



## Bahamas Dorian – Protection Working Group - Meeting Minutes

<http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/field-support/field-protection-clusters/bahamas/>

<b>Date</b>	15/10/2019 – Meeting #10	<b>Location</b>	National Training Agency	
<b>Chair</b>	Maeve Murphy <murphym@unhcr.org>, Senior Protection Coordinator, UNHCR	<b>Minutes prepared by</b>	Deneisha Moss <moss@unhcr.org>	
<b>Participating organizations</b>	<b>UNHCR/ UNFPA /IFRC/IOM/UNDP/HHI/CEF/Ministry of Health/Public Hospital Authority/Team Rubicon USA/Americares/Active Citizen Bahamas</b>			
<b>Agenda</b>	<p><b>Endorsement of previous PWG minutes</b></p> <p>Agency updates on specific issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration</li> <li>• 3W, Activities Tracking &amp; Referral</li> <li>• Documentation</li> <li>• Psychosocial/Mental health</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Cash based interventions</li> <li>• Communication with Communities</li> <li>• PSEA</li> </ul> <p>Update from Sub-working group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection,</li> <li>• GBV</li> </ul> <p>Field Update – Abaco, Grand Bahamas etc. AOB</p>			
<b>Previous meeting action points</b>			<b>Status</b>	<b>Responsible</b>
Frequently asked questions by community – it would be helpful if people can share frequently asked questions which are being asked by the community to clarify			Pending	All agencies



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Referral form to be agreed by subworking groups to include psychosocial referrals	Pending	IM to call meeting regarding same
Child Protection – Confirmation of when school starts with location details and confirmation of locations waiting to be accommodated, also details of child friendly spaces to be shared	Pending	UNICEF
OAG to confirm when decision is made regarding the death certificate and also to share details of Eugene Dupuch Law school to develop leaflet on services being provided	Pending	OAG
Discussion on way forward for 3W-activities tracking	Presentation for next meeting	IM
Criteria used by Social Services dept for those eligible for support would be beneficial and where the documentation centres might be established and where	Pending	Social Services
Details of obstacles and gaps for documentation replacement to be shared	Pending	All Agencies
Minimum expenditure basket	Pending	Social Services/ICRC
Details of names and details of students who may be impacted with moving to the gym to be identified for possible replacement of uniforms	Pending	MoE/SS
Different communication strategies for different locations could be developed – i.e. where international agencies were providing services – no cost	Pending	MoH/Various agencies
Mobile teams to be considered while documentation not replaced to ensure access to health clinic	Pending	MoH/various agencies
Accreditation of NGO to be shared in advance of PSEA implementation of complaints system	Pending	SS/UNFPA
Follow up with the removal of the signage at MH Clinic, outlining costs and requirement to show documents	Pending	MoH
Followup on getting numbers of those out of school to plan for focus group response on how to address those out of school	Pending	BPA
Mapping of who is doing what where to be finalized once accreditation is finalised	Pending	IM

### AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSIONS

By Agenda Item	Main Points and Decisions from Discussions	Agreed Follow-Up Actions	Responsible
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<p><b>Registration</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The Chair reoriented the group that in a meeting with Social Services and Dept. of Technology, the idea of supporting a baseline registration and verification exercise was proposed in order to facilitate planning and responses by the various agencies.</li> <li>○ The agreement was that the Protection Sector would lead this request and all agencies would then have ability to include their needs for planning.</li> <li>○ There was a question from the Red Cross on how registration and verification might affect the undocumented population, given their current fears they face.</li> <li>○ Noted by the Chair that the registration and verification maybe in their best interest at the moment, because now they are invisible and not receiving assistance unless in the shelter. At least if the affected population is known, then we could potentially understand their intentions and needs: shelter, cash, previous home owners, previous legal status etc. and advocate on their behalf</li> <li>○ There was a question from UNDP on when the questionnaires would be available for input, to which the Chair confirmed PWG IM had received the registration questions from SS and Education, and is willing to receive input from agencies.</li> <li>○ Heart to Heart highlighted the need for assurances from the Govt. that they weren't going to target those who were registered for deportation, to which the Chair confirmed that such questions will formulate a part of the negotiation on the content of the registration/verification.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>3W, Activities Tracking &amp; Referral/Needs assessment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chair enquired about the extent to which agencies were reporting their activities on the 3W platform. Noting the platform is somewhat cumbersome, it was further noted that the IM WG is working with Government to see if process can be simplified.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Documentation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chair noted that during mission to Abaco there was still a sign at the clinic asking for legal status documents and citing costs for treatment</li> <li>○ MOH noted in response to the signage at the MH clinic, that there were 7 EMTs on the ground and their job is to go door to door, to assist those with medical needs in their communities and that no one is denied treatment irrespective of status.</li> </ul>		



