Bahamas Dorian – Protection Working Group - Meeting Minutes

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

Date	*08/10/2019 – Meeting #8*	Location		*National Training Agency*
Chair	*Maeve Murphy <murphym@unhcr.org>, Senior Protection Coordinator, UNHCR*	Minutes prepared by		Deneisha Moss <moss@unhcr.org>
Participating organizations	**UNHCR/ UNFPA /UNICEF/ IOM/WFP/**			
Agenda	**Endorsement of previous PWG minutes** Agency updates on specific issues • Registration • 3W, Activities Tracking & Referral • Documentation • Psychosocial/Mental health • Human Rights • Cash based interventions • Communication with Communities • PSEA Update from Sub-working group: • Child Protection, • GBV Field Update – Abaco, Grand Bahamas etc. AOB			

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**

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

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

AGENDA ITEMS DISCUSSIONS		
By Agenda Item	**Main Points and Decisions from Discussions**	**Agreed Follow-Up Actions**	**Responsible**
Registration	- IOM - Based on previous discussion on the way forward i.e. - NEMA to lead the process of amalgamating existing databases, presentation as prepared to focus on what is needed for registration needs from agencies going forward which hopefully be lead to facilitation of discussion if protection working group members are aligned in advance - Numbers 7 Oct – 981 in shelters. Population 40% less a few days ago in one shelter. - SS still not allowing assessment of official collective sites at this point. - Chair reminds the participants that the PWG agreed to wait for a streamlined approached to registration and to try not to do multiple registration/assessments. - Based on presentation slide - UNICEF – queried IOMs definition of UAM and noted that social services did not consider kids under their care as "unaccompanied" because there are legal implications. IOM noted this was raised by social services and adopting alternative language - The importance of moving from a shelter management paradigm to case management paradigm was raised, particularly in light of people no longer being in collective shelters		

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

		o During the presentation IM support noted registration is key to protection. Further added that registration is an entry point for referrals of those with specific needs, and [registration] also helps to ensure authoritative figures are produced.		
		o Noting that a registration system should give a profile of population, documentation and facilitate targeted assistance, IM noted that it was a necessary tool to minimize fraud and duplication of humanitarian assistance and could facilitate family reunification.		
		o IOM highlighted the use of QR codes could improve accountability, maintains confidentiality while still tracking specific issues. E.g. social services can vouch for this without having to share name of the person.		
		o UNHCR provided an example of the ration card, which can be made as a smart card, which could also provide access to ATM for example (with a chip inside) for cash distribution.		
		o There was a question about why QR codes were preferable to an RFID is chip. IOM noted the pros and cons could be discussed, but this was the suggestion because they have worked with them before and there were no specific problems, and picture validation is advised. IM noted the need also to match with standards in the Bahamas as this will be discussed with Data Protection Commissioner.		
		o Presentation noted the need to ensure the guiding principles for registration – free, confidential, non-intimidating, accessible, voluntary, trained personnel		
		o On data protection – there is a domestic Data Protection Act that must be complied with but there is always a way to anonymize.		
		o IOM noted that in general to conduct registration, they need a processing centre, letter of offering services, outline prepared to provide equipment, trainings, etc – and they currently waiting on this from Govt.		
		o WFP – noted their agreement with one govt. led registration process. But in the short term, should be considering all options because there are programs that will start, so the question is how to link current programming once the registration occurs. Suggested this could be discussed sector by sector to ensure inter-operability.		

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

- Cluster IM noted data inter-operability is important, NIB for example who already has a lot of information - Chair- noted it would be preferable to first agree the plan to ensure that it is Government led, then technical discussion on how to implement can follow. - UNICEF interjected that they have made advancements with Govt. on child protection data and have a formal engagement already. In terms of data systems, UNICEF noted there are many various types in country so their focus is on many strengthening system where there are gaps. As such, they are working on investment of the national case management system in the ministry - Primero. - UNICEF noted that data inter-operability is a huge challenge in the context, and further noted they have already had tense negotiations since the registration started, and are now using tools that have been adapted from recognized global ones. - UNICEF highlighted the need to have Govt. approval to get things done and noted that registration is one component – whereas how are services provided and implementation is another question. Hence, UNICEF is looking at the whole system; so for example separated children, and children in contact with the law – this will be done with regard to those parameters. - Based on the foregoing, UNICEF suggested understanding what programs are there that need documentation and service provisions, then ascertain where they the linkages come in. - UNICEF noted in their last meeting with the Minister, PS, Director of Social Services, Deputy Director of Social Services, Director of Gender and Family Affairs – they looked at what to do with their legal team, and UNICEF noted they will be moving forward with child protection. - IOM – asked whether the approach to which UNICEF referred covers adults with no children, and reconstruction in Abaco when people are mobilized, and whether they will provide the list for the cash transfer program?		

