LEBANON CRISIS RESPONSE PLAN (LCRP) BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN (BCP) – July Update 2023

More than eleven years into the Syria crisis, the continued large-scale presence of refugees in Lebanon and increasing vulnerability of both refugees and host communities is stretching local resources and service capacity to the limit. Since 2019, Lebanon has been facing an unprecedented multi-layered political, economic, financial, and public health crisis that is undermining the subsistence capacity of already vulnerable populations. Individuals and families are falling deeper into poverty due to currency depreciation, high inflation, rising food prices and loss of income. Within this context, it remains critical to ensure continuity of Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) operations. The analysis undertaken under the LCRP suggests that a range of risks could further impact the business and programme continuity in 2023. As such, there is a need to continuously update the BCP to enhance LCRP partners' preparedness and adaptation for the evolution of these risks and mitigate negative impact on operations.

The LCRP Business Continuity Plan (BCP) was initiated in 2020 and aims to:
a) *Understand the context in which the LCRP operates, particularly in terms of the risks listed in this BCP;*
b) *Understand the interaction between the context and LCRP interventions;*
c) *Outline how partners can act on this understanding to minimize the negative impact on interventions and maximize the positive impact of operations based on risk mitigation through putting in place prevention and preparedness measures;*
d) *Provide an overview of the LCRP response capacity in-country;*
e) *Outline coordination arrangements on the ground in the event of additional crisis.*

The key risks identified to have an impact on LCRP Operations – *as a result of various political, economic, social and environmental drivers* - are[1]:
- **Risk 1: Lack of containment of outbreaks and infectious diseases**
- **Risk 2: Sharp deterioration in protection space and involuntary movements**
- **Risk 3: Increased social instability**
- **Risk 4: Supply gaps (including for fuel and electricity)**
- **Risk 5: Pressure on partners due to increasing needs**
- **Risk 6: Access gaps and closing operational space**
- **Risk 7: Operational risks linked to transfer values and shift in currencies**

2023 updates to the document include re-shaping 'Risk 1' from COVID-specific to focus on a wider set of disease outbreaks (including a recurrence of cholera); contextualizing risks in light of recent protection and tensions dynamics; and a thorough revision of risks related to supply gaps and currency issues (noting some reduction in impact given adaptation since 2021).

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[1] In addition, a risk associated to renewed tensions with Israel is included in the South Lebanon regional action plan.

Contents

I. Risk Analysis, Prevention and Mitigation Measures

The purpose of the Business Continuity Plan (BCP) is to map out the key risks that could have an impact on the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) operations in 2023 and provide a vehicle to keep track of action to prevent and mitigate these risks.

By better understanding the current and potential impact of key risks and putting in place prevention and preparedness measures where possible, the regional Inter-Sector coordination will be better able to support partners to mitigate any impact.

The most recent analysis was undertaken in June 2023 through members of the national inter-sector working group, with further discussions to follow at the sub-national level in order to capture regional specificities.

In the current deteriorating context, many of these risks are already having an impact, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, stretching the capacities of the Government, UN agencies and NGO partners to respond and affecting LCRP operations on the ground. The potential effect of shifting political and social dynamics has been captured in the updated analysis.

Risk 1: Lack of containment of outbreaks and infectious diseases

Overview of Risk: Lebanon is currently facing a precarious situation that leaves it highly vulnerable to disease outbreaks, with the overall risk of infectious diseases on the rise. This susceptibility is exacerbated by several factors, including the ongoing complex crises, weakened water, sanitation, and health systems, and a shortage of human resources. Additionally, the sharp decline in vaccination coverage among both Lebanese and displaced populations due to the economic crisis has significantly increased the risk of vaccine-preventable diseases. The strain on Lebanon's capacity to respond to multiple and simultaneous outbreaks is further compounded by the lack of a national contingency plan including stockpiles for response to disease outbreaks, in addition to the global lack of resources and critical supplies, as well as an overstretched healthcare workforce dealing with multiple emergencies concurrently. The shortage of vaccines and essential resources adds to the challenges faced by the already overwhelmed public health and medical personnel.

As observed during the COVID-19 pandemic, any outbreak is likely to have devastating consequences, particularly for vulnerable populations across various groups. Since the end of 2019, compounded crises have resulted in deteriorating living conditions nationwide, with a significant percentage of the population experiencing multidimensional poverty. Both refugees and Lebanese citizens struggle to afford safe water when public supply is inadequate and lack access to proper sanitation facilities.

In October 2022, Lebanon encountered its first cholera outbreak in decades, adding to the strain on an already overstressed healthcare system. Although the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) declared the end of the cholera outbreak in June 2023, the country's current situation makes it highly susceptible to another wave of the disease. Consequently, the MoPH is actively monitoring Acute Watery Diarrhea (AWD) outbreaks through close surveillance.

While Lebanon has a history of endemic seasonal outbreaks such as varicella and hepatitis A, the past few years have seen the resurgence of preventable diseases like cholera, in addition to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. These outbreaks have significantly depleted the MoPH's capacity for early detection, overwhelmed the laboratory network, exhausted healthcare personnel and resources, and stretched the limited capacity for outbreak response and management. Presently, Lebanon is facing a Measles outbreak, and the country remains at high risk for other infectious and communicable diseases. Partners and health organizations must remain vigilant, keep their contingency stocks updated, and promptly report any suspected emerging communicable diseases to the Epidemiological Surveillance Unit (ESU) at MoPH.

The country's health system has been severely impacted by the multifaceted crisis, including the devastating Beirut Port explosions in August 2020, which destroyed essential medical infrastructure in the capital. In this context, responding to any outbreak has the potential to overwhelm the already fragile health system, affecting the capacity of partners to deliver critical services and people's ability to access essential care.

