

Gaza Education Cluster Meeting

October 27, 2009

Coordinator:

Maryan Koehler

Note taker:

Timekeeper:

Attendees:

Heba Zayyan (UNIFEM); Mohammed Arouki (UNESCO); Hala Othman (UNDP); Ibtisam Abu Shammala (UNICEF); Maha El-Shawwa (Welfare Association); Salwa El Tibi (Save the Children, UK); Numan Sharif (MoEHE); Tamer El Bahri (Educ Aid); Lorenza Sebastiani (Educ Aid); Hazem Mashharawi (GTZ); Fahmi Abu-Shaabani (Welfare Association); Atef El-Ghoussein (Welfare Association); Nuhammed Zimmo (CBI); Jo Kelcey (UNESCO); Heba Mountaga (Islamic Relief France); Laetitia Lemaistre (UNICEF); Oscar Butrangueno (UNICEF); Mona Zakout (Save the Children, US); Mahmoud Abu Nemeh (Ma'an Center); Mohammed Ammar (Islamic Relief); Amir Yasin (UNWFP); Ahmad Alriyad (UNDP/ER); Ahma Ashour (Tamer Institute); Firyal Snounu (USAID); Aesha Abo Shaqfa (Sharek); Haneen Abu Nahlas (Sharek); Reem El Wihaidi (NPA); Linda Thu (UNRWA); Fadel Al Saloul (UNRWA); Maha Rezea (UNICEF)

Agenda

Time Allotted
11 to 12:30

- Welcome by Save the Children (Jason Erb, Save the Children Emergency Team Leader)
- Updates
 - Ministry of Education (Mr. Numan, MoE)
 - Universities (Dr. Mazen, Al Azhar University)
- New business
 - UNESCO (Jo Kelcey, monitoring and reporting officer)
 - Early Childhood Education Working Group (Mona Zakout)
 - CAP review (Laetitia Lemaistre)
 - Contingency Plan Education (Maryan Koehler)
- Cluster handover to UNICEF
 - Introduction Oscar Butragueno
- Lunch (pizza and soft drinks)

Jason Erb - Save the Children US Emergency Team Leader

Jason welcomed the Gaza Education Cluster to the Save the Children office and acknowledged the achievements of the cluster these past six months including:

- Giving education a strong voice in the emergency and hopefully continuing to present a strong voice for education during the on-going crisis
- Holding regular meetings to share information, coordinate and plan projects
- Organizing a one-day Education Cluster Workshop in July to discuss needs, gaps, and plans for the school year 2009-2010
- Conducting trainings on the INEE (Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies) Minimum Standards
- Participating in the CAP appeal
- Including 'Education' as part of the Gaza contingency plan
- Advocating for change, including the American School media event in July

Mr. Numan - Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE)

numansharif@hotmail.com

Mr. Numan updated the cluster on the activities and problems faced by the Education Ministry including:

- 38 schools out of the 179 totally or partially damaged schools were rehabilitated by Islamic Relief, and the ministry has been in contact with several donors and INGOs for the rehabilitation of the remaining schools and for winter preparedness as many schools are without window-glass and have broken doors needing repair.
- World Food Program (WFP) is providing fortified milk for 92,000 students in the governmental schools on a daily basis and the project will last for 8 months. Islamic Relief is also providing fortified milk for another 12,000 students.
- UNICEF is providing government schools with drinking water and supporting other programs such as remedial education programs and training programs for teachers, school principals and councilors, mainly those newly hired. There are two types of training: basic courses for 200 teachers and 60 supervisors (30 hours) and advanced courses (60 hrs).
- To address the stationary shortage, UNICEF is currently procuring stationary for the ministry. Additionally, UNICEF will implement a maintenance project for the schools' electrical networks and sanitation units.
- UNICEF will support 60 kindergartens in cooperation with the MoEHE in order to ensure child friendly safe learning environments at the KGs.

Cluster members asked for more details about the winterization preparedness issue, the size of the problem and the needs. It was suggested that advocacy action is needed to respond to the winterization issue in the light of shortage/lack of construction material.

