



Bahamas Dorian – Protection Working Group - Meeting Minutes

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

Date	03/10/2019 – Meeting #7		Location	National Training Agency
Chair	Maeve Murphy <murphym@unhcr.org>, Senior Protection Coordinator, Global Protection/UNHCR	Minutes prepared by	Deneisha Moss <moss@unhcr.org>	
Participating organizations	Dep of Social Services/UNHCR/UNICEF/IOM/WFP/			
Agenda	<p>Endorsement of previous PWG minutes</p> <p>Agency updates on specific issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration – Presentation • 3W, Activities Tracking & Referral • Documentation • Psychosocial/Mental health • Human Rights • Cash based interventions • Communication with Communities <p>Update from Sub-working group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Protection, • GBV/PSEA <p>Field Update – Abaco, Grand Bahamas etc. AOB</p>			
Previous meeting action points			Status	Responsible
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
Referral form to be agreed by subworking groups to include psychosocial referrals			Pending	IM to call meeting regarding same



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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
Child Protection - TOR of working group 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
Meeting on registration prior to next protection group meeting	Pending	UNHCR
Information on town hall meeting to be shared, telephone numbers for active numbers to be shared with group and also community centres where psychosocial services are available	Pending	BPA

AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSIONS

By Agenda Item	Main Points and Decisions from Discussions	Agreed Follow-Up Actions	Responsible
Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o IOM has still not received any updates from the Social Services regarding approval for registration and DTM. The request is with the Lawyer who is reviewing same. o OHCHR questioned the reason for the delay – and how does IOM’s assess the reason for the delay? Are they expecting a positive answer? Was it raised in meeting with the PM yesterday? 	PWG agreed the need to prioritize registration to obtain baseline data for support	UNHCR



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IOM – is not clear on the reason, noted their offer of support to Govt was sent a week and half ago, alongside others, so maybe a capacity issue. Regular follow up every two days, but don't want to push too hard. Suggested if other agencies have channels to push forward that would be helpful. ○ WFP noted shared previous experience in the region – noting in British Virgin Islands registration approval from the Government took 3.5 weeks. Noted it would be helpful to streamline how agencies are approaching the government on registration. Red Cross for example, which has auxiliary status – can be an open channel, maybe willing to facilitate. ○ Chair asked whether anything has already been shared with Govt on cash program. ○ IFRC noted they are not relying on the Govt to identify anyone ○ WFP noted that an entry point to break the impasse could be under the guise of cash support. ○ IOM raised the issue that the American Red Cross sent a letter to the Government (Social services) referencing discussions on an MOU registration and cash transfers, which is likely to confuse the Govt. This was done bilaterally without consultation or coordination about the plan after sharing draft MOU with Govt. IFRC noted that the Bahamas Red Cross sent a letter, not the American Red Cross. ○ Chair interjected that this issue should be addressed between agencies and as IOM was agreed under the premise of CERF by protection working group as being the agency to register and would share information with others it was important that this was made easier to clarify the situation so as not to confuse the government. ○ IOM questioned how to organize since registration is a protection concern. The Chair confirmed that a second meeting should be convened to clarify the situation in advance of the next protection meeting to discuss the requisite requirements and agree on a way forward in an effort to ensure that there is a consolidated agreement. ○ IOM confirmed they began documentation of informal homes/ shelters not in the Govt list: Emergency Host, Nazareth, Ranfurly Home while waiting for official from Govt. ○ WFP had questions on the registration system and suggested commencing training until such time as approval is granted. 	<p>and assistance. A separate meeting will be convened prior to the next protection meeting. Then a presentation will be made at the next protection working group to look at 1) requirements for registration and 2) safeguards to be included in the process and 3) lessons learned/</p>	
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<p>3W, Activities Tracking & Referral</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IOM noted the system is for govt, which IOM is supporting and they have to share info with partners who are accredited ○ IM support confirmed that instructions have been sent to agencies to report on 3W, now that it's been handed over ○ Next IM working group - which is now organized by NEMA – likely to take place on 4th of October ○ OCHA will be providing backup support to the system and dashboard, now confirmed since discussion in the last PWG ○ IM will be taking over on coordination response, but this is still open for discussion and will be decided at the meeting ○ IOM until they decide on the actual channel – continue filling in 3W in the useful links ○ Next meeting on who is doing what where in the coordination system will be soon. 		
<p>Documentation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chair noted the situation with regard to replacing documents was unclear because of pronouncements made by Govt. on work permits, etc - contradictory statements have been issued by different members of Govt. ○ Protection has requested meeting with technical people at Immigration to field questions on documentation to understand whether there is still a waiver, and what is the process for different categories. If a meeting is not secured the matter will be elevated for clarity on the issues. ○ Chair noted the serious protection concerns for those not able to access legal docs and are now at risk of being deported and there is a necessity to have access to due process ○ IOM noted there was 0.3% decrease in the shelters in the last week. ○ Chair also asked that information on concerns regarding deportation be shared, be it in Nassau or Abaco as there is a need to track those cases to ensure due process ○ IOM noted a CBO have a video of military stopping people in the street, asking documents in Nassau ○ OHCHR pointed out that the Govt made a commitment to replace document so procedures need to be in place before starting a campaign to send people home. There 		