RISK MATRIX – RISK 1: LACK OF CONTAINMENT OF INFECTIOUS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES		
Current Impact on Operational Environment	**Likelihood/ Impact**	**Future Risk and Impact**
The increased needs to **strengthen public health capacity to prepare for and prevent emerging and epidemic-prone infectious diseases**	Likely/ High	Compromised national health system and decreased access to medical services.
The increased needs to strengthen capacity for the early detection and investigation of outbreaks of emerging and epidemic-prone infectious diseases	Likely/ High	Decreased ability to contain outbreaks.
Lack the ability to **build capacity** to implement high-impact control strategies for **rapid response** to high-risk emerging and epidemic-prone infectious diseases	Likely/ High	Decreased ability to timely respond and contain outbreaks.
The lack of national capacity to respond to outbreaks puts the access to primary and hospital care services at stack.	Likely/ High	Compromised national health system and decreased access to services.
The increased needs and decreased funding force **partners to further prioritize and repurpose available funds** which affects the access to life-saving interventions.	Likely/ Medium	Decreased capacity by health sector partners and decreased access to life-saving interventions which increase morbidity and mortality.
The spread of communicable diseases puts a burden on healthcare system and infrastructure in many forms including human resources, necessary trainings, and the high urgency of medical equipment, including infection control measures.	Likely/ High	Strained system, staff stressed and fatigued. Compromised ability to respond to outbreaks which might contribute to the spread of diseases.
Outbreaks **hinder the access to other basic services such as education, water, and food.** They also affect the already deteriorating economy.	Not Likely/ Medium	Interruption of basic services which will have an impact on the populations especially the most vulnerable.
Partners face some constraints in following adequate **health and safety measures**, including the provision of needed PPE.	Not likely/ Medium	Compromising safety of partners and their ability to provide services in an effective, safe, and dignified manner leading to gaps in support to vulnerable populations.
Marginalized populations are directly exposed to infectious diseases due to illiteracy, **poor living conditions**, and reduced access to services. Population density and lack of sanitation is likely to increase communicable diseases.	Likely/ High	Rapid spread of diseases especially in poor and overcrowded areas.
Lack of sanitation facilities and inaccessibility to safe water will exert increase the risk of communicable diseases, which will increase healthcare expenditures across countries.	Likely/ Medium	Increase risk of disease outbreaks particularly water borne diseases.

Gaps in capacities and **information flow** towards national actors and community-based organizations has been reported, with additional support required - especially related to vaccinations (for communities and front liners). Gap in having a unified platform for all information (e.g., MoPH and WHO have separate platforms).	Likely/ Medium	The low awareness could potentially lead to low vaccination rates when applicable and more outbreaks. Ununified information especially related to vaccinations when applicable (for INGOs, NNGOs and communities but also for front liners) leading to reluctancy in resuming field work and direct provision of services.
High-risk for **front liners** due to relaxed approach by beneficiaries with little adherence to infection, prevention, and control measures.	Likely/ Medium	Delays. Negative impact on staff wellbeing. High risk of further outbreaks.

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS MEASURES – RISK 1: LACK OF CONTAINMENT OF INFECTIOUS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES		
PREVENTION		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-Sector	Use administrative directives, organizations and operational skills and capacities to implement strategies, policies, and improved coping capacities in order to lessen the adverse impacts of hazards and the possibility of public health emergencies.	Ongoing
	Follow emergency management plans and institutional arrangements to engage and guide the efforts of government, and voluntary and private agencies in comprehensive and coordinated ways to respond to the entire spectrum of emergency needs	Ongoing
	Follow preventative internal measures and issue operational guidelines for partners and public specific to the disease. Ensure partners maintain standard infection prevention control and hygiene measures.	Ongoing
	Distribute protective equipment, soap and sanitizer depending on the nature of the disease.	Ongoing
	Risk Communication and Community Engagement: ● Maintain unified platform and/or SOPs (Standard Operations Procedures) to support ongoing efforts for risk communication and community engagement to ensure that all persons are equipped with vital information. ● Reinforce sectors (and partners) responsibilities in providing support to improve information sharing and awareness. ● Keep close coordination and support to ongoing efforts for RCCE at national and regional levels. ● Engage local authorities in the coordination, planning, implementation, and monitoring of activities. ● Ensure coherence between service continuity plans and other plans relevant to public health emergency management. ● Liaise and coordinate with public health emergency management structures, health system strengthening structures and other relevant forums to ensure coordinated planning and implementation of the plans.	Ongoing
PREPAREDNESS		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-Sector (with WASH and Health Sectors)	● Maintain planning assumption for the LCRP that prevention measures should take place across sectors. Disseminate lessons learned and good practices within sectors and across inter-sector. ● Include budgets for personal protective equipment procurement (PPE) where applicable. ● Regularly update and share Inter-Agency guidance documents depending on the situation.	Ongoing
	At the field level, ensure the availability of Rapid Response Teams (RRT) to assist communities and families where cases are suspected or confirmed in informal settlements, collective shelters, and overcrowded areas and in both urban and rural settings. Considering the challenges posed by requiring Partners to keep RRT on standby due to the time-constrained nature of their projects, a more sustainable approach is recommended. This could entail strengthening the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) capacity to enable effective responses, thereby reducing the reliance on NGOs for ongoing support in Lebanon.	Ongoing

	Put in place new monitoring schemes needed to ensure preparedness for remote monitoring: ● Develop M&E toolkit for remote modalities and better measure quality of online services. ● Share overall lessons learned and best practices from all sectors with all partners. ● Do an initial rapid WASH assessment within the first 3 days from the onset of the emergency. ● Assess key hygiene practices in terms of water needs and sanitation habits. ● Identify lack of basic services among the refugee population that might influence their hygiene / sanitation preferences.	GAP
Health Sector	Improve coordination within the Health sector including through the NHSWG and the sub-national working groups such as the SRH and the national mental health task force.	Ongoing
	Reaffirm and support the importance of a One Health approach and the need for synergies between multisectoral and cross-sectoral collaboration at national, regional, and international levels to safeguard human health and detect/prevent health threats. It is essential to include animal health and environmental health in the One Health approach ensuring coordination with the Ministry of Environment (MoE).	Ongoing
	Reiterate the need to work towards building and strengthening resilient health systems, as an essential foundation for effective pandemic prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery of health systems, and to adopt an equitable approach, including to mitigate the risk that pandemics exacerbate existing inequities in access to services.	Ongoing
	Improve cross-sectoral coordination including with most relevant sectors: WASH, Protection, GBV, and RCCE taskforce.	
	Ensure an effective communication between national and sub-national level including MoPH, DRM, and partners.	GAP

Risk 2: Sharp deterioration in protection space and involuntary movements

Overview of Risk: The impact of the ongoing Syria crisis on Lebanon and its people has been profound. Since late 2019, all populations have been facing further consequences of the additional multi-layered crises in Lebanon. While Lebanon has remained a generous host to refugees, over the past year social tensions and host-community fatigue have significantly increased, combined with depleted resources and the weak functioning of public services has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and sharply impacted the well-being and safety of both the refugee and host population. Political instability, insecurity and ongoing institutional vacancies have exacerbated instrumentalization of the refugee file and undermine governance, legal and policy reforms needed to support the protection of women, children, and marginalized groups. These domestic challenges as well as regional developments including the restoration of Arab states' diplomatic ties with the Syrian Government, have impacted the protection space in Lebanon. Key protection risks include collective evictions and other municipal imposed restrictive measures, safety and security concerns for refugees, risky onward movement and most recently in April and May 2023 an increase in raids, arrests, and deportations. These phenomena have an impact on the operating environment for all sector response partners. Some of these issues are already impacting the situation of refugees in Lebanon whilst others remain a risk to be monitored and mitigated in the future.

