover their monthly expenses and basic needs. Only 16% are able to fully cover their needs through existing sources of income. Those, who are not able to cover their monthly expenses at all have increased significantly (from 35% to 46%).
- The costs and expenditures households are struggling to manage are rent/housing 26%, food 25%, utilities 11%, health 8%, and hygiene related items 8%
- Overall, 78% of all respondents were identified to adopt coping mechanisms, including borrowing money, reducing essential food expenditure, reducing non-food expenditures and buying food on credit/debt.
- The findings indicate that overall, across all groups (nationality and gender), socio-economic vulnerabilities are increasing.

UNFPA Project Updates

- UNFPA has presented on their new project carried out in collaboration with Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, named Improving Employability and Social Inclusion of the Most Vulnerable Refugee Women and Youth. The project is supported by the British Embassy – FCDO. The project started in October 2020 and will end in February 2023.
- The project aims to overcome barriers faced by women in accessing employment and other means of protection and to empower women and youth through a multi-sectoral approach. The project objective is increased employability and social inclusion of the most vulnerable refugee women and youth through strengthening municipal infrastructure and human resource capacity.
- The project outputs are empowering refugee women and youth in Ankara through tailored municipal services, and increasing the institutional capacity of the municipality.
- Under the first output, the project has established the Women and Youth Support Center, under the municipality's community center in Altindag. The center invests in the capacity development of the project staff and contributing municipality staff, including on the legal framework, GBV, empowerment of women, and psycho-social service delivery.
- Project beneficiaries are women and young people from the refugee and host communities living in Ankara and the city's rural districts.
- The services provided by the support center include protection services, provision of information on sexual and reproductive health and GBV, socio-economic empowerment services – including life skills building and language skills sessions, outreach services, social cohesion activities and the distribution of kits. The center also has a child-care room, which allows women to engage in center activities while their children are taken care of.
- In March 2021, UNFPA conducted 3 focus group discussions in the centers with the aim of enhancing the understanding on the impact of socio-cultural norms on women and youth access to livelihood opportunities and the challenges faced by women and youth in accessing services in the WYSC. 19 beneficiaries participated in the FGDs.
- Key findings of the FGDs include the following:
 - Participants report that the labour market favours men due to their ability (1) to carry out a wider range of jobs, (2) to look for job opportunities that are further located, (3) to perform in any working environment, (4) to commit to jobs that imply longer working hours, (5) to understand better the local culture and social norms.
 - Participants unanimously agreed that language courses are a building block in securing a job in Turkey.
 - Vocational courses give a chance to refugees without a higher degree diploma to discover their skills and get certified in a professional area.
 - Participants voiced that receiving services in their native language is vital for refugees and is a determinant factor for them to request the WYSC support.



- To make the WYSC inclusive for all refugee women it is important to ensure that the services are provided by female staff.
- To increase access to services for vulnerable women and youth, participants suggested providing (1) transportation services for those living in remote areas, (2) Accommodate a translator for the Afghan beneficiaries, and (3) a study room to accommodate the needs of those who go to school or universities.
- Recommendations were developed in line with these findings, and to improve service delivery in the centers.
- Under the second output, the project provides awareness raising sessions for municipality management, training of service providers, preparation of SOPs for service provision, strengthens local market analysis capacity and disseminates good practices.
- The centers were active in December 2020 and the total number of beneficiaries reached is over 1200.

AoB

- The next BNWG meeting is on 8 July.