



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

VACANCY NOTICE MEB Consultant 2016/HRC-001

UNHCR Greece invites applications from qualified candidates for the following position:

Project title	Review of Cash Minimum Expenditure Basket
Position title	Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) Consultant
Duty Station	Athens
Duration	30 working days
Effective date	7 th November 2016
Closing Date	31st October 2016

OPERATIONAL CONTEXT

Over one million refugees and migrants have undertaken the perilous journey across the Mediterranean between 2015 and mid-2016. The majority are Syrians, Afghans and Iraqi nationals who crossed the Aegean from Turkey to Greece.

While up to mid-November 2015, most persons of concern (POCs) stayed in Greece for only a few days, the situation considerably following new border restriction on the Western Balkan routes in February 2016 and the entry into effect of the EU-Turkey agreement on 20 March. From a response targeting people on the move, humanitarian actors reviewed their priorities to focus on a static population. As of September 2016, it is estimated there are over 165,000 arrivals by sea and currently between 35,000 and 56,500 persons of concern in the country. The majority of them are hosted in the mainland, spread throughout over 40 sites and urban locations. A few remain in the islands, being catered through the ‘hotspot’ approach.

FUNCTIONAL STATEMENT

Context – Greece Cash Working Group (CWG)

The overall objective and role of the Greece CWG is to provide a platform for operational coordination and technical harmonization. It discusses and establishes standards/recommendations on market based responses (inclusive of multi-purpose cash grants - MPGs, restricted and unrestricted cash, conditional and unconditional cash, vouchers) in Greece among all stakeholders within the response. This includes a design of the minimum expenditure basket (MEB) in Greece. This group is composed of market/cash based programming experts from UN agencies (namely UNHCR) and international and national/local NGOs, relevant ministry representatives and implementing agencies created to advise, guide, design, harmonize and coordinate the different aspects of the implementation of MPGs for implementing agencies/organizations.

The group frequently reviews and analyses the situation in order to make recommendations on the appropriateness, effectiveness, and efficiency of market/cash based approaches overall throughout the country and at specific locations. Its members also provide guidance on beneficiary accountability and protection. It decides on ways to move forward to a gradual shift into a market based response from in-kind assistance (of food, NFIs, WASH and shelter) as appropriate.

Considerations – MEB in Greece

The Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) is defined by what a Person of Concern’s (POC) household requires in order to meet basic needs – on a regular or seasonal basis – and its average cost while residing in Greece. In addition, an analysis of what households can meet by themselves is generally also stipulated, where labour or remittances are legal and accessible. Borrowing and other negative coping mechanisms (such as survival sex, illegal labour, early marriage or reduction of meals etc) however as means to meet some income themselves, cannot be taken into account since cash assistance would aim to reduce those coping mechanisms rather than emphasize and provide incentives for their continued pursuit.



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

Determining the MEB serves three functions as holistic reflection of needs of affected populations.

1. It is a primary tool to develop a cost and market based expression of minimum needs that is representative of what cash assistance will be spent on.
2. The current calculation is a rational estimation of funds absolutely needed by an individual and family of 5 members and family of 7 members in (1) inside and (2) outside – e.g. urban – camp/ site settings. The main difference is that the first assumes in-kind assistance is provided (for e.g. food) and the latter assumes a fuller basket. The main commonality is that in both cases rent/ accommodation is not monetized (for legal and operational reasons at the time).
3. There was a general recognition that, to this date, communal and individual kitchen spaces are a challenge, particularly in camps/ sites, therefore the continuation of food assistance provided in the form of catering meant that only a supplementary food amount was calculated in the basket.

Taking into account that the current MEB was established at a time when significant numbers of PoC were still on the move and the accommodation sites were being established with many of the PoC living in makeshift conditions, and a coordinated and harmonized cash and other sectoral working groups were being established, a new MEB is required. Namely, following the findings and recommendations (e.g. MEB amounts for scenario 1: catering + supplemental cash amount for food, scenario 2: MEB with full food amounts (no catering), scenario 3: MEB amount for supplemental food/ nutrition requirements for infant feeding or special medical conditions in addition to food MEB) to increase cash amounts to cover **ere catering is continued**, as well as to incorporate a component for cash for rent) of the Food Task Force report, UNHCR and the CWG agencies require the MEB to be revised to incorporate the current scenario and needs. In particular, to review each sector's assistance needs and how it can best be met (and with what amounts) with cash assistance to ensure cost-efficiency, assistance effectiveness and support to the local economy and host communities.

Calculations – MEB in Greece

The calculations made for the MEB in Greece were based on average family size of the target population and expected family need. It is to note that family amounts are not generated by a ratio of individual values, rather calculated by factoring in savings and sharing of a family of 5 and 7. Hence the amount allocated to a family of 5 is not equal to the value calculated by multiplying the individual amount by 5. This will also be an issue that requires further examination.

Current MEB Models:

- Accommodation Sites/ Camps are locations where refugees and migrants are staying in emergency shelters (tents, RHU, isobox) and provided with in-kind meals and non-food items by government and other actors. The population in sites range between 100 and 4000 people.
- Urban Shelter Apartments (through urban programmes or UNHCR Relocation Accommodation Schemes) are provided to refugee and migrant individuals and families as alternative to the emergency shelter sites. Within this option there is no in-kind support thus the total amount of MEB would be needed to meet basic needs.

The Cash working group has agreed on a six month revision of the MEB by an external consultant.

Guidance:

The calculation for the MEB took into consideration the Greek minimum consumption standards in consideration of the poverty line, minimum wage, and social safety nets. This MEB review will also need to take this – as well as pensions being cut to Greek populations every month further more – into account but perhaps now using the new SSI programme.



