

ESSN Task Force, Gaziantep Minutes

Objective(s)	i) to provide an update on ESSN roll-out, with a focus on southeastern Turkey; ii) to provide a briefing on the verification exercise; and iii) to share the findings of the survey on barriers to access to the ESSN.
Time & Date	26 July, 10.30-12.00am
Location	TRC, Gaziantep

1. Introduction and welcome

- Following a tour de table, the ESSN co-chairs revisited the action points of the previous meeting, as follows:
 - WFP and TRC to share information on the verification process and inclusion/exclusion errors identified to date at the next meeting. **Status: Pending. The household verification process remains under discussion at Ankara level.**
 - Task force members to visit the ESSN website (<https://www.essncard.com/>) and the Kizilay Card website (<http://kizilaykart-suy.org/TR/index.html>) and contact WFP and TRC with suggestions. **Status: Ongoing**
 - WFP to circulate the link to the dependency ratio / eligibility calculator. **Status: Pending. WFP clarified that the tool remains under development and will be circulated once finalized.**
 - WFP and TRC to include trends in ESSN implementation in future presentations to the task force, rather than static figures. **Status: Ongoing**
 - Partners interested in receiving ESSN sensitization materials to disseminate at their project sites in mid-July to contact WFP as soon as possible. **Status: Complete, although WFP reiterated that leaflets received to date should be discarded as re-print is required.**
 - WFP to check the level of integration between the MoFSP and DGMM databases and share feedback with partners at the next task force meeting. **Status: Pending.**
 - WFP to check the 'lag-time' between contacting the helpline and receiving support to obtain a notarial document and share feedback with partners at the next task force meeting. **Status: N/A – alternate process agreed at 13/14 July workshop.**

2. Update on ESSN implementation, incl. briefing on provincial-level coordination meetings in Urfa (8 June) and Hatay (10 July)

- ESSN Task Force Co-Chairs, World Food Programme (WFP) and Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) then provided an update on ESSN to date, noting that, to date, the ESSN has reached approx. 863,000 beneficiaries. Nation-wide, as of 21 July, 318,026 applications had been lodged, on the basis of which 154,842 households have been found eligible and 157,905 households have been found ineligible (5,279 remain to be assessed), bringing the eligibility rate to 49.5% eligibility rate (up from ~ 37 % prior to revision of criteria). It was noted that, as of 17 July, in SET, 852,452 individuals had been included in household-level ESSN applications – almost 50% of DGMM-registered refugees (1.71M).
- WFP shared the latest analysis on eligibility rates at the district level. It was noted that eligibility exceeds 60 per cent in 14 districts (considering only those with 100+ applications), including three districts in Sanliurfa. It was further noted that eligibility is less than 40 per cent in 65 districts, including, in the southeast, Cukorova (Adana); Pazarcik, Araban (Gaziantep); Artuklu, Nusaybin (Mardin); Kadirli, Duzici, Osmaniye Merkez,

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Toprakkale (Osmaniye); Batman Merkezi (Batman); Mezitli, Yenisehir Mersin (Mersin); Yenisehir Diyarbakar (Diyarbakar); and Defne (Hatay).

- WFP and TRC noted that the revised transfer value (120 TL / person / month) was actualized in the June upload and that the revised criteria to had come into effect in July. WFP noted that the revised transfer value was communicated to beneficiaries on 30 June via SMS, the ESSN Facebook site, and the ESSN website, and that the criteria change would be communicated in mid-July via the ESSN Facebook site, the ESSN website, and new information materials (in Arabic, Turkish, and Farsi). While sensitization materials have already been shipped to partners, WFP reminded participants to discard the leaflets received to date, as these will be subject to a re-print.
- TRC presented more detailed application numbers and eligibility, focusing on SET (see the attached presentation). WFP again noted that because this analysis draws upon MoFSP's raw data, there is some divergence between these figures and the final, verified figures.
- WFP debriefed Task Force members on the provincial-level meetings in Sanliurfa (8 June) and Hatay (10 July). It was noted that these meetings have been very well-received, and that tentative plans are in place to hold a further meeting in Mersin in August or September.

2. Update on ESSN roll-out in SET

- WFP's Head of Area Office provided an update on ESSN roll-out SET. The following points were highlighted:
 - **Discretionary pilot:** Initial discussions on the discretionary allowance have taken place with SASF offices in Nizip, Kizilteppe (Mardin), Iskendarun, and Tarsus (Mersin). Effort being made to utilize and build upon existing (Turkish) tools and processes.
 - **Uncollected cards:** There has been some concern about uncollected cards in some Halkbank branches (e.g. Antakya, Reyhanli, Kirikhan). The reasons are unconfirmed, but it likely to be due to wrong phone numbers and returns to Syria. TRC is following up with beneficiaries. WFP and TRC have made an important breakthrough in cooperating with Halkbank staff to enable beneficiaries to collect their cards from dedicated desks set up in the Service Centres, rather than from the bank itself, helping to reducing crowding and confusion at bank premises.
 - **Informal housing:** WFP and TRC have been undertaking field visits to verify numbers and locations. 58,343 cases were reported, with 12,776 cases (1,998 HH) verified in Gaziantep, Hatay, Mersin, Adana and Sanliurfa.
 - **DGMM registration:** WFP and TRC field teams visited DGMM offices to identify backlog (locations, causes, numbers). Information continues to be fed into high-level advocacy efforts.
 - **CVME:** CVME visits were conducted throughout July.
 - **Coordination with CTE:** Efforts are ongoing to strengthen operational coordination between TRC, MoFSP, UNICEF, and WFP.
 - **Advocacy** continues at all levels. On 12-13 July, a high-level TRC-WFP-MoFSP mission took place to Gaziantep, Sanliurfa, and Hatay.

3. Presentation on verification exercise

- UNHCR Ankara provided the ESSN Task Force with an update on the verification exercise. Areas of cooperation with WFP were highlighted, as follows:
 - Information on the ESSN program has now been incorporated into all verification information material e.g (leaflets, outreach sessions, and counselling notes). The ESSN will also be described in the verification animation that DGMM is currently developing.
 - Joint briefings have been delivered to partners at working groups and inter-sectoral meetings. A joint briefing session on the ESSN, the CTE, and the verification exercise will take place in Izmir on 3 August, with likely replication in other locations over coming months.

- WFP has conducted an information session on the ESSN for the staff who will be manning the protection desks in verification centres.

For more information, see the attached presentation.

4. Presentation on the findings of the survey on barriers to access to the ESSN

- TRC shared the results of the survey that WFP and TRC conducted to determine barriers to and reasons behind delays in application to the ESSN. For more information, see the attached presentation.

5. Briefing on outcomes of “Workshop to identify programmatic responses to facilitate access to services in Turkey”, 13-14 July

- Given that most Task Force members present also belong to the Basic Needs Working Group, it was suggested that the briefing on the workshop outcomes be pushed back to the next BNWG meeting (Monday, 31 August). WFP agreed to brief ECHO, which does not attend the BNWG, bilaterally.

6. A.O.B.

- An NGO partner noted that some challenges on the ground are being identified when families split up. WFP agreed to follow up on the specific case at hand, as well as to strengthen operational coordination on protection matters more broadly.
- Next Meeting: Due to the Eid holiday, the next meeting will be postponed until 13 September (tbc).