

SNFI Cluster Coordination Meeting | May 9, 2023

Meeting Minutes

Location: MS Teams

Time: 11:00 – 12:45 Sudan time

Attendance: MS Teams attendance sheet annexed at the end of the document.

Agenda:

- Situation Update
- HRP Revision
- Roundtable on Operational Plans

The Cluster Coordinator, Iva Vavic, and acting Co-Coordinator, Maysa Al-Aqil, introduced the new Co-Coordinator to the attendees. The contact details are provided below for reference:

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Situation Update:

- At the time of the meeting, the official figure from IOM DTM for newly internally displaced individuals was reported to be 334,053 as of May 1. Following the meeting and in anticipation of the HRP revision, IOM DTM released an updated estimate, which indicated a significant increase in the number of newly displaced individuals, totaling 736,223.
- According to the latest figure from UNHCR, at least 120,000 individuals have crossed into neighboring countries, while the more recent figure from IOM estimates over 177,000 individuals that have left Sudan since the SAF-RSF conflict erupted on April 15.
- Internally, COR and UNHCR continue to track the relocation of refugees from Khartoum to safer areas in the East. Approximately 75,000 refugees have arrived to White Nile, between 5,000 and 6,000 to Jazirah, and around 3,200 to camps in Gedaref.
- As per the RRRP update, UNHCR is preparing for an expected outflow of 860,000 refugees and returnees by October. To support the response efforts in collaboration with partners, it is estimated that a total of \$445 million will be required.
- People are accumulating at the borders and often staying in overcrowded conditions or sleeping in the open, particularly those facing challenges with border crossings. As a result, it is crucial to enhance the response efforts for populations in transit, whether they are located near the border or further within the country.
- In Port Sudan specifically, approximately 16,600 people are currently residing across 22 gathering sites/public facilities. This population largely comprises foreigners, rather than Sudanese citizens who have been able to join family, friends or find accommodation in hotels. People are in transit, so numbers are volatile. Both Protection and S/NFI Cluster meetings were held at state level. On the evening of May 7, the distribution of 1,500 NFI kits from UNHCR began through COR/HAC. Only the most vulnerable are being prioritized. As of May 8, 625 families had received assistance, with distribution efforts still ongoing. Additionally, UNHCR announced plans to conduct an inter-

agency rapid needs assessment and invited partners to participate. Partners also inquired about the prioritization and targeting criteria, which will be shared together with sector-specific assessment questions, alongside the minutes of this meeting.

Operational Challenges:

- Numerous partners reported looting of warehouses and offices, as well as interceptions of trucks en route. These incidents not only led to the loss of critical supplies, such as NFIs, but also resulted in the destruction and loss of significant physical assets, including office buildings, vehicles and computer equipment, among others. Therefore, it is imperative to account for the likely increase in future operational costs when planning forthcoming activities and budgets.
- The prevailing security situation and fuel shortages have led to transporters' reluctance to operate, preventing even agencies with significant in-country stocks, such as UNHCR, from accessing or relocating their supplies. While the Eastern region of the country remains somewhat safe and accessible, transportation costs are escalating drastically, with prices more than tripling. UNHCR reported they are currently loading plastic sheets and mosquito nets from the port (items cleared before the SAF-RSF conflict broke out), hoping to move them to Kosti and Kassala. If they succeed, UNCHR will share the experience with partners.
- Customs clearance at the port continues to be a significant bottleneck. While getting goods to the port is feasible, moving them out and into the country is a challenge due to the non-functionality of various line ministries and governmental departments required for clearance. This not only impedes access to items currently stuck in the free zone but also poses a barrier to future imports into the country.
- Partners inquired about the possibility of leveraging corresponding offices in neighboring countries to facilitate the import of supplies. In response, it was revealed that a humanitarian air bridge, managed by ECHO, is being established. The bridge will operate from Europe to Chad, while potentially there would be some flights from Dubai to Sudan as well. This will be open to all partners and not just those funded by ECHO. Logistics Cluster is doing the mapping of cargo movement and storage needs (<https://enketo.moda.wfp.org/single/1dbe637b4416588cbcbe474d3dd31ec1>) so partners are encouraged to reach out to them.
- Day by day, the availability of basic commodities is dwindling, coinciding with a continuous surge in inflation. Decimated public infrastructure continues to restrict access to basic services and utilities, including telecommunications, negatively impacting both the general public and humanitarian operations.
- Considering the low purchasing power and other pressing needs of affected populations (such as food and transportation), some partners are of the opinion that local markets can still be utilized for procurement, given the current low demand for NFIs and shelter materials. However, widespread looting has significantly impacted the private sector as well, and transportation and delivery still remain a challenge even if some vendors are confirming availability. There is a growing concern that, as these limited stocks are depleted due to disruptions in industry and imports, markets may become entirely dysfunctional. Further complicating matters, banking services, including mobile money, are facing severe disruptions, all of which can impact our ability to leverage cash-based interventions.
- Limited operational capacity with both national and international staff fleeing for safety will impact the response in high-risk areas, and options are being looked at to engage with civil society that remains on the ground and de-facto provides emergency services at the moment.