These include:
- Collective evictions, raids, arrests, and detention outside due process creating an insecure environment, **including occasional medium and large-scale internal movements, requiring negotiations with local officials and urgent need for basic assistance and protection services.**
- Involuntary returns and **deportations** requiring protection interventions to prevent risk of refoulement.
- **Increasingly restrictive protection environment** creates **heightened barriers to accessing assistance**, reduced access to legal residency (with associated movement restrictions, arrests, and deportations) and targeted restrictive measures toward refugees.
- Dangerous onward movements increase by sea and land.
- **Increased human trafficking especially for women and children** with limited ability to monitor.
- **Increased exposure to child protection threats and gender-based violence** including child labor, and early marriage, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, harassment, and exploitation often driven due to lack of financial resources to pay rent and to provide for basic needs.

RISK MATRIX – RISK 2: DETERIORATION IN THE PROTECTION SPACE AND INVOLUNTARY MOVEMENTS		
Current Impact on Operational Environment	**Likelihood/ Impact**	**Future Risk and Impact**
Increased feelings of **physical insecurity and lack of safety** in both refugee and host communities, particularly impact refugee access and participation in services.	Highly Likely**/** High	Further instrumentalization of the refugee file has the potential to further undermine the protection space for refugees which could lead to an uptick in security incidents targeting refugees without legal residency and who entered irregularly, impact individual access to services and may lead to internal movement especially to Palestinian refugee camps as people try to avoid contact with authorities. Decreased presence of security personnel on streets, continued lack of street electricity and weakened rule of law and functioning justice system impact feelings of safety and security across populations, including for beneficiaries seeking to access assistance and LCRP partners operating in communities, requiring amended outreach. This is especially reported to impact PRS in Palestinian camps, women, male refugees without legal status and those in urban areas.
Collective and individual eviction threats and incidents remain a major concern. Categories at risk include women and persons with disabilities. Eviction drivers: inability to pay rent, repurposing of land/property, thefts, crimes, and personal disputes which are increasing because of the deteriorated socio-economic situation including due solid waste management and water shortages [Latent threat of evictions by Litani River Authority in the Bekaa].	Likely/ High	• Eviction threats due to inability to pay rent/demand for USD payment are likely to increase and translate into actual incidents of eviction (already observed in the PRS /PRL community). Impacts households' feelings of insecurity and risk of exploitation (especially female headed households, single women, persons with disability, child headed households etc.) as they devise ways to avoid eviction. • Internal movement could increase as households search for cheaper accommodation, amid worsening conditions and relocation following evictions. Households likely to move to informal settlements or overcrowded sub-standard accommodation in crowded urban areas (including Palestinian refugee camps) leading to privacy concerns for women and girls and hygiene and mental health concerns. • Eviction incidents have a high impact on education as children of moving families will have to be registered in new schools which might be challenged by the ability/capacity of the schools to register new students. It also impacts the

		livelihood of working household members and ruptures community support networks. ● Risk of collective eviction by property owners caused by the need to repurpose land to be more profitable taking up agricultural activities, making new accommodation difficult to find.
Increase in raids, arrests and deportations as well as raids on informal tented settlements and collective housing.	Highly Likely/ High	As accusations of aid bias, criminality, and smuggling increase alongside worsening economic conditions an increase in raids, arrests and deportations outside due process remain likely. Key concern areas are those with high density of Syrian refugees with those without legal residency most at risk. Also, with the increase of theft incidents and crimes, some communities started to impose communal security measures which include raids by community groups.
Increase in attempted onward movement of refugees, Lebanese, and migrants by sea (particularly over the summer months).	Likely/ High	Attempted irregular onward movements via sea will increase (as weather improves) further depleting refugees', Lebanese and migrants' resources and risking loss of life (operational implications in Lebanon for unsuccessful attempts). Increase in risks of fraud and exploitation by smugglers (in some cases the smugglers are taking the money and calling the authorities informing them about the attempt to illegal migration).
Increased living costs, shrinking protection space in Lebanon, and decline of inter-communal relations. are all **pressure points for return** and involuntary movement to Syria.	Likely/ Medium	Refugees risk coming under intense pressure to return to Syria before they feel safe to do so. Potential increase in return pressure due to a combination of factors; tighter restrictive measures and security incidents, stigmatization in media/social media/news outlets, greater normalization of regional relations with Syria, socio-economic crisis leading to increased cost of goods, high debt and poverty and growing protection risks as a result. Protection/assistance implications in Syria. High adaptability to survive on low incomes especially in areas with low share of assistance and NGOs. Increased reports of harassment and sexual exploitation of refugee and migrant women and girls by landlords, shop owners or employers such as agriculture.
Increase in **cross-border tensions with Israel**, leading to risk of renewed conflict.	Medium/ High	Renewed conflict with Israel would likely lead to significant internal movements across populations in Lebanon, as well as involuntary return from different Lebanese regions to Syria where relative safety

		might be assumed. South-South internal movement of refugees is not highly feasible as municipalities are resistant to new arrivals.

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS MEASURES – RISK 2: DECREASED PROTECTION SPACE		
PREVENTION		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-sector (regional and national) – with UN Comms Group	Advocacy for the need for safe, voluntary and dignified return in line with international principles and protection thresholds and to uphold principle of non-refoulement.	Ongoing
	- Secure adequate and timely funding for refugees and other vulnerable groups in Lebanon through positive engagement with donors and donor conferences and advocate for greater burden-sharing through resettlement programs and other humanitarian pathways. - Regularly coordinate, communicate, and share information with local authorities (ex. On the status of interventions, specific needs/requirements, and challenges). Work on accountability measures for engagement with authorities and clear guidelines. - Increase municipal training on due diligence and legal pathways for engagement with communities targeting rural areas with problematic municipal practices. - Continued and expanded engagement with regional authorities including security agencies through ongoing initiatives (UNDP, EU-SSR programs) to develop responses to security concerns which do not exacerbate protection risks (detention, raids, eviction) while also addressing rising social tensions. Need to promote more dignified solutions. - Communication planning to mitigate aid bias perception by communities and local authorities alike. Specifically, maximize the impact of the collective efforts rather than agency/organization specific communications only.	Ongoing – gaps include localized communications, training and increased coordination with municipalities
	Facilitate effective eviction prevention and preparedness measures through a cross-sector approach to individual eviction incidents (incl. referral pathways, guidance & trainings, housing stock assessments are updated, accessible and available etc.). Promote use of existing guidance on collective evictions to be used as a minimum standard across regions.	Ongoing with funding gaps - individual cross-sectoral and collective eviction guidance exists.
Protection	- Continuity of Protection monitoring programs maintained to identify emerging trends, vulnerabilities, and support prioritization. - To adapt advocacy and national action plan interventions to target civil servants and public administration level officials as well as ministerial or parliamentary stakeholders. - Advocacy and communication with authorities and communities (sharing protection messages related to eviction prevention, specific escalations, registration, community groups, counter-fraudulent messages). - Granting municipalities, a more enhanced role in terms of building ownership and hence communications with the communities which will help to curb some of the communication gaps and negative perceptions.	Gaps – communication