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	<p>should be procedures in place, because people need the opportunity to apply to replace documents. Then there should also be legal assistance for those that need it in a clear and transparent way. As protection sector we need to address, especially without having a confirmation with technical team on procedures in place for those who lost their documentation. Why acting like this without respect for due process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IOM updated on their meeting with the PM, the invitation of which was extended 16 hours before. Alicia and Jan attended. Present form Govt side: Foreign Affairs, Immigration, PS of PM’s Office, PS of MFA, PS Immigration, Senior Policy Advisor in PM’s Office, Communications Advisor, and a rep from the new ministry ○ PM confirmed what’s in paper: he is concerned with unrest in Nassau which is related to “illegal migrants” he is determined to respond. He prefers illegals go back voluntarily but if not they will be repatriated. Confirmed that those persons hosting “illegals” are breaking the law and will be arrested/prosecuted. Further noted work permits can only be requested from abroad, no while person is in country. ○ PM confirmed the # dead now 60, likely to increase. He also mentioned there are 200 Bahamians in Florida and are stuck (operation support or tickets) not clear if legal or illegal. IOM will contact Bahamas Consular officials in the US for details ○ PM suggested it would be good if IOM would “observe” the repatriation exercises to ensure that it happens in a humane manner. Jan confirmed to PWG IOM will not do that and cannot be involved in any Govt initiated repatriation, only when the same is fair voluntary. ○ IOM is expecting a letter from Govt on this and they would reply that as a member of UN system they can help develop system or procedures to assist in vol rep/reintegration support with services in COO ○ IOM updated the Spring City “family relief centre” for 1,000 people with prefab dome shaped structures will be installed in coming weeks. PM visited and expected mostly regularised Haitians will be there. Costs 5 million (private sector involved in design and procurement) 		
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<p>Psychosocial/ Mental health</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mission of Hope rep asked if there was an estimate on people expecting to repatriated, to which no one could respond. ○ IOM noted the PM mentioned strengthening border by using drones and helicopters – as its cheaper that repatriation exercises. Also planning to set up documentation centres – no details, but assumption for passport/birth certificates ○ Chair directed the question to Social Services who did not know anything about these centres but will try to find out. ○ IOM noted they were present in Bahamas in 2009/2010 where they supported logistics of Bahamians retuning from US. Supported with equipment and training to check authenticity of passports. ○ It was noted that a case of a person replacing passport damaged by storm was done free of charge by passport office. More information on what this is applicable for all is needed ○ Chair asked whether information on Immigrations exercises had started – what are the safeguards to ensure people are deported have had access to due process. Need information on the process so that we can include in the matrix and eventually a leaflet for the shelter managers ○ SS confirmed there was no contact with immigration in the shelter. Those in shelters would not be protected said Govt. but it hasn't started ○ IOM – asked PM confirmed immigration exercises started, but not related to the shelters ○ SS noted there are new people coming into shelters – not Haitians, but Bahamians who can no longer stay with relatives ○ IOM in Abaco have not seen immigration. Concern from PM – irregular travel by mail boats and people were trying to take advantage ○ OHCHR reminded UN agencies and organizations in the Bahamas of our humanitarian principles: to respect views and opinions, participation, non-discrimination etc and that we have a responsibility to report to protection sectors any cases of discrimination, lack of due process that they might witness. ○ Bahamas Psychological Association have been, in coordination with Min. of Health offering services in shelters, with a particular focus on children and immigrants. Have 	<p>Action Point – SS to help facilitate meeting request with Immigration documentation. Need clarification on the process and the costs.</p>	<p>Social Services</p>
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	<p>been working with a Creole speaking colleague out of Miami who has recorded a presentation for the clergy to facilitate their work in the shelters. Also coordinating for Creole speaking colleagues in Haiti and Miami to come to Bahamas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Red Cross is ongoing with their services. An update is that services will soon be in available in community clinics but hours not yet confirmed though likely to be in the evening after primary health care ends. ○ Chair noted there is a need to start referrals, noting that some people are still in hotels and having coping issues. Raised concerns for those remaining in hotels ○ BPA stated they received information on this and were able to deploy persons to Bob Marley and two hotels over Paradise Island: Club Land 'Or and Sunrise Beach Resort. ○ IOM will be going to sunrise today and can share info. Also noted about 70 UAMs at Ranfurly, Nathareth and Emergency Hostel. ○ BPA noted Social Serviced reached out about these kids, and they are trying to get profile: age, gender and abilities. ○ Past president of BPA is operating in GB (Rand) but