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

- o Chair clarified that UNICEF is talking about one registration system –and noted the need to maximize the work already done, as opposed to duplication. We all need to be on the same page, using the same language
- o UNICEF – noted that their focus is on all children in The Bahamas – beyond the emergency. Reiterating that UNICEF does not own any data and that the data subjects and govt own that data, UNICEF noted they are ensuring data sharing is being done in accordance with international standards –and noted that for the Govt, data is shared on "need to know basis", on their referral system.
- o IM management noted that there was the need to incentivize people to register. It is 5 weeks after the event – why would they want to. WFP highlighted that communication should be developed around this and highlighted when presenting to the government.
- o UNICEF questioned why we making investment on registration: who is responsible to harvest and do what?
- o Chair noted registration was a fundamental concern because the whole premise of the response was to 1) identify the need for assistance and longer term support which if certain groups are not included will not ensure that they are provided assistance in a non-discriminatory fashion. In the current situation where people are hiding and do not access healthcare to health, registration is needed to advocate and safeguard for their rights noting that many had legal status. Registration is the only way to identify them and give them access to what it is they need - documentation/assistance/shelter/etc – in conjunction with the Govt.
- o UNICEF questioned whether registration is the solution or whether we should have people doing independent monitoring, and looking at trends on rights violations, lack of access to services. Subsequently, the group could compile that and have a strong message on that, because registration will require lots of negotiation. Noted a protection monitoring and response strategy might be better, particularly given the time frame – 120 days plan for their intervention
- o IOM noted with this approach one would not gather sufficient information to support this population.

5

Survey/Needs assessment	○ Chair underscored the 120 day time frame was not a response to needs of people in the longer term and was certainly not feasible for shelter – so we must look longer term. Further noted that despite registration requiring lots of negotiation, this was inconsequential in the scheme of things, and furthermore people are already reporting on the incidents and facing serious consequences as a result (including death threats). We are present to advocate the inclusion of all in humanitarian assistance and must satisfy donors and our mandate to ensure there is access on a non-discriminatory basis. ○ There was a comment that the Government has various databases which are not interoperable so this will be helpful as they have been trying to do this for many years ○ Rubicon suggested that once the Government sees how well the tool works, it will be easier to sell as a platform across social services. ○ NTR		
3W, Activities Tracking & Referral	○ IM held the first meeting last week, which included representatives from the Government IT Dept and ESF5. Discussions were focused on potential issues, including on data curation. ○ WASH will be starting their own 3W and reporting on the OCHA site ○ IM will meet once per week and then have dedicated sessions as necessary. They are still anticipating Government to lead the discussions, but the idea is to have a focal point for each ESF and a focused meeting with NEMA with the technical person in each focal group ○ IOM informed the calendar will be up and running again with the support of OCHA but ESF will be maintaining it. Agencies were encouraged to continue reporting activities		
Documentation	○ Chair noted serious concerns remain re: documentation ○ Noting that in speaking to people, there are varying responses concerning their ability to replace documents. Some have been able to, others have not, and thus there remains the need for further clarity on the process.		

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

Psychosocial/ Mental health	- IOM – raised the issue of psycho-social support for children in children's homes where the same was seen as a gap. In particular, some (older) kids from Grand Bahama, had concerns about returning there, as they were also adjusting and enjoying their new children's homes. It was noted that such uncertainty plays a role in PSS needs - UNICEF stated they met with the Bahamas Psychological Association on Monday and are in the process of finalizing a cooperation agreement with them. UNICEF have also formalized a partnership with ISRAID to conduct MHPSS in all public schools and communities, and the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture. They are also planning an event, featuring artists on Nov 16, now approved by Min and Cabinet. - Chair –reiterated the need for UNICEF to provide details on psycho-social/child friendly activities in the community centres so that people surrounding the centres can be informed regarding how to access same – as they are needed. - Furthermore the number of children registered and actually attending school, together with an analysis of the impact of those leaving shelters – on school registration is necessary as is a quantifiable possibility. The Chair highlighted the link between these factors and MHPSS and stated the critical need for information on the same. - UNICEF stated the data on education must be shared by Education.		
Human Rights	- OHCHR highlighted that the escalation of the Government's policy on undocumented Haitian migrants has led to what could be considered denial/reduced access to basic services, especially to education, health – as there are at least 2 cases of health denial due to concerns over lack of documentation. - Numbers in detention facilities are increasing, including in women and children in safe homes. - The change in policy – which allegedly affects those who had work permits - is deteriorating overall human rights situation and PWG should see how (together with Social Services) we can reduce the impact on those people and ensure access to economic social rights, or might result in further deterioration.		