	• Promote the need to introduce new approaches to programming which are inclusive and accessible in the face of growing barriers, facilitate partners to share best practices in relation to program adjustments and the improved quality of remote service delivery. • Promote a conflict and protection sensitive approach to protection cash provision which avoids duplication and avoids causing harm.	
	Cross-border coordination: Increased monitoring of return intentions and the implications for beneficiaries which may include FAQ and Q&A sessions. This includes messaging and a joint approach.	Ongoing
Social Stability	Anticipate triggers and identify preventative measures in a timely manner through ongoing tension monitoring. More guidance and coordination with government bodies in terms of covering Lebanese beneficiaries to avoid duplication of coverage).	Ongoing – gaps are coordination with authorities
Livelihoods	Thorough communication and coordination with local authorities, municipalities, regional actors, local partners, informing them about project activities, area of implementation, targeted population and understand security plans and strategy.	
PREPAREDNESS		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-Sector	Proper targeting and prioritization through a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach, strengthened referral pathways for sustainable interventions, program adjustment is coordinated within sectors, multi-sectoral response package: Involve protection actors actively in response to emergency escalations/incidents as well as mental health actors. This is requested to be a priority given the current context and learning from previous examples.	Ongoing
	Identify sites: evictions continue to be reported and site identification is being conducted on a case-by-case manner between relevant partners, government counter parts, and refugee populations themselves. Pre-identification and response planning is required for collective evictions. Confirming and supporting the role of DRM and national partners in identifying alternative shelters ahead of evictions and other emergencies could strengthen a more coherent approach. Prioritize interventions given funding gaps. Cash for work programs could be utilized through enhanced coordination between PRT and Shelter Sectors (e.g., in incidences of freeze of rental fees) to support a decrease in evictions.	Ongoing
Inter-Sector	To enhance the monitoring of sudden changes to the context and operational environment through strengthening and developing cross-sectoral monitoring capabilities with key indicators tracked and reported on for timely joint information sharing and informing response.	Linked to HCT risk monitoring process
Protection	Continuous border monitoring activities/mechanisms at borders. The overall mechanisms remain vague in terms of operationalization and the criteria around it. There is also a need for a continued negotiation with counterparts.	Ongoing with few gaps
Protection	Cross-border coordination. GAP: Increased monitoring of return intentions and the implications for beneficiaries which may include FAQ and Q&A sessions. This includes messaging and a joint approach. Agencies need to establish communication lines and collaboration, preparedness etc.	Ongoing with few gaps

Protection	Supporting people to fast-track documentation: Civil documentation registration and the due process delays with all the associated risks a could be strengthened. There are obstacles in the process not just in the personal status department. This is related to earlier levels such as Mokhtar and hospital related documentation.	Ongoing
Inter-Sector	Promote Inter-Agency referral tools (Inter-Agency service mapping, Inter-Agency referral trend platform, Inter-Agency referral form) ensuring they are fit for purpose and capture accurate information on available services and assistance across sectors and governments. These tools are critical for referring in timely and accurate manner at-risk individuals in need of assistance, as well as to uphold accountability by identifying bottlenecks in the provision of assistance. Should be promoted across LCRP/non-LCRP partners. Ensure partners are aware of the emergency function in the service mapping to capture rapid updates made to services. In coordination with municipalities and regional offices, map available services provided by non-LCRP partners through the Inter-Agency service mapping.	Ongoing
Protection	Protection in detention and return movements. Ensure that case-management, referrals, family tracing capacities and protection desks are in place.	Ongoing
Protection	Continued advocacy on the fee waiver to access legal residency and the facilitation of legal residency process for those who entered irregularly. Continued advocacy on UNHCR's ability to resume registration of refugees. Continued advocacy and communications with authorities on main protection concerns and addressing restrictive measures.	Ongoing
Protection	Influx from Syria: response, registration, needs assessment (see HCT contingency plan).	Ongoing
Shelter	Relocation of displaced families to pre-identified public structures/pre-identified sites, in case of collective evictions, there is a lack of pre-identified sites. Map existing public structures/pre-identified sites in order to relocate families affected by collective evictions. Current list of pre-identified sites is not comprehensive and requires updating. Continued advocacy to fund the cash for rent programme in order to respond to the increasing number of eviction cases.	Ongoing
Social Stability	Conducting tension assessments and stabilizing the environment around the immediate affected areas and preventing further escalation. More guidance and coordination with government bodies on assistance to Lebanese to avoid duplication of coverage. Expand and enhance the information sharing mechanism between the PRT and the SoST sector and the implications in terms of contextual developments and protection implications.	Ongoing
Protection /Health	Scale up Mental health and psychosocial support services and mainstream MHPSS into sector activities. Enhance MHPSS questions in rapid needs assessment tools and train enumerators. Advocate for increased levels of funding to respond to higher demand and advocate with the Government to address medication shortages.	Ongoing
Protection /Education	Expand outreach and support to out-of-school children to ensure they are accessing an appropriate protective learning environment, prevent and respond to violence in schools through capacity strengthening and establishment/strengthening of referral mechanisms. Strengthen and align community messaging to reduce perceptions of aid bias, fear in accessing education.	Ongoing
Livelihoods	Implementation of activities at the community level (limiting the need for movement between areas were passing through checkpoints, for example, is required). This should come through identifying neutral and accessible locations	Ongoing with few gaps

	that are considered safe by beneficiaries (municipalities might not be the best location to conduct activities in some cases). Raise awareness of beneficiaries to carry their documents/to regularize if possible (training the livelihood sector front liners on the key messages and the Q&As prepared by the protection sector on legal residency and recent developments Note: Men are more affected (by increased mobility limitations including self-restrictions/deportation).	
Livelihoods	Support partners and provide the needed guidance to enable them to adapt activities (when possible) to accommodate for women's increased request for participation (child-care services). Note: Women increased need/pressure to engage in employment due to men's inability to move.	Ongoing with few gaps
Livelihoods	Prepare guidance material for livelihood actors on how to act in case of access issues (for beneficiaries to activities, or staff to locations) – common with access issues.	Ongoing

Risk 3: Increased Social Instability

Overview of risk: Across the country, **anti-refugee perceptions and tensions are growing**. There is a high risk that tensions will further increase, both at intra- and inter-communal levels amidst the deteriorating socio-economic as well as political crises including but not limited to presidential vacuum and 2023 postponed municipal elections. This is coupled with a higher propensity to violence as well as actual escalations into violence on a micro-level, mirroring the increased inter- and intra- communal tensions.

