



Date/time/venue	Sunday, 7 March 2021, 13:30-15:00 WebEx
Attendees	Inter-Sector Coordinator (UNHCR Inter-Agency Coordination Unit, IACU), Protection (UNHCR), Food Security (WFP), Basic Needs (UNHCR, IOM), Health (UNHCR), Education (NRC), Livelihoods (UNHCR, NRC, DRC), Shelter (UNHCR, NRC), MHPSS (IMC), WASH (UNICEF), GBV (UNHCR, UNFPA), CP (UNHCR), Urban Coordination South (UNHCR), Urban Coordination Irbid (UNHCR), JIF, SGFPN (UN Women), UNHCR Representative

Meeting Note and Action Points

1. “Graduation Model”

The newly elected livelihoods sector co-chair, NRC, introduced the graduation model, a unique approach to income generation that combines social protection and empowerment, income generation, and financial inclusion in a sequential and time-bound manner. The goal of this model is to “graduate” the poorest or most vulnerable out of poverty in a way that thereafter allows them to sustain and generate livelihoods independently.

The graduation model is comprised, usually, of providing mentoring services, delivering consumption support, advocating for financial inclusion, fostering social networks and linkages, and engaging participants in technical skills training; the goal is to connect participants with self-employment or wage employment opportunities.

The graduation model was first introduced in the early 2000s, and rigorous, worldwide evaluations of its impact have produced statistically significant results across several indicators of economic wellbeing (i.e., monthly income, ability to maintain and grow small businesses, etc.). It has also demonstrated an effect on clients’ emotional wellbeing and women’s ability to make decisions in the household.

The success of the graduation model encouraged the convening of a Poverty Alleviation Coalition (PAC) to further develop and test graduation-style programs. Driven by UNHCR, the World Bank Partnership for Economic Inclusion, and 13 international NGOs, the PAC coordinates graduation efforts at the global and country levels. The goal is to marshal resources for graduation programs globally to help 500,000 households get out of poverty over the next five years.

Jordan has its own PAC representative group comprised of organizations that are either part of the global PAC or are implementing graduation programs locally. DRC launched the first graduation project in Jordan: Resilient Youth, Socially and Economically Empowered (RYSE), in cooperation with Mercy Corps and the Jordan River Foundation.

While working with young Jordanians and Syrians, RYSE is demonstrating a “use case” for the graduation model in the Jordan context. During its inception phase in 2020, the project conducted market assessments in seven governorates across Jordan. Based on the results of those assessments, this year the project is registering new participants and developing training content. RYSE targets new participants based on the assumption that extremely poor Jordanians and Syrians are already covered by a social protection program (e.g., NAF or UNHCR cash assistance) and therefore would normally not be included in livelihoods projects. New participants are selected based on a review of NAF and Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) scoring data as well as additional vulnerability indicators, such as dependency ratio, food security, debt levels, dependency on negative coping mechanisms, disabilities in the household, and whether the household is headed by a female.

Participation in RYSE does not eliminate the need for other forms of cash assistance and participants are assured that participation in the program will not result in a discontinuation of services provided by other organizations.

The project will next begin coaching participants and providing them with cash assistance so that they can begin training.

Basic Needs sector chair, UNHCR, confirmed that close coordination between Basic Needs and Livelihoods sectors could ensure transition of prioritized cases.

In view of expected funding shortcomings, Food Security Chair Agency, WFP, suggested to collectively brainstorm on the equitable distribution of resources to ensure those in need are reached. WFP signaled that it may not be able to maintain current level of assistance to half a million refugees. Linked to funding challenges, the Food Security sector was intending a mapping of food security and related assistance by all sector partners including current/ planned projects, assistance type, beneficiaries, etc.