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<p><b>Psychosocial/ Mental health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ MOH noted that there was recommendation to remove the signage since access was not being prohibited. The Chair noted from a protection standpoint, while access was not being prohibited, it was effectively not accessible under the circumstances as people were fearful of approaching the clinic. Furthermore UNFPA added if people require more complicated treatment, the signage would turn them off.</li> <li>○ MOH, PHA stated the policy has always been that for those who have no documents or cannot afford, they do not have to pay and will be treated, however MOH consequently conceded that this issue will be raised to be further discussed.</li> <li>○ UNFPA noted the issue of the gap in the communication. If these measures are in place, we need to share messages amongst the community as this is the key.</li> <li>○ MOH could not say how long the policy would be in place, but confirmed for non-payment, this has always been the case – even before the hurricane.</li> <li>○ MOH, Heart to Heart are going door to door in the community for free. Americares noted they are working from Elbow cay, Rubicon indicated sandy point, moores town, fox town.</li> <li>○ Americares confirmed they will be supplementing the Govt. in all clinics until December, and will be going from house to house with UNFPA to build trust.</li> <li>○ UNHCR reported there were still no updates with respect to efforts to meet with Immigration Director, although efforts were still underway to arrange a meeting re documentation. In a meeting with Haitian authorities, confirmation as received that documents were being replaced and the first passports arrived today.</li> <li>○ The Chair provided a brief update on weekend mission to Abaco, voicing protection concerns observed there, including in shelters – specifically a vulnerable woman at risk, alone with several drunken men in the middle of the day. The woman confirmed she felt unsafe under the circumstances, leading the Chair to underscore the need for any outreach component take these kinds of circumstances into consideration.</li> <li>○ It was further suggested that due to the fact that people do not know what their future holds, unhealthy coping mechanisms are being developed including reliance on drugs.</li> </ul>	<p>Follow up with the removal of the signage at MH Clinic, outlining costs and requirement to show documents</p>	<p>MOH</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ PHA noted they have observed similar but could not answer questions on how long people will be housed in shelters or what will happen to them. Nevertheless, they try to educate people on appropriate coping strategies and emphasize that drinking is not the solution.</li> <li>○ Americares introduced their new staff who is based at the Kendal Isaacs gym and will be in Nassau for 6 months. He is currently communicating with the shelter supervisors and trying to assess where the gaps are.</li> <li>○ IOM updated on their efforts to compile information into a single document to share with the Government on the various capacities of the UN /INGOS, and what practical support they are able to provide to support the shelter. Deadline COB today to provide inputs.</li> <li>○ Child Evangelism NGO raised the issue of settled water under the bleachers which is carrying a stench and could have health implications as it is outside near food and toilets. She further noted that there are areas at the gym where children play and they can be hurt, while using trolleys etc. Americares confirmed there have already been some accidents and are looking to develop messages and relationships to address this issue.</li> <li>○ MOH noted they had engaged Creole speakers to assist with PSS, and maybe those individuals can assist in speaking with evacuees on the issues outlined above.</li> <li>○ IOM – pointed out that the issues being raised were inter-related and suggested that there should be more emphasis on working with social services on community participation. It was added that this could be reflected in the document currently being prepared.</li> <li>○ Chair recommended that after CCCM, there could be another meeting specifically on Kendal Isaacs’s gym to document the issues being raised and to identify who is doing what and concretize actions for actors going forward.</li> <li>○ Heart to Heart questioned where the stagnant water is coming from, to which the response was rain water.</li> <li>○ A second issue was raised about children in the shelter not going to school, and there was a question about the number of children in this predicament and their age group</li> <li>○ The Chair noted that unfortunately there was no clarity on that from Education, and opined that there should be focused group discussions to see exactly where the issue lies and what can be done.</li> </ul>		
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It was noted by Child Evangelism that there were apparently different reasons including missing documents like NIB. It was noted that between 3-5pm when their afternoon program starts, there are approximately 50 kids present on school days, indicating there are not in school through the day.</li> <li>○ PHA noted the Government combined the shelters, so there were issues with location of school and registration – now some kids are further away from the school they were registered, and/or they may face the impediment of not have a uniform as yet.</li> <li>○ PHA promised to look into the situation with the shelter manager from social services and ask what the issue is.</li> </ul>	<p>Look into the details of school aged children not currently attending school</p>	<p>BPA</p>
<p><b>Human Rights</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Chair confirmed earlier reports that 112 Haitian migrants were deported, 37 of whom were interviewed after arriving in Haiti. Of the 37, 10 indicated they were impacted by the hurricane. In addition, some deportees reported not being able to retrieve their documentation before being hastily removed by immigration officers. There were concerns raised about the circumstances of the apprehension, including 1) children reportedly being left behind in one case, and 2) the modality of the arrests which took place in the middle of the night.</li> <li>○ Chair informed members that OHCHR issued a statement this morning, calling for the need for due process to be observed for all cases, in particular for those who are stateless and risk of stateless.</li> <li>○ Chair further informed that over the weekend a group of 12 and 13 migrants were repatriated over two days. Currently 61 people in the detention centre.</li> <li>○ The Chair informed there had been contact made with the Chamber of Commerce who saw the value in collective messaging, since employers will need to have staff back, thus the same advocacy messaging on same will be developed further.</li> <li>○ RC will arrive in Bahamas to raise concerns with Government side, as access to assistance is being jeopardized due to the current situation on the ground and the lack of access to due process is an issue of concern across the board.</li> </ul>		