Perception of aid bias has further intensified, with increased pressure being put on LCRP partners to provide support to municipalities and host communities. **Increased communal insecurity** incidents involving crime (mostly theft) have been on an evident escalation since 2021, with increased evidence of them becoming organized rather than reactive which was the case in 2020. At the same time, there is a perception that foreigners are being connected to crime and approval of restrictions on foreigners' movements to increase safety remains high across most communities. The community's preoccupation with survival, parallel to increased community insecurity, has also manifested in the establishment of informal security arrangements.

Disputes that were previously resolved amicably are now escalating into clashes and fights, such as disputes between landlords and tenants (noting that eviction threats risk related to rent default has reached a worrying level especially for displaced Syrians). A recent development has been the **increased tensions related to goods, cash, and services**, resulting in physical confrontations as well as ad-hoc measures on restricting foreigners' access to essential products and services. This is further amplified when specific commodities suffer intermittent shortages which escalating into violence on several occasions. Subsequently, the scapegoating of displaced Syrians has gained traction as they receive the blame for shortage and competition over resources.

Online and social media reactions to specific incidents is sometimes leading to the dissemination of fake news on sensitive topics such as changes in aid provision and security incidents also heightens reactions to incidents offline. This has not resulted in highly antagonistic sentiments and infrequent haphazard incidents at an inter-communal level. High risk areas are oftentimes municipalities hosting high numbers of displaced Syrians with key tension points during distribution activities, when displaced Syrians will try to access goods in shops, and around ATMs when they are receiving cash assistance. Solid waste management, specifically around waste generated by displaced Syrians and Palestinian refugees, is a recent flashpoint.

The prospective **presidential elections and postponement of municipal elections are additional variables for 2023 which may have an impact on tensions and social stability**. The areas of most concern are Beirut, North, and the Bekaa governorates. **Micro-level insecurity and increasing**

incidents are to be expected especially given the rise of informal security arrangements. In addition, the online space is expected to experience continuous highly antagonistic sentiments and hate speech. Nevertheless, organized, or widespread community violence is not foreseen.

RISK MATRIX – RISK 3: INCREASED SOCIAL INSTABILITY		
Current Impact on Operational Environment	**Likelihood/ Impact**	**Future Risk and Impact**
Anti-refugee sentiments are growing, particularly in municipalities close to informal settlements and/or overcrowded areas. Key tension drivers include competition over jobs and resources, access to services, aid perception bias and high community insecurity. Increased perception that Syrians are the cause of the rise in insecurity incidents and crime.	Very likely/ high	• High risk that tensions will increase, both intra- and inter-communal, leading to scapegoating, clashes, and confrontations. • Increased association of the displaced Syrians presence with security risks especially when they are newcomers (following earthquakes in Syria) or single men has a potential for increased negative perceptions and risks. The job competition perception is consistently on the rise. • Increased tensions associated with political support to politicians in Syria, but also on the intra-Lebanese tensions manifesting into tensions and reactions towards displaced Syrians especially in the context of BML. • At national level, the exclusion of displaced Syrians from social safety nets may lead to increased vulnerabilities as well as increased tensions and aid perception biases when programs are redesigned. • The risk of intra-communal tensions remains high as the presidential vacuum persists against a continuously deteriorating socio-economic situation. • Impact of possible dual currency aid modality leads to increased inter-communal tensions and heightened anti-refugee sentiments.
	Moderately likely/ High	Potential internal movements of displaced Syrians and evictions.
	Likely/High	Skirmishes and physical confrontations related to accessing goods and services are a key concern (linked to risk 6).
Area-specific (municipal) elections related tensions. Tensions are expected to exacerbate in areas of high competition between electoral candidates.	Very Likely/High	Highly antagonistic sentiment on social media platforms as well as the use of hate-speech is expected. This dynamic shall be triggered by specific statements stemming from macro-level differences. Such sentiments could have an impact on the overall protection space.

		Moderately likely/ High	Micro-level insecurity and increasing incidents should be expected especially given the rise of informal security arrangements.
		Likely/High	Tensions and violence will more likely be linked to the subsequent municipal elections - which is expected to have a medium to major impact on the operational environment as well as the scapegoating of displaced Syrians on matters pertaining to service provision as well as the targeting of communities. The postponement of municipal elections has already impacted the funding levels at municipal level which further complicates the operational environment and the community's access to services.
Direct physical confrontations across all regions. Perception of displaced Syrians being connected to crime and approval of restrictions on foreigner's movements to increase safety remains high. State institutions (including community police) are less able to provide services impacting the rule of law and its implications on access to services, legal documentation, as well as community security.		Very likely/ high	Community insecurity will increase with impact on both beneficiaries and partners. Crime including theft, informal groups, increased restrictions to certain areas and higher GBV. The formal channels to mitigate and resolve tensions and less capable with decreased human and financial resources. Nonetheless increased raids and movement restrictions are to be expected in an increasing fashion from both formal state institutions and informal security arrangements.
Demonstrations, protests and roadblocks taking place across the country, increasingly triggering inter-sectarian tensions and clashes, sometimes armed.		Likely/ medium	Will likely continue and could lead to access issues especially when main roads linking areas and regions are closed. With the increased number of protests, there is a risk of inter-sectarian tensions resulting in confrontations. Areas of concern: [BAALBEK]: Saadnayel, Taalabaya, Zahle, Qab Elias, Chtoura, Baalbek [BML]: Beirut district, BSS, Jal el Dib, Antelias, Jounieh, Zouk Mosbeh, Furn el Chebbek, Choueifet [SOUTH]: Saida [NORTH]: Bahsas Mina, Abou Ali Roundabout, el Nour Square-Tripoli, ABdeh in Akkar

