



MEETING MINUTES

LOCATION:	Zoom
DATE:	April 18, 2022 (15:00-16:00 GMT+2)
CHAIR:	Charles Hopkins, FSL Cluster Co-coordinator
AGENDA:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Presentation by the World Central Kitchen2. Presentation by Estonian Refugee Council

56 (fifty-six) participants representing 35 institutions attended the FSLC coordination meetings. The institutions included donors, NGOs and international organizations (including UN agencies and the Red Cross movement).

1. Presentation of the World Central Kitchen cluster activities

- The World Central Kitchen (WCK) has a team in Ukraine and five neighbouring countries (Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova).
- WCK is a non-profit organization founded in 2010 by Chef José Andrés that provides fresh meals in response to crises while also working to build resilient food systems through locally led solutions. WCK began focusing on food systems and resilience after the Haiti earthquake, but since Hurricane Maria in 2017, WCK has shifted its focus primarily to a disaster response with Ukraine being one its largest response.
- When a disaster strikes, WCK mobilizes to the frontlines to provide meals to those in need. WCK quickly and effectively provides nutritious meals to communities affected by crises by partnering with organizations on the ground and activating a network of food trucks, restaurants, or emergency kitchens.
- WCK began serving meals at a 24-hour pedestrian border crossing in southern Poland just hours after the initial invasion.
- It quickly expanded to include Ukraine, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, and Slovakia, where it provided meals at border crossings, shelters, and other locations by collaborating with local restaurants, caterers, and food trucks.
- Within a week, WCK had built and began producing meals from its own field kitchen in Przemysl, Poland, which is a massive facility capable of producing 100,000 to 200,000 meals per day.
- WCK, on the other hand, will collaborate with restaurants, food trucks, catering companies, or whoever their culinary professionals are in specific areas. Restaurants, food trucks, and catering companies are all preparing meals, leveraging their own distribution networks, and assisting WCK in identifying and receiving what it refers to as "recipient locations" or "distribution points" to provide hot meals.
- WCK is also working to support the strained food supply chain by distributing bulk food products, such as produce and dry goods, to restaurant partners in Ukraine.
- While WCK's efforts in these areas evolve and solidify, they are expanding to other cities where refugees congregate, such as Warsaw, Krakow, and Madrid.

- WCK activities began in the bordering areas on February 26th. It meets the needs of people crossing the border who do not have a place to cook by providing sandwiches or cold meals. Following that, it expanded to include refugees in Poland and Romania, providing nutrition to those who chose to remain in those countries or needed to relocate to Western Europe.
- Following that, WCK began preparing and distributing food that could be quickly reheated, and eventually expanded to meet the needs of people in conflict zones by delivering cooked food in refrigerators.
- WCK keeps track of the number of meals it serves. It feeds the same people in the shelters on a regular basis, including underground shelters.
- WCK concentrates on cold storage and fresh products. Other food items are delivered via the train network.

2. Presentation of the Estonian Refugee Council

- Our trucks are primarily used for cold storage or fresh products. Other food items will be delivered via the train network.
- The mission, which was founded in 2001, advocates for refugee rights and welfare in Estonia and around the world. Tallinn, Tartu, Ar-Ramtha (Jordan), and Zaporizhzhia have offices (Ukraine). The Estonian Refugees Council (ERC) is one of the most important refugee support and humanitarian organizations in Estonia. It was founded in Ukraine in 2014 and has three main pillars: integration support, humanitarian aid, and a competence center.
- Interventions aimed specifically at hospitals, as well as psychosocial support in a variety of areas, are being pursued. It has been heavily reliant on cash modalities or interventions, including conditional and limited to grants for entrepreneurship, since 2016.
- Humanitarian aid programme in Ukraine established in 2014, initially concentrating on:
 - Food assistance and NFIs in eastern oblasts
 - Medical supplies and equipment to hospitals
 - Psychosocial support
- Since 2016 I have focused on cash-based interventions, incl:
 - Conditional/restricted entrepreneurship grants (focus on women)
 - Winterization grants (HHs near the contact line)
 - School grants
 - Agricultural grants
- Micro-business entrepreneurship programme 2016-2018 in Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia oblasts:
 - 100 beneficiaries, men and women
 - Results: on average 105% increase in HH income
- “Empowering Women” entrepreneurship programme from 2019 in Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, Dnipropetrovsk, Kharkiv oblasts:
 - 280 beneficiaries in total
 - 31 women-led teams
 - Results: on average 86% increase in HH income