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

There is a need to be cognizant that in most sites there are several nationalities and ethnicities. Needs, perception of needs and amount provided as well as costs and communications/translations are challenges. For this reason, it would be ideal if the consultant could look into a small communications part of the MEB. All products will need to be discussed, presented, shared and approved by UNHCR and the CWG before final submission.

Overall Purpose and Scope of Assignment:

The objective of this consultancy is to review and revise the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) for cash assistance in Greece and provide recommendations to the CWG on future assistance amounts.

A. Specific objectives:

- Review methodology to calculate the multi-purpose basic assistance cash grants MEB (consider need for region specific MEB) – regular and seasonal e.g. winter.
- Recommend a separate seasonal cash MEB package(s) – e.g. cash for winter amounts - based on above results- providing recommendation on per capita or per household.
- Devise an MEB for food assistance for different scenarios: 1) (supplemental) Food Assistance with catering, 2) Food Assistance without Government catering or other food assistance, 3) Supplemental amounts for persons with special medical or dietary needs.
- Propose a separate MEB for specific protection needs e.g. vulnerable cases such as unaccompanied minors/ separated children etc.
- Revise contents of this multi-purpose basic assistance cash grants MEB – ensuring sector needs are considered and sectors see value in monetization of certain key items and assistance within each.
- Calculate the national and (if needed regional) MEB based on the current market prices and population needs building on existing data.
- Explore and present the pros/cons of having individual amounts that would increase per person in family verses having set family amounts and set individual amounts taking into consideration beneficiary accountability, preferences and operational feasibility to agencies.
- Investigate a methodology to take into account the expenditures disparities created by different regions in the country as well as the age of the household members or particularly young children and other vulnerable groups as defined by Greek law.
- Take into consideration Greek Social Safety Net Programme benefits to ensure MEB transfer amounts do not exceed Greek government support and acceptability of host community.
- Take into consideration the effects of building and operating communal kitchens on cash programs.
- Validate and ensure that persons and agencies of concern are consulted throughout the research program, for example through Focus Group Discussions with Persons of Interest and or direct consultation with Key Informants.
- Provide a comprehensive narrative report that supports the above mentioned and document the methodology as well as the rationale behind each of the steps.

The Consultant may be requested to conduct mission travels around Greece.

B. Deliverables:

Based on consultation and compilation of feedback from different agencies and partners involved in the CWG, the Consultant is expected to produce:



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

- Inception report including final work plan (in the form of WORD or PPT).
- A proposed revised multi-purpose cash grants MEB for sites and for urban/relocation programmes (in the form of excel spreadsheet).
- A proposed cash MEB for winter/ seasonal needs (in the form of excel spreadsheet).
- A proposed MEB for Food Assistance.
- A proposed cash MEB for specific protection vulnerable groups, e.g. UACs (in the form of an excel spreadsheet).
- A monthly assessment tool that contains the market survey and post cash monitoring tools/expenditure and food basket review.
- A full report including (in the form of a WORD document only):
 - A detailed methodology of the review of the multi-purpose cash grants MEB including recommendations on review methodology, sources and timeline.
 - Estimations and calculations for the MEB values as per the specific objectives mentioned above (national, regional with fixed or variable components per capita, region, family size, season etc) that incorporates higher amounts in particular for food and shelter in specific.
 - Final reviewed and proposed value for the national (and regional breakdown, if possible) MEB for 2016, detailed calculation and rationale.
- A debrief presentation and/or presentation to Inter-Agency Working, other Sector Working Groups and Governmental/ Ministry Bodies relevant forum(s).

Monitoring and Progress Controls (report requirements, periodicity, format, deadlines):

- a. The final product (e.g., survey completed, data collected, workshop conducted, research documents produced specify): 3 MEBs (excel spreadsheet), 1 Report, 1 Presentation
- b. Delivery Periodicity, as applicable: Once, at the end
- c. Work on the basis of time employed Yes No
- d. If it is to result in a written product specify:
 - a. Number of pages: 5- 10 pages maximum
 - b. Language(s): English
 - c. Number of copies: 50

ESSENTIAL MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

- Education background preferred in Statistics or Economics, alternatively in development or related field.
- Significant experience in household economics and cash transfer programs.
- Experience in other MEB reviews and market analysis particularly in the MENA region.
- Experience in Monitoring & Evaluation plus good data analysis skills.
- Ability to present complex information in a succinct and compelling manner for not only technical staff but also management and other field staff.



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

- Proven inter-personal and people/ skills / ability to engage with a wide variety of actors .
- Fluency in English for oral and written communication.
- Experience in collating price monitoring data.

DESIRABLE QUALIFICATIONS & COMPETENCIES

- Knowledge of the MENA or EU region and Greece strongly preferred
- Knowledge of the humanitarian response to date and cash programming in Greece strongly preferred
- Fluency in Greek desirable
- Fluency in Arabic/Farsi an advantage

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

If you wish to be considered for this vacancy, please submit your **Personal History Form (P11)** (which can be downloaded from www.unhcr.org/recruit/p11new.doc) and **Motivation Letter** by e-mail with the vacancy title **MEB Consultant 2016/HRC-001** in the subject line to: greatvac@unhcr.org no later than 31st October 2016. Only applications submitted by e-mail with a **signed P.11 form** will be considered. **Emails without vacancy title MEB Consultant 2016/HRC-001 in the subject line will not be considered.**

Shortlisted candidates might be required to sit for a written test and will have to undergo an oral interview. Only shortlisted candidates will be notified. No late applications will be accepted.

UNHCR is an equal opportunity employer and does not charge a fee at any stage of the recruitment process (application, interview meeting, processing, training or any other fees).

Deadline for submission of application: 31st October 2016.