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS MEASURES – RISK 3: INCREASED SOCIAL INSTABILITY		
PREVENTION		**STATUS/GAPS**
Protection	● Ensure the continuity of UNHCR and partners' protection monitoring systems. This includes a need for monitoring as well as clear follow-up criteria given specific escalations. ● The consistency of the data collection over time and the changing dynamics requires a new way to focus on time specific contextual developments (deep dives).	Ongoing – need for more deep dives

Social Stability/ Protection	• Ensure the continuity of the Social Stability tension monitoring through its existing structure (tension mapping and analysis, tension taskforce, monthly tension brief, perception surveys, etc.). Communicate the key trends and hotspots areas/places of concern on a quarterly basis with MoIM, MOSA, UNHCR and UNDP. • Tensions Overview Presentations to be conducted in forums nationally and on the field level to inform partners and influence policy in a conflict-sensitive manner. • Expand Conflict Sensitivity & Do-No-Harm guidance and training to frontline staff in Arabic and English reflective of the contextual developments at hands. • Expand the monitoring of social media sentiment, networks, and hate-speech whilst anchoring findings to programmatic implications with regards to the change of narrative, combating fake news & hate-speech as well as enhancing communication strategies. • Address tensions and specific formal channels to be utilized to de-escalate tensions and the advocacy channels. Strengthen local level advocacy and clear channels of engagement.	Ongoing – Conflict Sensitivity TOT is due in August 2023 in Arabic.
	• Engage community leaders (Communication of services that target both nationalities - to municipalities and community leaders to mitigate aid bias perceptions and create more approval of partner and their operations). • Support to municipalities in terms of tension drivers especially around service provision displaced Syrians hosting areas (e.g., solar energy and solid waste management). • Community dialogue and establishment of committees e.g., the "conflict mitigation mechanisms" that are established/supported by SoST sector partners, these mechanisms are created through municipalities, including community representatives (ideally from different nationalities), aiming to identify root causes of tensions to mitigate conflicts at the local level.	Ongoing – gap is localized communication approaches
	• Inter-Agency coordination (and with UN Comms Group, HCT etc) on advocacy and communications in cases of materialization of incidents (including communication with authorities, communities, key interlocutors). • Advocacy with donors in terms of support modalities given the gap in support to the different nationalities.	GAP - training donors on conflict sensitivity is planned by UNDP
PREPAREDNESS		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-Sector	• Conflict Sensitivity & Do-No-Harm guidance and training to frontline staff. • More CS guidance on new developments and the social stability aspects to issues such as access to shops and access to services (health, education, water, cash, solid waste management, etc....) and commodities.	Ongoing - new concept notes are in the pipeline
	• Liaison with shops with regards to escalations when accessing goods and services.	Led by WFP / FSA Sector
	• Maintaining key messages to on assistance (including myth-busting on aid bias).	UN Comms Group

Risk 4: Supply gaps (including wheat, fuel, electricity, and water)

Overview of Risk: The current crisis in Lebanon continues to lead to overall supply chain challenges as procurement challenges are compounded by increased prices of raw materials and essential equipment. **Partners report supply challenges** due to inability to withdraw money from the bank, increased prices of raw materials/ fees of services as well as challenges in paying suppliers and contractors, which has delayed the delivery of products or services. The situation has also led to unavailability or scarcity of materials, for example, the lack of cement in the local market delayed the implementation of several infrastructure interventions.

Regarding essential food items availability, specifically wheat and oil, The Black Sea grain initiative enabled safe shipping of grains and other essential food items from Ukraine. However, Lebanon's domestic wheat production remains low but there is a reduction of export of local grown wheat that is instead purchased locally by an increasing number of new local wheat product manufacturers e.g., burghul and pasta producers.

Lifting fuel subsidies resulted in increased prices though there has not been a reduction in demand for fuel. Moreover, fuel prices might result in network and internet outage as in May 2023, the state-owned telecommunication provider "Ogero" announced that around 30 stations would shut down due to the operator's financial inability to purchase diesel needed to power the machines. Other specific supply gaps **include access to electricity** as Électricité du Liban power plants might begin to cease operating as the state monopoly doesn't secure funds to buy fuel. Electricity gaps are already witnessed in most areas.

The effects of these persistent supply gaps are not limited to one sector. Food Security and Agriculture is challenged with the rapid price changes of goods, commodities and produce, the livelihoods sector is challenged with the rapid currency fluctuation that affects the value of wages.

RISK MATRIX – RISK 4: SUPPLY GAPS		
Current Impact on Operational Environment	**Likelihood/ Impact**	**Future Risk and Impact**
Wheat availability: The Black Sea grain initiative enabled safe shipping of grains and other essential food items from Ukraine. Moreover, the government maintained the wheat subsidy through Lebanon Wheat Supply Emergency Project, a loan of USD 150 million from the World Bank. It is expected that the loan will cover wheat requirements up to 10 months at the price of wheat on the international markets. During February 2023, the first shipment of 33,000 tons of wheat, financed under the Lebanon Wheat Supply Emergency Project, arrived at the Port of Beirut and started being discharged.	Not likely/ High	Food stock availability may deteriorate, including through the government's inability to pay for wheat imports, leading to shortages in shops as well as significant price rises. Increasing agriculture costs and maintaining wheat subsidies will likely hamper a timely increase in domestic wheat production. The removal of the wheat subsidy and associated price hikes may also lead to increased social tensions and violence.
Fuel shortages: During 2022-2023, fuel shortage was not reported. However, the cost of fuel, diesel, and cooking gas increased exponentially after the phase out of fuel subsidies starting January 2021 and accelerated significantly in the first half of 2022. Between May 2022 and May 2023, the price of motor fuel increased by 195 percent and the price of diesel increased by around 120 percent. It is important to point out that despite the reported sharp increase in fuel prices the Transport Index has not reduced nor the general demand, with transport market prices and availability of trucks has increased steadily over the past year. Fuel unavailability at state-owned telecoms provider "Ogero" may result in network outage. During May 2023, Ogero management announced that around 30 stations would shut down due to the operator's financial inability to purchase diesel needed to power the machines.	Not likely/ High	Removal of subsidies might affect the operation especially if not accounted for in budgets and planning.
	Likely/ High	Could potentially lead to complete loss of communication network since communication stations power may run out of fuel. This would be particularly challenging as many activities are carried out remotely.
Procurement challenges are compounded by soaring inflation and increased prices on raw materials and essential equipment, lack of medicines (LH, FSS, Shelter, Health, SoST, Water).	Very Likely/ High	Partners may be forced to suspend, delay or completely halt activities if there is no access to supplies. Key sectors at risk are Health and Shelter, followed by LH, FSS, Water and SoST. There are already delays in procurement – huge impact on winterization preparedness. Delays up until December with partners resorting to international procurement.