Food Security sector was invited to engage in the ongoing discussion in the Livelihoods sector on coordination of Graduation projects and contribute to ensuring consistency and harmonization across them. Along with PAC and RYSE practices, ILO, UNICEF and UNHCR are actively engaged in livelihoods programming involving refugees and NAF beneficiaries. The number of beneficiaries needing support might be larger than the Graduation model anticipated to absorb within 12 – 24 months. Livelihoods sector chair, UNHCR, emphasized that the sector was recognizing its role to support the population affected by the Syria crisis to reduce poverty and dependency on aid, contribute to self-sustainability and enhance social cohesion in the community. The Graduation model was a shared responsibility and an effective tool.

ISWG chair expressed her appreciation for the excellent and very useful presentation and suggested to propose it for inclusion in a future HPF.

2. Funding shortages in 2021

In his introduction, UNHCR Representative confessed his long intention to attend the ISWG meeting, which had been challenged by emerging issues particularly triggered by the evolving COVID-19. UNHCR Representative appreciated the work of the sector chairs and co-chairs and assured that in all his engagements in the coordination bodies, including HPF, he had continuously highlighted the solid sector architecture, and that sectors header by chairs and co-chairs formed the pillars of the response. It was emphasized that through their presentations at HPF the sector chairs successfully took advantage to speak on behalf of the sectors thus making these engagements more coherent and understandable for the larger community.

He was following through the Inter-Sector Coordinator and conversations the excellent work being done by sectors and reassured that he remained tuned to the issues conveyed by sectors to the broader attention, and increasingly to HPF and HDPG.

It was also highlighted that the significant achievements in 2020 contributed to a change of narrative in coordination from a solely humanitarian response to feeding the conversations in HDPG with development actors. This provided opportunities for closer linkages to development actors and development agendas.

UNHCR Representative elaborated on the funding outlook in 2021. It was worrisome that humanitarian actors anticipated that funding shortages might trigger multiple partner agencies to having to phase out very rapidly and to leave limited time for putting proper exit strategies in place. The ISWG members were encouraged to think collectively and to ensure transition was managed in a coordinated manner.

The sectors achievements and work were once again appreciated especially also in the even more difficult Corona context with often restricted direct access to the field. The importance to observe global trends related to humanitarian assistance remained, together with the importance to comply with funding related reporting

requirements. The Representative added that there were opportunities to use existing reporting mechanisms to economize other reporting requirements. In this regard, the Representative assured his readiness to support sector coordinators in real coordination aimed to improve the response.

Inter-Sector Coordinator informed that, ahead of Brussels V Conference, ISWG just completed compilation of sector gaps, and invited participants to exchange on specific sectors' funding situations and plans. The topic triggered intensive exchange of experiences and observations.

Anticipating the financial problems, WFP is working on retargeting and prioritization strategy. WFP admitted introducing major cuts in assistance, which will have strong implications on other sectors. WFP emphasized that potential financial problems are calling sectors to ensure effective allocation of resources and to assess consequences of lack of assistance to be used in advocacy with donors.

WASH Sector Chair, UNICEF, commented that evolvement of the funding situation had a major effect on programmes, particularly in camps where WASH interventions would decrease from June 2021. Generally, discussions on the future sustainability of camps are ongoing. WASH sector direct implementation should decrease, proposing the gradual integration in national systems and existing government nets. Attention should be paid to sustainable financing modalities, to engage in bi-lateral discussions with development actors, to enhance advocacy with donors and Government counterparts for WASH operations.

GBV Sub-Sector Chair, UNHCR referred to its gaps' analysis conducted in 2020. The challenge to cover basic needs was frequently raised by women contacting GBV providers; as well as a reported lack of GBV response programmes for non-Syrian refugees on the ground. GBV Sub-WG recommended the increase of cash programmes integrated in GBV response, as well as livelihoods and empowerment interventions targeting women and adolescent girls.

Basic Needs Sector Chair, UNHCR stated that funding reductions had been continuously faced since 2019. The number of actors providing monthly cash assistance had also reduced, with a slight increase in agencies providing emergency assistance for COVID in 2020, but with a trend of partners again decreasing in 2021.