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- The incoming rainy season introduces an additional layer of complexity at a time when prepositioning efforts have been disrupted and stocks remain largely inaccessible. The Logistics Cluster is examining the possibility of establishing staging areas in Jeddah and potentially in Chad, among other locations. The aim is to avoid overloading Port Sudan, which is already facing clearance issues, and to preposition items as close as possible to Sudan before the onset of the rainy season.

Assessments:

- The assessment mapping carried out by the International NGO Forum was presented as a good example, however ideally, this role should be undertaken by OCHA. This would ensure that the efforts of National NGOs are also reflected, and would facilitate the coordinated use of inter-agency tools, reviewed by the respective clusters, to ensure consistent and comparable data collection across various locations and over time.
- In the meantime, a set of Shelter and NFI related questions was shared with partners. They were encouraged to incorporate these questions into their assessment efforts and tailor them to suit their capacity and specific contexts.

HRP Revision Timeline:

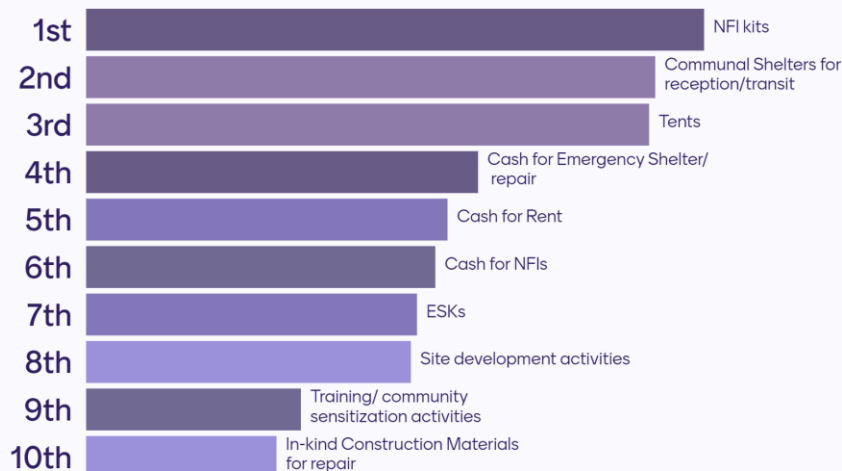
- Message on HRP timeline revision sent last night at 11 pm which prompted this unexpected agenda point. There have been no consultations on the timeline at the ISCG level, and substantial details regarding how the process will unfold under the challenging deadlines are still missing.
- Attempts were made to seek additional clarification from OCHA through WhatsApp and Teams this morning. However, OCHA was unable to provide immediate answers but promised more details soon.
- Given that starting from tomorrow we were only given 3 days to revise the sector-specific narrative as well as severity and people in need (PiN), activities, costs and targets at locality level, this meeting was seen as an essential opportunity for consultation and partner input. Additional feedback will be requested through email for those that could not attend today.
- Starting from May 13, HRP project module will reopen, and partners will be expected to submit projects. At this point, the level of detail required in these submissions remains uncertain, as does whether partners will need to amend existing projects, submit new ones, or both. The group expressed hopes that OCHA will soon provide clarity on these matters, especially in light of the ambitious deadline. Partners will only have three days for this process, and those suffering from severe internet disruptions have voiced concerns about their ability to complete this task within the three-day window, adding another layer of complexity to the challenge. Several suggestions were put forward to overcome this, such as identifying agency offices with reliable internet access that partners can use to submit their projects or exploring alternative means of communication to reach out to larger international organizations, which could potentially submit projects on their behalf. Similarly, considering consortium options for project submissions could also be a solution.

Severity/PiN Update at Locality Level:

- 2023 HRP severity and PiN figures were calculated following the indicators and thresholds from the global JIAF guidance for the Shelter and NFI sector. Data feeding into the indicators is from the MSNA whose questions were already in alignment with the new guidance released this year. The problem is, looking at the prevalence of darker areas on the severity map, the situation was

- Next step for cluster coordinators now is to determine targets for all activity types at locality level. To accomplish this, coordinators need feedback from partners to identify which activities should be prioritized and hence assigned higher targets. Hence another short Menti exercise was launched:

Prioritize from most feasible & needed (1) to least (10)



- Partners voiced concerns about the feasibility of Emergency Shelter Kits (ESKs), particularly due to the potential scarcity of natural shelter materials on the market, and thus expressed a preference for the use of tents. However, they also raised concerns about the past performance of tents, which were often quickly damaged by high winds and heavy rains. Consequently, if tents are to be widely used, it is essential to implement additional risk mitigation measures, such as secure anchoring, or at least situating them near public buildings where quick shelter can be sought. In addition, concerns were expressed about the authorities' potential resistance to setting up camps, which could further constrain response options.