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS MEASURES – RISK 4: SUPPLY GAPS		
PREVENTION		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-Sector	Maintain inputs on operational context for joint advocacy to be shared with HCT, informal donor group and other relevant bodies (including in relation to government policies as well as discussions on support packages with the World Bank and IMF). Input into joint UN economic brief (reflecting conditions on the ground).	Ongoing
Food Security & Agriculture; Livelihoods	Explore increased investment in interventions designed to support domestic wheat production and storage as well as engagement on imports of basic commodities. Encouraging increased investment in the agriculture sector.	Ongoing
Livelihoods	● Develop programs tackling entire value chains following market gaps information. ● Promote sustainable renewable energy across the sector's activities (specifically support to businesses with green solutions, MBST and WBL on solar energy). ● Promote a circular economy (to cover the gap in fuel, agriculture, and electricity).	Ongoing with few gaps
PREPAREDNESS		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-Sector	● Maintain early warning and risk monitoring systems such as WFP's VAM Update on Food Prices and Market Trends.	Ongoing
	Joint prioritization including on: ● Prioritized assessments (mapped through LASER, with active regional-level coordination). ● Collaboration in field visits (or covering for others). ● Map out critical life-saving activities (*see end of BCP – Annex 1*). ● Joint workspace, allowing smaller partners to piggyback on larger agencies. Look into possibilities of Joint office hubs - joint infrastructure as in joint crisis center especially at regional levels.	Ongoing with some gaps
	Liaison with car rental firms – some partners are contracting a second company in the area to facilitate the process. Mitigate risks by adapting contracts with the rental car companies. Include new requirements in terms of fuel being covered.	Ongoing
	Joint liaison with fuel providers: in the past, there has been some tentative attempts for fuel storage (but needs many approvals). WFP and UNICEF are looking at joint fuel reserves.	Ongoing but could be expanded
	Electricity: Procuring generators and batteries, resorting to alternative sources (like solar based). Need to consider market capacity and regulatory frameworks and mitigate thefts.	Ongoing – gap is collaboration around solar, to be addressed
	Outreach volunteers and local CBOs could play a bigger role if trained and equipped properly.	GAP

	Prioritize communication among partners: crisis communication task force to ensure coordination, collaboration, and communication to support the Inter-Sector.	GAP
	Procurement: ● Joint approach to map warehouse capacity and distribution capacity of partners. ● Pre-positioning of material where possible (shelter, CRI). ● Joint lists of contractors (including sharing information on extortion –include more information on local contractors. ● Joint assessments - Regular assessments are already happening but very few jointly. ● Joint updated guidance /SOP. ● Put in place timebound Procurement task force or mechanism as situation is changing rapidly. ● Jointly map out and anticipate the best (specific time) to make procurements (oftentimes the time window for this is narrow).	GAP
	Engage in LTAs to ensure better sustainability.	Ongoing
	Develop a Contingency Plan in the event of large-scale communication failures.	GAP – link to HCT preparedness process
	Explore satellite internet as a last resort noting that it is very expensive and might require approvals from government counterparts (such as MoD).	GAP
Shelter	Hire local contractors with better understanding of that specific area and focus on more localized procurement but Capacity building plans might be needed and development of SoPs to avoid risks of extortion. Conduct market assessments.	Ongoing
Health	Support to government hospitals and health centers with fuel (already struggling).	Ongoing
	Capitalize on referrals – capacitate local NGOs (accountability is a challenge).	GAP
	Where possible, deal with suppliers to procure medicines directly from abroad (fresh US dollars).	Ongoing

Risk 5: Pressure on partners due to increasing needs

Overview of Risk: The compounded crisis in Lebanon has impacted access to and quality of services across the country such as health, education, electricity, water, wastewater treatment and solid waste. At the municipal level, many municipalities are now hampered in the delivery of basic services under their mandates due to limited funds and diminishing human resources due to resignations. Requests to LCRP partners for fuel, renewable energy for services, and spare parts, maintenance of machinery, equipment and direct support have progressively increased.

There is an increase in demand at various services points including protests at offices of UN agencies (especially UNHCR) and NGOs. There have been multiple incidences of threats of self-harm/harm to others in desperation for assistance. Pressure is also being put on partners by communities including during distributions, livelihoods activities (especially cash for work) and other community-based activities, sometimes leading to access issues, insecurity, and heightened tensions. Staff mental health is suffering in the face of overwhelming needs that cannot be sufficiently met.

RISK MATRIX – RISK 5: Pressure on partners due to increasing needs		
Current Impact on Operational Environment	**Likelihood/ Impact**	**Future Risk and Impact**
Increased pressure by local or national authorities being put on LCRP partners to provide support to municipalities and/or certain populations. Examples: ● Intervention by local authorities during distributions to demand % to host communities (North, Bekaa & South). ● Blocked distribution to displaced Syrians until Lebanese are served. ● Tried to impose beneficiary lists without assessments e.g., in Cash for Work activities. ● Municipalities asking for operational cost support e.g., fuel, small machinery, maintenance for vehicles (difficult to cover) ● Municipalities attribute inability to provide services such as SWM to generated waste by high numbers of displaced Syrians and Palestinian refugees and threatening to cut services, etc. ● Municipalities asking for immediate-term support to reply to their priorities, like cash (for ex to pay for salaries), solar energy installation etc. without any prior assessments. ● Many municipalities are not able to control the security situation due to shortage of municipal police and access issues to vehicles/fuel.	Very likely/ High	● Potential new quotas / modalities requested by Government at central level, to shift resources within the response. ● Interference in assessments. Imposition of beneficiary lists (compromising humanitarian principles). ● Evictions/expulsions to relieve pressure on municipal services (e.g. SWM in areas with ITSs, wastewater discharge at rivers borders etc.). ● Increased restrictions by the Litani River Authority resulting in evictions and demolitions (in South and Bekaa). ● Distributions creating tensions: leading to substantial increase in distributions being blocked and the increase in information requests by the authorities. ● Increased tensions between municipalities and humanitarian actors. ● Deterioration in quality of services when stretched across larger number of communities / reputation risk for UN and partners. ● Shut down of some municipalities leading to complete chaos in services delivery and security situation control affecting business continuity of partners. ● Elections' context: might see an increase in municipalities taking advantage of distributions/interventions to build political capital. ● Prices rises continuing to increase demand from authorities towards partners to support them with direct interventions without prior assessments/studies (which is a strict Donors requirement before any intervention). ● Donors stretched by competing global priorities, impacting LCRP funding and partners' ability to maintain interventions.
Increased pressure by Private sector: ● Pressure from contractors (change of prices); threats when conducting tenders and resulted delays or suspension of projects.	Likely/Medium	● Contractors decreasing the 'offer period' due to deterioration of the currency – supply chains cannot cope. ● Aggression from contractors, becoming increasingly desperate without work.