<p>Dr. Mazen Hamada - Al Azhar University mazenhamada@hotmail.com</p>	<p>Dr. Mazen Hamada gave an update on Al Azhar University, and although he said that he cannot speak for the other universities, he indicated that all the universities were suffering from similar problems including:</p> <p>After the destruction of the Faculty of Agriculture in Beit Hanon, all the students and staff had move to the main campus of the university. Since then, the university is overcrowded, and students and staff suffer from a lack of classrooms and laboratories. There are difficulties obtaining the necessary stationary for lectures. The labs are equipped with minimum instruments to run the practical courses. The university is not able to buy spare parts to repair the damaged or defective devices. Reconstruction of the buildings is still not possible. The university is in the process of finding glass to fix the broken windows but the only source is through the tunnels. Very little support is geared towards higher education. Most of the support goes to basic education. Al Azhar has appealed to various organizations and has received no or very little support.</p> <p>The academic achievement of the students was drastically affected during the semester immediately following the war on Gaza. By conducting a survey and using available computer data, it was found that thousands (8,000 to 10,000) students had dropped academic hours. Dr. Hamada explained that this is most likely due to the psycho-social impact of the war as students could not attend classes, or attend their exams, and therefore, preferred to withdraw. The numbers of dropouts and withdrawals from classes is much higher in the war-semester than in previous semesters.</p> <p>Cluster members wondered if there were other reasons that might have contributed to this large drop out such as the economic situation and the inability of the students to pay the fees. Another member asked if the numbers were disaggregated by gender and/or other cultural factors. Dr. Mazen indicated the need for psychosocial support for the university students and teachers as well. He indicated he had written and submitted a proposal for the CAP to fund a program for psycho-social support for university teachers; however, he learned that higher education institutions cannot apply for the CAP, and he therefore, partnered with Sharek.</p> <p>Through the Flagship project funded by USAID, Al Azhar will benefit from the capacity building activities mainly for the colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, Medical Professions and Dental medicine.</p> <p>Dr. Mazen also submitted a proposal to UNRWA's Job Creation Program for payment of salaries for one year for 100 unemployed professionals to provide services to the university in the areas of finance/administration, maintenance, etc.</p>

<p>Jo Kelcey - UNESCO</p> <p>j.kelcey@unesco.org</p>	<p>As part of a newly funded program for the education response in Gaza, UNESCO would like to cooperate with the education cluster members on two (2) projects. The first project beginning in November involves conducting a psycho-social assessment of the impact of the war and of the blockade on the education system in Gaza. It will be largely qualitative and the consultant will conduct focus groups with students, teachers and other educational staff, and with other stakeholders. A report on the research will be shared with the cluster and released by late January. If anyone has any suggestions or other feedback on this, please email Jo Kelcey.</p> <p>The second project is to improve and expand data collection on violations of the right to education. UNESCO is keen to develop this project in close collaboration with cluster members. The project involves building upon education monitoring that is already being conducted in line with the UNR1612 on children affected by armed conflict (part of the protection sector) but also expanding into areas such as higher education and attacks on teachers. UNESCO will hold meetings between the education and protection cluster members in January to discuss the various data needs.</p>
<p>Laetitia Lemaistre</p> <p>UNICEF Education Cluster Coordinator West Bank</p> <p>llemaitre@unicef.org</p>	<p>Laetitia discussed the CAP process and results including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight agencies participated in the vetting process: 4 UN (UNICEF, UNESCO, UNRWA, UNDP) and 4 NGOs (Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children US, Save the Children Sweden, Sharek Youth Forum) • There were four main objectives: assistance, protection, monitoring and coordination in line with the CHAP (Common Humanitarian Action Plan) objectives and activities were planned accordingly including rehabilitation of classrooms, remedial education, alternative learning spaces, teacher-training, psycho-social support, support for students with disabilities, early childhood education, and cluster coordination • There were 14 proposals approved with funding requirements of \$24,043,975
<p>Mona Zakout - Save the Children US</p> <p>mzakout@savechildren.org</p>	<p>Mona announced the formation of an Early Childhood Working group and invited interested agencies to join. The impetus for this group is that INEE is updating the INEE Minimum Standards and intends to strengthen representation of such cross-cutting issues as early childhood education. Save the Children and Islamic Relief have been in phone contact with the consultant in New York who is working on the project. He indicated that input from the oPt is highly valued. Additionally, several organizations are focusing on early childhood issues in planned and on-going projects. It is timely, therefore, to form a working group to share strategies, data and plans.</p>
<p>Contingency Plan</p> <p>marykoeh@gmail.com</p>	<p>Maryan informed members that a basic contingency plan for the Gaza education cluster was submitted to OCHA but due to the deadline for inclusion, there was no time to consult cluster members. However, a more detailed plan needs to be formulated and will be one of the goals for the education cluster in the coming months. The basic plan is attached here with the minutes.</p>

<p>Handover to UNICEF</p> <p>Oscar Butragueno obutragueno@unicef.org</p> <p>Ibtisam Abu Shammala iabushammala@unicef.org</p> <p>Maha Rezeq (maha.iyp@gmail.com)</p>	<p>Maryan Koehler is leaving Gaza as her contract is ending. She expressed her warm appreciation to the cluster members for all the hard work and support over the past seven months and hoped the cluster would continue to grow and strengthen. She then introduced Oscar Butragueno UNICEF, who along with Ibtisam Abu Shammala and Maha Rezeq will take over the responsibilities for cluster coordination. Oscar expressed his thanks to Maryan and reiterated UNICEF's commitment to work with the cluster for the betterment of education in Gaza.</p>
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