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

- o No reports of deportation, but increasing detention population. Pregnant women in Abaco who are afraid of accessing the clinic because of risk of deportation. So even if there are services available, the same must also be accessible to vulnerable groups
- o OHCHR questioned the sector are we doing to address this?
- o IOM – noted in a previous meeting that they discussed the decrease of persons in the shelters and speculated on why that was, some reference to accounting numbers. In the same meeting questions were directed to socials services on what is required for food assistance through Social Services, and the latter confirmed documentation was necessary. So again, this emphasized that while there may be accessibility, there may still be barriers or deterrents.
- o Americares noted despite the fall in numbers at the gym, their clinic numbers have not changed at all.
- o Chair questioned whether Americares had experienced issues with (hospital) referrals, noting another organization did. Americares confirmed they had no difficulties in the referral process per se, but noted that patients were discharged without instructions for follow up care and without medication, which should not occur. So there is access, but problem/difficulty with securing treatment.
- o On education – the ramifications of the shelter reduction is not known yet.
- o OHCHR noted the issues with the registration, noting the time it is taking for approval and questioned why these obstacles continue. Further noted the UN should not be blamed if we don't have access to the data. Everything depends on proper documentation and registration. We have facts from the Govt from their statements including the change in legal status of those on work permits before the storm. The 40% decrease in the shelter is also a fact. We also have information that they left shelter because they are at risk and we need a clear answer –we must can we provide service under our own principles of non-discrimination, and the SDGs which call for no one to be left behind – so we have a responsibility to them.
- o OHCHR noted those we cannot reach those who are excluded, left behind and this requires us to make hard decisions – we are here to help all affected by the hurricane. If

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

	there are obstacles – need to be very clear – need to cooperate with government and civil society to deliver. But have to make clear those obstacles are related to access, documentation and registration o Americares highlighted that many on Abaco don't trust Govt. services. In the health meeting they discussed how when the Govt goes and holds clinics on Abaco, no one shows up, yet when the NGOs show up, people come out of the bushes. Pointed out that trust is necessary and the Government is asking for guidance on how to communicate this – in particular that no documents are required and there is no cost. o WFP – raised the importance of doing this quietly, losing the political rhetoric, and maybe working with NGOs and others who are willing to get it done. o Chair raises the issue of the diminishing numbers. Also – how to build that trust with one sector and have no answers with another sector. Further noted the need to have a discussion on what are the red lines for organizations, because it will lead to a bigger problem. Education and Health – need to make decisions on this. Advocacy to the donors as well on these issues and necessity to put together a strategy on how to move forward.		
Cash Based Interventions	o WFP noted the CBI Working Group will soon be convened. At the moment NEMA is identifying a focal point for the working group who can work across agencies. o 9 agencies (UN, INGOS, Red Cross) have expressed interest in providing cash based assistance. o Yesterday there was a meeting at the Ministry of Finance to discuss some of the key objectives of the working group. While this will be ultimately be up to the Government, the WG structure will ensure relevant standards and guidance are in place, and that any initiatives are linked to existing or future social protection systems. o IFRC enquired about the number of organizations that have already started. WFP noted that in addition to the Red Cross, Samaritans Purse and the Salvation Army are in discussions regarding future planning. o WFP also confirmed there will be a working group on each island and indicated that it is open to working with co-leads in this regard.	**Cash based interventions working group**	**WFP**

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

	o The Chair emphasized the need for basic principles to be included from the outset, especially non-discrimination, and the need for a sustainable structure which safeguards the inclusion of all in the longer term.		
Communication with Communities	o NTR		
GBV/PSEA	o NTR		
Child Protection	o NTR		

OTHER ISSUES TO NOTE

Next Meeting	*National Training Agency, 10/10/2019*
Next Agenda	**Endorsement of Above PWG minutes ()** **Agency updates on specific issues** • Registration • 3W, Activities Tracking & Referral • Documentation • Psychosocial/Mental health • Human Rights • Cash based interventions • Communication with Communities • PSEA **Update from Sub-working group:** • GBV • Child Protection

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv

Bahamas Dorian – Protection Working Group - Meeting Minutes

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

Field Update – Abaco, Grand Bahamas etc.

Abaco

- IOM raised concerns about the debris management on Abaco (reportedly not being separated properly and concern for body recorvery) and IFRC confirmed they have forensic specialists on the ground working with the Government.
- There were also questions regarding the Government's participation in EOC meetings, as there were reports that the Government was participating infrequently in Abaco.

Grand Bahama

- NTR

AOB – Any other Business

Timing: Next Meeting Thursday 10th October at 13:30, Room A

Join the Whasapp group: https://chat.whatsapp.com/GTzkIBa86Uu7gnQlLeNuEv