

South-East Turkey: Inter-Sector Working Group (ISWG) Terms of Reference Updated: October 2016

Background

Five years into the Syrian crisis, Turkey hosts the largest number of refugees in the world, including more than 2 million Syrian refugees. To date, the Government of Turkey (GoT) has demonstrated a strong sense of national ownership, ensuring registration of newcomers and playing a leading role as main responder in the provision of protection and assistance. Refugees have continued to enter Turkey as a result of the GoT's 'open door policy', albeit subject to increasingly tightened entry measures due to security reasons.

At this juncture in the Syrian crisis, Turkey's government and communities face a critical test of stability. In light of the continuously growing refugee population – projections indicate Syrian refugees will total 2,75 million by the end of 2016 – GoT institutions and services are increasingly overwhelmed and resources stretched thin. Compounding this situation are an increasing number of refugees resorting to negative coping mechanisms within a framework of aggravating tensions with host communities. It is estimated around 59% of the refugees are in the South East of Turkey, the majority being from Syrians and Iraqi, but also including other nationality groups.

To address these concerns, The Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) for the Syria Crisis was launched in December 2014 consolidating a regional framework addressing refugees and resilience needs including protection, food security, education, health, basic needs and livelihoods. Targeting both refugees and host community, the 3RP is based on six sector strategies (including the strategic direction of the Child Protection and Sexual and Gender Based Violence sub-sectors under the umbrella of the Protection Working Group), which are implemented and coordinated by the UN with technical advisory support from selected NGO's. Sector leads and agencies providing coordinators are responsible for working in consultation - and coordination - with national and local authorities, partners and other relevant actors to ensure a strategic, balanced, and well-prioritized response in the sector or area of activity concerned.

Objectives

- The ISWG will function as the body where technical issues pertaining to the working groups are discussed in an open, inclusive and transparent manner.
- The ISWG will provide technical guidance and oversight to ensure the refugee and resilience response in the South East of Turkey is effective, coherent and predictable. Technical operational issues covered by the ISWG will only be focused in the South East of Turkey targeting the refugee and resilience needs of Syrian and non-Syrian refugees as well as host communities.
- The ISWG will ensure coordination with, and among, humanitarian agencies represented, NGO community, the IACG and the STF in Ankara. While the ISWG has a direct

communication line to the Syria Task Force (STF) in Ankara, official reporting will be conducted through the Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG)

- The ISWG will ensure a clearly articulated region-level response by ensuring flexibility to adapt to potential changing circumstances; the ISWG does not add bureaucratic layers but aims to streamline and facilitate the work of the various sectors
- The ISWG, as a technical group, under the lead of the Inter-Sector Working Group Coordinator, will operate on the basis of clear deliverables, to which all sector leads shall commit and be held accountable to.
- The ISWG will ensure accountability to populations of concern are an integral part of all interventions and that an age, gender and diversity (AGD) approach is applied throughout the program cycle.

Principles

The Inter-Sector Working Group will:

- Be grounded in the principles of inclusivity, predictability and transparency.
- Be governed and guided by established humanitarian principles;
- Bring 'added-value' to the Sector Working Groups (SWGs) – focus on activities or processes that affect all or several sectors, but without duplicating their work;
- Promote a "Sector-Based Approach" in planning, implementation and reporting;
- Encourage consistency in information management products across the different sectors;
- Seek and promote consensus to support decision-making;
- Promote coordination of sectoral activities based on evidence and collective protection analysis, seeking feedback and participation from the affected population and reviewing strategies accordingly.

Membership

I. Composition/frequency

- Sector Leads,co-leads and technical advisory of Sector Working Groups operating in South-East Turkey.
- Changes to membership are to be discussed and agreed by all participating agencies, including broadening (observer) membership on an ad hoc basis
- The ISWG meets at least once a month preceding the Syria Task Force and the IACG. Ad hoc meetings can take place when necessary

II. Roles/Responsibilities

- The working group is led by UNHCR.
- The Inter-Agency Coordinator, acting as Inter-Sector Working Group Coordinator leads and chairs the group.
- The chair will circulate the agenda and background papers, where relevant, to members of the ISWG prior to each meeting for comments.
- Urgent items may be added to the agenda by any member for either a scheduled meeting or an ad hoc meeting in consultation with the Chair. In this case, substantiating information should be provided by the requesting member

- A summary record and action points will be produced and distributed by the Chair no later than 3-5 days after the meeting. The summary record and action points will be shared by the chair with the members of the ISWG, IACG as well as the STF.

III. Commitment

- All ISWG members commit to actively participate in the group, including attending meeting, following-up on action points and deliverables and participate in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of joint, multi-sector activities.

Specific Responsibilities of the ISWG

- Identify cross-cutting thematic advocacy opportunities and raise them to the attention of the IACG for follow-up;
- Provide technical oversight and guidance to sector-working groups ensuring cross-cutting issues are properly reflected in sector activities;
- Ensure a rational and efficient geographical operational coverage at the various working groups with a focus of strengthening coordination within the SE of Turkey and particularly between GZT and the provincial levels;
- Support technical and operational emergency preparedness efforts in the SE of Turkey, implementing recommendations from the risk analysis exercise;
- Advise working groups on assessments and undertake efforts to review and endorse a harmonized multi-sectoral needs assessment template. Complementing this, ensure data sharing protocols are in place.
- Guide and facilitate information management to support operational decision making – ensuring basic IM tools are in place and up-to date;
- Produce and disseminate monthly ISWG products. In the short term, these will be:
 - A monthly technical operational note (2-3 paragraphs per sector)
 - A monthly statistical overview (explained further in the point below).
- Support the monitoring of sector and coordination performance, including:
 - a. In line with the 3RP and the national sectors, keeping track, on a monthly basis, of 2-3 key indicators per sector (where possible to also include indicators from the 3RP);
 - b. Conduct regular surveys to gauge participants' satisfaction, identify bottleneck in coordination and promote joint actions to address them.
- The ISWG supports the dissemination of technical tools to the sectors, discussing and monitoring progress against operational sector targets
- Systematically discuss (as a fixed agenda point) changes in humanitarian context, cross-cutting issues and access issues at operational level. Programmatic updates (roundtable) not necessary as these updates will be captured in the monthly technical note (updates of this nature only to be given in case of major programmatic shifts/updates). Possibility of including a monthly thematic presentation as a fixed agenda to be confirmed.
- Ensure need for support from Ankara for specific sectors to be raised to the attention of the IACG.
- Ensure updates at Ankara level, e.g. regulations, policy changes, etc, are systematically fed back into ISWG (main role for Protection sector lead in this regard). In addition, ensure protection is mainstreamed across all sectors.
- Promote the role of IM across sectors to ensure inter-sector outputs are of high quality. Recommend/provide IM capacity where needed.

- Systematically review and ensure harmonization of 3/4 W's per sector as well as agency reporting in Activity Info
- Review training needs per sector and incorporate training/capacity building activities into the ISWG work-plan. Focus in particular on 'overlapping trainings' (e.g. cash for CBI and PRT) that would benefit all sectors.
- Systematically track progress and review the workplan and jointly agree on amendments/new additions where necessary.
- Monitor and provide support to the CBI and IMWG