Health Sector Chair, UNHCR confirmed serious financial challenges of the sector, which critically impacted medical referrals, primary, secondary, and tertiary health care. Some health partners were developing exit strategies in collaboration with the sector to ensure inclusion of urban refugees in the national health system. Though the multi-donor account and the inclusion of non-Syrian refugees in the national health system was a major collective achievement, even subsidized health services were not affordable by this group. It was important to elaborate on the five-year sector strategy to comply with SDG goal "Full integration of refugees in national health systems".

UNHCR Representative thanked sector chairs for sharing their views and concluded that this subject deserved much attention and should be further discussed, including at the HPF. He also drew attention to the fact that, despite of COVID-19, Jordan operations had entered naturally in a transformation phase. More opportunities should be explored to mainstream programmes, to include refugees in national systems, and to gradually reduce parallel systems. COVID-19 dramatically changed the operational landscape, created a difficult environment for all parties including Government with initial difficulties to accepting the need for transformation.

UNHCR Representative stressed the importance of localization, where building on value added by local partners was crucial for any progress hand in hand with context analysis and advocacy for solutions.

He emphasized the role of the inter-sector coordination platform to place discussions with main donors and encouraged sector coordinators to continue demonstrating practical value of ISWG in the current evolving environment.

In relation to funding gaps and the role of ISWG in response coordination, Inter-Sector Coordinator suggested to engage with regional 3RP coordinators and brainstorm on the future structure of 3RP, in view of addressing transformation of the operational environment in Jordan.

JIF proposed that facing the funding challenges and anticipating the outcoming decisions of Brussels V Conference, agencies may start monitoring and identifying projects which had been successfully implemented or failed to materialize or closed.

Livelihoods sector informed on ongoing conversations on revamping the Livelihoods sector in JRP and re-engagement with Government for additional livelihoods opportunities in the country. The momentum should be used for better planning and prioritization of projects in terms of suitability and sustainability, bringing humanitarian and development actors together with national institutions to respond the needs on the ground.

Food Security Sector, WFP, echoed the need to bringing humanitarian and development actors together, a direction which WFP as an Agency also took. Linkages between humanitarian and development agendas should figure as a topic in a future ISWG meeting.

JIF underlined that Nexus and Localization had been key strategic priorities and were continuously discussed by donors, JIF and ISWG. Meanwhile, the transition agenda had been never supported by Government. JIF has commissioned a consultancy to match risks and opportunities across the Nexus. As outcome a basic study with observations of main implementors was produced. JIF offered the document to be used broadly by not only JIF, but also ISWG and donors as it may facilitate the formulation of concrete messages and recommendations to be submitted to GoJ. Inter-Sector Coordinator suggested to include a briefing on the Study in one of the upcoming ISWG meetings.

3. JRP 2021 – 2023 and Brussels V Conference

The JRP 2021 – 2023 was in principle endorsed by Government; only few minor changes were still to be made MoPIC. The final version of JRP was expected to be issued shortly.

In preparation for Brussels V Conference end of March, successful and constructive consultations with refugees and civil society in Jordan have been recently conducted. A survey was also carried leading to recommendations which were shared with the EU ahead of Brussels V. Topic of the ‘Days of Dialogue’ and final agenda were still in the process of being determined. All stakeholders and partners were encouraged to take the opportunity to attend side events of the Conference taking place from 16 to 26 March.

4. AOB

Next ISWG meeting: 04 April 2021

Action Points	Responsible	Timeframe
Include topic of cooperation between humanitarian and development actors in future ISWG agenda. Consider invitation of expert to contribute to the discussion	IACU	April
Communicate on coordination of Graduation projects	Food Security and Livelihoods Sectors	asap
Disseminate information/ documentation in relation to Brussels V Conference	IACU	asap