services in Abaco are more limited. They have communicated with Americares. They are planning to do something with Heart to Heart and Rubicon, but looking at bringing in others who can travel. ○ Chair – sought clarification if all phone numbers for those on islands available now? BPA explained there was a toll free number but there is a technical problem which BTC cannot correct. So there are currently 4 lines that are operational but not toll free. The toll free in GB – they are still active. Abaco not sure of the situation. Aliv lines are working. ○ BPA are bringing reinforcement for Care for Carers as hierarchy for services needed: persons in the Bahamian diaspora, Creole speakers Caribbean professionals. This will help to spread capacity and allow social services and psychologists to rotate. ○ Chair – requested debris managers be included in the plan for support ○ UNICEF noted that they trained more than 120 teachers psychosocial counselors and early childhood schools, targeting schools coming from those islands. They have 	<p>BPA to provide an update on the numbers for PWG</p>	<p>BPA</p>
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<p>Human Rights</p>	<p>deposited supplies in Abaco, and some will be provided in GB including community centres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNICEF is starting a partnership on quality assurance with BPA, which will also include monitoring content, specialized referral for those require mental health, capacity bldg. ○ OHCHR raised the Town Hall tomorrow night and noted it would be important to have Bahamian nationals on the ground observing. ○ Also asked whether there is more information on the organizers? Questioned why the Government allowing it to go ahead? There is a concern this could escalate already existing tensions. Noted reports of human rights defenders receiving death threats and underscored at least 10 social media posts mentioned “killing”. ○ Noted the situation is very dangerous and UN agencies must think how to stop and approach the Govt on the vulnerable groups at risk ○ IOM noted they had already reached out to FB policy manager for Caribbean to see if they can support Govt on managing hate speech on social media. ○ IOM further noted reps from Rights Bahamas will be attending the town hall. ○ Chair made a point to the Dept of SS present as to whether this can be raised regarding concern over hate speech as needs to be addressed because otherwise could exacerbate the problem. ○ Bahamas Psychological Association added that they also work on inter-cultural tensions, and volunteered that a representative could attend the town hall to see what’s happening there. ○ Chair – kindly requested that rep from Bahamas Psychological Association attending the town hall also attend next PWG to provide an update. 	<p>Bah. Psy. Association to provide feedback on the Town Hall meeting, if volunteer attends.</p>	<p>Bahamas Psychological Association</p>
<p>Cash Based Interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chair asked whether Social Services Rep there is cleared criteria applied for support ○ SS confirmed that they are not dispersing cash - only food vouchers and no deviation from this position at this time from that at this time. Noted that according to their current assessments, if rent assistance is needed and you qualify, it’s available, but this was also the case before the hurricane. There have been no changes. 		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chair – WFP and IFRC also considering cash so what is needed is the pre-agreed figures in advance, including a breakdown of the criteria of who is entitled to this assistance ○ WFP noted they are an implementing a cash based working group to set up standards. The intention is to build on the social protection systems that already exists ○ IM support mentioned the previously existing RISE program funded by IDB which used the SPIS system and asked if there any information we can build on. Also noted that FAQs on cash assistance should be submitted for broader collation. ○ Chair explained again the lack of registration data means that agencies were unable to plug in to be able to build development assistance programs and there was concern over duplication ○ Suggestion was made by WFP that former RISE colleagues should come to next cash based meeting to provide insight. SS requested a reminder to bring those colleagues ○ SS also noted the Parliamentary Secretary of Social Services reviewed the doc on registration, made the comments and sent it back ○ Mission of Hope (MOH) raised the point that Inflation in Haiti is at around 50% and agencies currently in the room have evacuated their staff. Noted the violence is probably the worst it's been in a decade. Returning storm victims to Haiti equates dropping them into civil war context. MOH emphasized the need to disseminate information – must be focused on this as #s are dwindling in shelters. Suggested the need to segment those messages, working mainly through faith organizations in GB. Suggested the publication of weekly information to share with communities. ○ IOM – interjected that they raised the question on civil unrest in Haiti in their meeting with the PM, but his response was that he was concerned about civil unrest in The Bahamas. 	<p>FAQs on cash IFRC will send to WFP.</p>	<p>UNHCR</p>
<p>Communication with Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IM mentioned the FAQs that have been collated and are being worked on with ESF5. IM shared the questions received from CBOs and combined with those already formulated by ESF5. Idea under consideration is to put into a chat bot, where questions will be 	<p>IM support to share with IOM and other agencies the</p>	<p>IM Support to compile, PWG participants to</p>