Partner Presence Mapping and Roundtable on Operational Plans:

- A map based on the results of the Partner Presence mapping survey initiated by OCHA (<https://ee.humanitarianresponse.info/x/FVibNbtC>) was presented to partners. A significant number of organizations previously not engaged with the cluster indicated willingness to implement S/NFI activities, hence the meeting invitation was extended to these organizations as well. They are encouraged to participate in the HRP revision and submit new proposals, as this may increase their chances of securing funding in the future.
- Similarly, partners funded by larger agencies are encouraged to submit their own HRP projects. For instance, SORR, whose activities are included in the UNHCR's HRP submission, is advised to submit an individual HRP project given their additional funding sources (e.g., \$2M received from SHF).
- Furthermore, those who have not yet completed the OCHA survey are encouraged to do so ASAP, as SHF allocation decisions will be based on capacities recorded in that survey. Should any organization notice any discrepancies on the map, they are requested to notify us so that we can update it and inform OCHA.

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- At the moment, UNHCR has 42,000 NFI kits within the country, however, they remain largely inaccessible in Khartoum, El Obeid, and across Darfur. The El Fasher warehouse has been looted, with some items missing and the status of the Genina and Nyala warehouses remains uncertain. That means that over 90% of the stock is inaccessible at present. Once the situation improves, or if additional stocks are brought in from staging areas and global stockpiles (items currently on standby), partners will be able to access these stocks for distribution – both implementing partners and operational partners, under the MoU arrangement. Although procedures will be streamlined, a certain level of monitoring and reporting will still be required.
 - IOM is currently establishing an office in Port Sudan to supplement their existing offices in Abyei, South Kordofan, Kassala, and Gedaref. They are also coordinating with their Chad office to possibly set up operations at the border for Darfur. In terms of in-country stocks, IOM currently has limited quantities, with one of their major warehouses being looted and 4,000 NFI kits stolen. Available stocks include 1,000 NFI kits in Gedaref, 1,000 in Kassala, and 175 in El Obeid that are in transit to Kadugli. IOM is working on securing warehouses in Port Sudan and Jeddah to facilitate procurement and import of items. They are exploring the possibility of importing items from Egypt to the Port Sudan warehouse, and are reaching out to neighboring offices, beyond Chad, such as South Sudan, to access their stocks. Funding has been received from BHA, ECHO, and CERF to enhance IOM common pipeline capacity, but all acquisitions will be made in one lot procurement.

General Guidance on HRP Project Revision:

- As noted earlier, we are in ongoing discussions with OCHA to acquire more detailed guidance on the partner project revision process. Regrettably, no specific details have been released at this stage. Moreover, we intend to urge OCHA to find solutions to help partners overcome connectivity challenges, thereby enabling them to submit their projects within the designated tight timeline.
- In terms of general guidance related to the usual HRP process, partners are reminded to only submit projects for which they expect to receive funding from institutional donors, pooled funds or private donations, since funding from UN agencies will be submitted by respective UN agencies.
- HRP is a funding appeal document and does not guarantee funding, hence partners are expected to fundraise against their submissions.
- Shelter and NFI projects targeting refugees should be submitted under the RCF and not the S/NFI Cluster.
- Cost estimates are only indicative, and are very likely to change, most probably upward.

Interim SAG:

- The SAG election process was disrupted by the ongoing crisis. As a result, we are simplifying the procedure to an interim SAG for the forthcoming three months. This adjustment is meant to ensure swift decision-making and guidance during these challenging times, as per the ToR shared with all partners previously. A few organizations have already contacted us about this, and we anticipate being able to announce the members of the interim SAG in the very near future.

End.

Participants

Name	First Join	Last Leave	In-Meeting Duration	Email
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Alfayha Ismail	11:06:34 AM 5/09/23,	11:10:20 AM 5/09/23,	3m 46s	ismaialf@unhcr.org
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kidist yacob	11:06:49 AM 5/09/23,	12:31:21 PM 5/09/23,	1h 24m 32s	
Behailu (Guest)	11:07:21 AM 5/09/23,	11:30:38 AM 5/09/23,	23m 16s	
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Haitham Hamza - IRW Sudan (Guest)	11:14:16 AM 5/09/23,	12:38:11 PM 5/09/23,	1h 23m 55s	
Shadrack Mutiso, HoProg	11:15:43 AM 5/09/23,	11:53:27 AM 5/09/23,	37m 44s	
FHDO Organisation	11:17:29 AM 5/09/23,	12:38:29 PM 5/09/23,	1h 20m 59s	
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Behailu (Guest)	11:56:05 AM 5/09/23,	12:39:10 PM 5/09/23,	43m 4s	
Adil Adam	11:59:20 AM 5/09/23,	12:38:25 PM 5/09/23,	39m 4s	
Ibrahim Modi, UPO	12:25:11 PM	12:30:53 PM	5m 42s	