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- Fundraising efforts started in late January 2022:
- The Ukraine response was established in 2014.
- The MPC programme was initiated on February 24, 2022.
- First payments out to beneficiaries on March 2, 2022
- Geographical focus: the entire eastern half of the country.
- Initially, vulnerability assessment + need-based transfer value
- Harmonization with CWG transfer value in mid-March
- Relaxation of vulnerability assessment with wide-scale roll-out

- Enablers:
 - Existing networks and work procedures for quick roll-out
 - Localization: cooperation with local authorities, CSOs, activists
 - Using Viber for outreach
- Struggles / Barriers:
 - Funding: Institutional donors have proved to be slow
 - Outreach and enrolment:
 - Lack of one entry/information point for beneficiaries
 - Lack of referral mechanisms to other agencies/programmes
 - Need for multiple avenues of enrolment (e.g., not everyone registers as IDP)
 - Further harmonization:
 - Difference in conditions and transfer values between agencies
 - Lack of a robust low-threshold de-duplication tool
 - MPC assessment: Need for continuous market monitoring
- Further plans:
 - MPC scale-up
 - Agreements with local volunteer groups
 - Entrepreneurship programme launch in western Ukraine (Ivano-Frankivsk, Lviv)
 - Agricultural support to subsistence farmers
- We were able to start rolling out the multipurpose cash program on February 24th, when escalation started, and the first payments went out on March 2nd. This was due to the fact that it was already fundraising and also because we had this network structure in place in order to. We initially had no specific geographic focus; we had beneficiaries all over Ukraine because we were the only multi-purpose program in operation.
- Based on our monitoring, the cash for humanitarian and food assistance that we provided was used to buy food, water, hygiene products, medicine, and also to evacuate.
- We encourage our volunteer groups' "last mile agreement" to support local businesses, so the distribution comes from a local level and goes to locals.
- The state supported large businesses in relocating. Some support was made for relocating medium-sized businesses, but no support was given for small and micro businesses. But we think the last two are also essential for sustainable livelihoods.

3. Discussion



- Can you please give a piece of advice to others in scaling up of an organization?
 - WCK: We are not necessarily following traditional aid sector narratives, such as writing reports or following pre-established procurement systems, that will slow down our actions in an emergency. But the real advice that can comply with the aid sector is just to leverage the trusted community or chefs, in our case. That allowed us to involve human resources in our scaled activities. Locals can help with logistics and procurement more quickly and efficiently than following traditional models.
- What about the currency for cash distribution you are using in NGCA?
 - ERC: We are providing cash transfers to a bank account. People in NGCA can always find a way to bridge banking gaps and pay electronically or exchange it in e-banking for what they can use on the ground.
- How you select your recipients or farmers to be supported?
 - ERC: Right now, it's mostly about disseminating information to our channels, making contact to fact check whether people are eligible for our program, and doing the targeting in the areas we know. We had made good contacts with local authorities and organizations, so they were the ones who could point us in the direction of those who would benefit the most from this support, so we had a more area-specific, more targeted approach.
 - WCK: We will typically feed everyone, and we don't have any conditionality on it. Firstly, every week we don't want any hot meals to go to waste. However, we do tend to focus on areas, like I said earlier, where people don't have the capacity to cook. Based on experience in Kenia, we followed an immediate response and provided food for those who were in transit with no capacity to get food. Secondly, based on experience with the Bahamas after a hurricane, we were feeding a number of different NGOs, first responders, and local governments that were also contributing to the relief efforts, which, in a natural disaster, is much easier to do than in a conflict setting. After some time, we went back with that and reduced the number of partners we supplied with food and went back to direct distribution to the people.
- HEKS-EPER also proposed cooperation with kitchens and delivering food in Kharkiv and the region, as their capacities are limited, and they are looking for any possible combinations to cover the needs.

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