Terms of Reference
Working Group on Social Cohesion - Lebanon

Rationale

1. The Task Force on Support to Host Communities brings together more than 30 UN, NGO and Government organizations concerned with the increasingly critical impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanese communities from social, economic and security perspectives. Formed in October 2012, and Co-chaired by UNDP and UNHCR, together with the Prime Minister's Office and MoSA, the TF seeks to enhance coordination and information sharing as well as support strategic planning, advocacy and communication efforts.

2. The purpose for support to host communities is to mitigate conflict between the Lebanese and Syrians and within the Syrian refugee community to maintain the welcome and leave some tangible benefit behind.

3. So far an indicative strategic framework has been developed highlighting three priority areas of intervention, namely: livelihoods and income generation; basic service delivery and social cohesion.

4. Interventions within livelihood, basic service delivery and social cohesion have so far been limited relative to need. In light of the scale of the crisis and structural impact on the Lebanese society, there is a need to move towards a more developmental community-driven and conflict sensitive approach to meeting basic services in affected communities, to establish centrally defined general principles and priorities for host community support coupled with well-defined area-specific mechanisms for decentralized project decision-making as well as to set-up local response systems with key stakeholders to address conflict.

5. In order to further operationalize the Task Force, it has been agreed to create a smaller working group on social cohesion and services tasked with preparing the necessary analysis of social cohesion issues in Lebanese host communities, devising effective response strategies and identifying priorities (among communities and areas of intervention). The role of the working group is to produce the basics to ensure consistency in designing, targeting and implementing projects, as well as compiling lessons-learned. It reports to the Task Force, which serves as a platform for further enrichment and validation by stakeholders of the strategic direction proposed by the working group.

Composition of the working group on social cohesion

1. The WGSC will be made up of MoSA, PMO, UNDP, UNHCR and open to all interested Government and UN agencies, INGOs and national NGOs.

2. Considering the importance of regular meetings and follow-up, members should communicate to the WGSC a back-up person who would be able to attend on their behalf and perform pending responsibilities in their absence.

3. The WGCA will be co-chaired by UNHCR, UNDP, MOSA, and the Prime Minister Office.

Responsibilities

1. The main responsibility of the WGSC will be to elaborate a social cohesion strategy in view of the heavy pressure on host communities and the increasing tensions between Lebanese and Syrian refugees.

2. The WGSC will strive to meet on a monthly basis or more/less frequently, depending on need. The purpose of the meeting is to coordinate the activities initiated by the members of the WG and that relate to social cohesion intervention.

3. The WGSC will perform a tension/conflict analysis for Lebanon in order to map and identify the underlying causes of the tensions between host communities and refugees. It will also look at potential opportunities for conflict mitigation and enhancing social cohesion as well as identify main stakeholders from both communities.

4. In an effort to prioritise among communities and areas of intervention i.e. co-existence and basic service delivery (WASH, roads, community facilities, health and education), the WGSC will:

   a. continue to update and further refine the GOL, Unicef, UNDP and UNHCR vulnerability index, identifying priority municipalities on the basis of poverty indicators in combination with relative size of refugee population;

   b. map and identify pre-existing and crisis related problems in basic service provision starting with most impoverished and affected host communities as per above vulnerability index (WASH, roads, community facilities, health and education);

   c. map geographically the communities currently most affected by refugee/host tensions and conflict as well as communities prone to be at risk of tensions due to composition, (poverty level, availability of services, opportunities, mixed populations, Syrian business initiatives etc.) or other;

   d. map ongoing social cohesion and basic service interventions.

5. The WGSC will develop guidance and general principles to be applied for support to host communities.

6. The WGSC will elaborate a well-defined area-specific mechanism for decentralised project decision-making.

7. The WGSC will draft audience-specific messages to promote social cohesion. Lack of objective information and rampant rumours can fuel fears and heighten tensions amongst both refugee and host communities. Communities in such situations can often latch onto rumours, scapegoating and hate speech, as their frustrations around access to resources render them more vulnerable to manipulation

8. The WGSC will draft strategy on response system to address conflict.

Responsibilities of the Core Group (if applicable)

As the number of participating agencies is very large, the leads may establish a core group for more in-depth review and guidance on matters of concern to the WG.

The core group should not exceed a maximum of 4 members in addition to the co-chairs and should be collectively identified by the WG partners based on their level of (a) operational engagement in the response under the RRP, (b) representation of the various stakeholders in the sector, and (c) participation in sector working groups. Co-leads are *ex officio* members of the CG, and will report to the full membership of the WG on the work by the CG. The CG will:

- Develop the sector strategy, including with respect to setting priority interventions, targets and indicators;

- Provide strategic oversight on the prioritization of resources within the sector and on the division of labour amongst the sector's partners;

- Monitor implementation of the sector's objectives against the RRP and assist in the identification of significant gaps;

- Validate common processes related to the sector's response, such as contingency planning, transition from in-kind to cash interventions, targeting, or use of common data collection and information management tools; and,

  Support internal and external evaluation of the sector, and sharing of lessons learned.