

EDUCATION CLUSTER MEETING MINUTES 3/11/09

General introductions and updates

- Following on from the INEE trainings that were held in late September in Ramallah and Gaza there will be a video conference organized between participants
- 18 proposals were submitted to the CAP and 14 were accepted, totaling \$24 million. Proposals concentrated on improving the physical learning environment, providing educational support to particularly vulnerable areas and provision of psychosocial care
- A global evaluation of the cluster mechanisms is being conducted. Evaluators will arrive in the OPT next week

Update from the MoEHE

- MoEHE concern about the widening gap between educational standards in Gaza and the WB. The Tawjihee remains the main focus of the education system in both territories, ensuring that the system remains unified and that there cannot be complete polarization of the curriculum. Despite some fragmentation the HE sub sector also remains unified.
- Stressed the need to highlight the educational issues in Jerusalem. 50% of the schools remain under Israeli authorities with the MEHE covering the other 50% of private and PA schools. Closures and the inability of teachers to reach the schools is a big problem; they are renting additional buildings; classrooms are overcrowded and lacking space
- They have started activities in the WB regarding teacher education and quality and want to accelerate these steps. Quality education is embedded in the 5 year plan notably in the teacher education strategy (first cohort to graduate and be teaching by 2014) and the reform of all in service teacher programmes. A major area of progress here was the establishment of the Commission for the development of teaching professionals which develops national standards for teachers.
- The MEHE has been working closely with partners on the Sector Wide Approach and the development of a sector strategy

OCHA 3W presentation

They are launching a database on who does what where, detailing the projects of stakeholders. The database will be searchable and allow OCHA to produce a map of what is happening by geographical region, by sector etc.

Each organization will receive an account log in and OCHA invites us to test the site and send them feedback and comments. Laetitia will follow up on this with OCHA second week of November.

INEE Minimum standards

Focusing on ECD the idea is to convene a smaller group that looks in more detail at the guidelines and indicators. The group should focus on access issues, learning environment teachers and other personnel.

The goal is to improve the language and format of the standards and look for inconsistencies between the Arabic and English.

Those who wish to participate should inform UNICEF as this will be done through a separate workshop and will only focus on ECD. For organizations who are interested please contact Alia Shaar (aliashaar@gmail.com).

Higher education

Following its exclusion from the CAP there is particular concern about the situation of higher education in Gaza (though this has specific overlap given the access issues for Gaza students in West Bank Universities). The Humanitarian Coordinator is however willing to support a separate campaign to address this. As a first step UNESCO is developing a briefing note and will circulate to the cluster for input and feedback. This information and data can then form the basis for further proposals and inform next steps. If anyone has any information to share please send to Jo: j.kelcey@unesco.org, who will compile and share for feedback.

UNESCO projects

As part of a newly funded programme for education response in Gaza, UNESCO has 2 projects it wants to cooperate with cluster members on.

The first is a psychosocial assessment of the impact of the war and blockade on the education system in Gaza – and how the education system can help mitigate for this (resilience approach). It will be largely qualitative and the consultant will conduct focus groups with students, teacher and other education staff, as well as interviews with other stakeholders. The idea is to have a publication that can also be shared with the cluster and released by late January. UNESCO also has funding to improve and expand data collection on violations of the right to Education in the OPT. The idea is to develop this in close collaboration with the rest of the cluster members. As a first step UNESCO will shortly convene a meeting to map out current data collection and identify gap areas. If anyone has any initial suggestions and feedback on either of these projects please email Jo, j.kelcey@unesco.org and/or Frosse f.dabit@unesco.org.

Area C research

OCHA is preparing a paper on Area C humanitarian issues (covering Education, Water and Shelter) that will be presented to the Israeli Civil Administration. UNICEF as cluster co-lead has been compiling case studies and information on Area C schools that are especially vulnerable to demolition. Cluster members are asked to send any additional case studies they have to Laetitia.llemaistre@unicef.org/. There was also a request to expand the information to include school coping mechanisms and to capture the broader permit issue (where permits are not being issued). The deadline for this is urgent as OCHA needs the information by the end of the week.

FOLLOW UP

- CLUSTER MEMBERS TO PROVIDE LAETITIA WITH ANY INFORMATION ON AREA C SCHOOLS
- FOR CLUSTER MEMBERS WORKING ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN PARTICULAR, PLEASE EMAIL JO WITH ANY INFORMATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
- UNESCO WILL CONVENE A MEETING AROUND CURRENT DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS AND A BRIEF PRESENTATION WILL BE MADE TO THE CLUSTER AT THE NEXT MEETING

Next meeting will be held at the offices of Relief International