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	<p>channeled through into a standardized approach, and can be shared through social media: Facebook, or website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ IOM added under the CERF budget to there is a budget for traditional communication i.e. posters and leaflets ○ IOM made a suggestion to work in blocks e.g. once GBV communication is completed and approved, consider printing/dissemination. IM support reiterated that it has to be done in coordination with ESF 5. 	<p>already collated questions. Action Point: additional questions for FAQ to be shared with IM support for collation</p>	<p>forward questions for compilation</p>
GBV/PSEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting will be held on 4th of October so more information will be available following same. 		
Child Protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ UNICEF noted concerns on UAMs, and informed they are moving toward nationalized assessment throughout the country in the affected islands and Nassau. ○ Noted the country has a Ward of the State mechanism for abandoned minors and that they would not be looking into that. ○ For those outside a system, UNICEF is looking how to mainstream them, using existing tools and working with local agencies to move it forward. They are relying on IOM for data ○ 4000 cases to be registered with needs but they are using a Standardized tool for data collection, have adopted them and shared with protection team – CP will share these. ○ UNICEF is working towards a unified system – how to digitize the information? There are concrete conversations with the govt. to see how to deploy childhood IM plus in order to inform policy and planning. Focus is on social services adapting global tools to the local context ○ WFP noted their interest to be involved on the PLUS side ○ Tomorrow – 4 Oct will be the first inaugural meetings of the subworking group. Currently in talks with Govt to see how to move forward with the initiative. They have looked at TORs, and Govt will share tomorrow, and everyone can provide input ○ Looking to strengthening systems in terms of DRR 		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chair highlighted that separated children needed to be addressed also and importance of also ensuring that children are included when doing UAM mapping noting that they will be potentially at risk of being stateless. ○ UNICEF stated the current registration captured all the data, but are looking for deficits, so they will be included but they will be focusing efforts where they can have maximum impact. If there are those in need, they will be referred to their service they require. 		
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OTHER ISSUES TO NOTE

Next Meeting	<i>National Training Agency, Tuesday 8th Oct @13:30</i>		
Next Agenda	<p>Endorsement of Above PWG minutes</p> <p>Agency updates on specific issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration • 3W, Activities Tracking & Referral • Documentation • Psychosocial/Mental health • Human Rights • Cash based interventions • Communication with Communities <p>Update from Sub-working group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV/PSEA • Child Protection <p>Field Update – Abaco, Grand Bahamas etc.</p> <p>AOB – Any other Business</p>		



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