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<p><b>Cash Based Interventions</b></p> <p><b>Communication with Communities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ NSTR</li> <li>○ IM support reminded participants to share any FAQ being received for compilation into the messages being developed in coordination with ESF 5. Further noted MFA communication on procedures for documentation and renewal was published recently,</li> <li>○ UNFPA has developed pre-recorded audio messages to share information with the communities and are developing similar sign language.</li> </ul>		
<p><b>PSEA</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ UNFPA PSEA coordinator will arrive this Friday 18/October and will roll out the training to support the development of the network. Will be in town for one month. Coordinator from HQ will also be coming to Nassau for a week</li> <li>○ Chair raised the observation that in the community people don't know the difference between any of the agencies, stressing the need for the accreditation process to be implemented in a timely fashion. As people become more desperate, and support becomes less visible, this leaves people at heightened risk of exploitation and trafficking</li> <li>○ UNFPA mentioned that there was mention of introducing volunteerism, but without standards, background checks or reporting requirements in place this was a concern that required PSEA in place to address</li> <li>○ IOM noted there were lessons learned from Greece, where there was similar situation and those could be considered.</li> </ul>	<p>Mapping of who is doing what where to be finalized once accreditation is finalized</p>	<p>PWG IM</p>
<p><b>GBV</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ UNFPA noted increasing cases in GBV in Abaco and that there was a team in Abaco working with community on awareness and how to improve interventions.</li> <li>○ UNFPA is giving out dignity kits, and supporting Heart to Heart to ensure beneficiaries are receiving the items sent for them</li> <li>○ UNFPA will be conducting training for responders GBV, PFA in Nassau and Abaco next week and now printed and shared referral pathways.</li> <li>○ UNFPA is currently working on access to services, in particular family planning, STI, PEP.</li> </ul>		



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<b>Child Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Heart to Heart made an enquiry about what happens to kids whose parents are deported and leave them behind. Chair noted that the understanding is that such children end up in the care of social services.</li> <li>○ MOH subsequently questioned how it works for those whose parents returned to Abaco to work and left kids behind in Nassau, noting that culturally it is not uncommon for Haitian parents to leave kids in the care of relatives. Chair noted the importance of the concern, highlighting the potential issues for such children to emergency medical care for example and further noting it was precisely with this in mind that UNICEF was recommended to include separated children in their mapping, to avoid further protection risks such as ensuring access to a legal guardian and safeguard against exploitation and trafficking.</li> <li>○ MOH clarified that for emergency cases, a separated child would be treated if the treatment is lifesaving, but recommended that NGO practitioners in the field should liaise with MOH on the scope partnership with Govt, and receive such confirmation in writing.</li> </ul>		
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### OTHER ISSUES TO NOTE

**Field Update – Abaco, Grand Bahamas etc.**

**AOB – Any other Business**

-Question about whether it is feasible to use FM radio to disseminate messages on health (re: free services and flexibility on documentation). It was noted that there was interest in doing, and if possible will follow up (Ferreira Foundation)

Point was raised re school access that current impediments are unacceptable and if all kids in shelters continue to face impediments then consideration should be given to have teacher come to the shelters, as end of October makes two months that kids will have been missing school. Americares noted this question was raised by a parent in the shelter and the Chair emphasized that these kind of concerns should be raised in the Education working group since all kids must be in school by law. Focus groups on why kids are not in school and the barriers thereto are needed to address the issue and if kids were not going to school in the past maybe MoE accredited catch up classes could be considered.

**Next Meeting** *National Training Agency, 22/10/2019 @13:30*

**Next Agenda**  
**Endorsement of Above PWG minutes ( )**  
**Agency updates on specific issues**





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- Registration
- 3W, Activities Tracking & Referral
- Documentation
- Psychosocial/Mental health
- Human Rights
- Cash based interventions
- Communication with Communities

### Update from Sub-working group:

- GBV/PSEA
- Child Protection,

AOB

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