		● Tensions between bidders of different nationalities (e.g., Baddawi/ Between Lebanese and Palestinian).
Increase in demands in centers, service points or offices: ● Protests outside offices and in centers. Example: UNHCR offices both in Beirut and the field were organized by displaced communities demanding more assistance and by Lebanese political parties demanding the return of displaced Syrians to Syria). ● Incidents of self-harm and attempted harm of others, particularly members of vulnerable families who are not receiving assistance.	Likely/ High	● Security issues – difficulty for staff to reach office. ● Forced to halt service provision and/or switch to alternative service points. ● Lack of ability to manage hotline self-referrals / complaints. ● Operations unable to continue. ● Staff mental health under acute pressure.
Pressure by communities on partners. ● Incidents of distributions to Lebanese being interrupted by other Lebanese families claiming unfair and demanding equal supply (i.e. not just refugee/host community issue). ● Demand for food and cash (where many of the existing programmes do not have a cash component). ● Excluded beneficiaries reaching desks at ATMs, during distributions etc. – increased individualized requests.	Likely/ Medium	● Wide-scale access issues - tensions within communities. ● Forced to halt distributions in communities. ● Forced to shift modalities for assistance distribution – geographical areas. ● Takeover of vehicles. ● Pressure to shift to dual currency aid provision, which in turn exacerbates inter-communal tensions and pressure on partners to accommodate both communities.
Municipalities and local authorities demanding a higher percentage of Lebanese beneficiaries for regular livelihood assistance provision including support with lower-skilled jobs).	Very likely/ Medium	Municipalities denying access for organizations if their conditions are not met.
Municipalities demanding that partners adhere to the MoIM circular requiring them to engage exclusively with refugees who are registered in the municipality.	Likely/High	● Municipalities denying access for organizations if their conditions are not met. ● Vulnerable target groups stop approaching the activities for fear of detention (those who are not registered).

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS MEASURES – RISK 5: Increased pressure on partners		
PREVENTION		**STATUS / GAPS**
Inter-Sector (with emphasis on regional level)	Engagement with municipalities: ● Give notice ahead of time before distributions. ● Share the needs identified or requests shared by municipalities with IA partners on a regular basis so partners can build on their plans. ● Improve inclusive and collaborative Governance e.g., municipalities' role in assessments of vulnerable Lebanese / ensure they can explain to community members how assistance is targeted; engage local community and local CSOs in decision-making processes projects implementation and monitoring etc.; and encourage participatory/inclusive assessments of priorities for more accountability, transparency, and local ownership. ● Prioritize basic support to municipalities (e.g., starting with printing costs, running cost, to localized emergencies and with focus on basic services priorities that are key drivers of tension like solar energy, SWM, wastewater etc.). ● Prioritize projects sustainability and low implementation cost interventions to reduce financial burdens on municipalities. ● Implement basic services projects coupled with Livelihoods components to cover basic priorities and ensure income generation opportunities and access to cash for the community. ● Joint advocacy for release of municipal funds (national level). ● Link municipalities to each other, UoMs, local CSOs and other resources for collaboration, coordination and sharing experiences and knowledge. ● Encourage Municipal Public Private Partnership (MPPP) specifically for UoMs and large size municipalities to partner with private sector (specifically social enterprises) on long-term interventions e.g., in SWM (circular economy), wastewater, solar energy etc.	Ongoing but more can be done. CS guidance notes to be translation and CS to continue.
	More inclusive planning and targeting, incorporating area-based approaches (in line with Inter-Agency CS guidance note): ● Tailor interventions better to the specification of each area: area-based approach. ● Prioritize clustering approach and encourage cross-municipalities cooperation for economies of scale and efficiency instead of working with municipalities separately e.g., in SWM, energy, water management etc. ● Well defined distribution plan to avoid prolonged period at distribution site: e.g., calling beneficiaries beforehand to minimize time on the ground. ● Coordination across different actors to ensure consistent approach to targeting / engagement with municipalities / distribution planning. ● Increased demand for re-assessment for eligibility as people's circumstances change. ● Combining individualized assistance with community-support assistance: try to help to balance expectations of the community.	See above

	Clear messaging, communication and info dissemination to municipalities and communities prior to distribution: ● Q&A where once project is launched, more information is given about the targeting criteria. ● Fully brief outreach volunteers and community groups. ● Proactive discussions with local authorities, influencers in advance of distributions / projects. ● Circulate guidelines on CS approaches / including a focus on how to explain limitations of assistance programs.	See above (prioritize joint and consistent communication)
	Strengthened methodology and communication around vulnerability assessments: ensure clear/transparent and build community understanding of selection criteria to mitigate perception of unfairness (in particular for BA/FSS and LH)	Ongoing
	Private sector: explore Inter-Agency support to outlining procurement and selection processes to private sector actors (this currently sits at organization level).	GAP
	Referrals: ● Clear communication in relation to assessments / self-referral. ● Improved use of inter-sector referrals e.g., for families asking for assistance during distributions. ● Conduct regular trainings and presentations on available platforms.	Ongoing with room for improvement
	Security: Improve security arrangements at service points and offices to protect staff and other community members from violent incidents. Share lessons learnt in inter-sector, SLT and other fora, including to better support smaller agencies.	Ongoing with room for improvement
	Joint advocacy and messaging to donors to increase funding to ensure assistance to Lebanese families and prioritize support to municipalities viewing their extreme shortage of resources. Support donor delegations' interaction with municipalities to better understand needs/pressure.	Ongoin
Livelihoods	Design inclusive programs (with focus on women and PWD) to address the double burden on women, protect them from accepting precarious jobs. Ensure equal distribution of beneficiaries (50/50) based on gender.	Ongoing
Livelihoods	Advocate for additional funding to cover the increasing needs. Increase accountability towards local authorities and communities.	GAP
PREPAREDNESS		**STATUS / GAPS**
Inter-Sector	Establish mechanism to flag issues related to pressure on partners at regional Inter-Sector level (better understand pressure to undertake immediate action). Build on/expand the pilot initiative at the IS secretariat level (MoIM, MoSA, UNHCR and UNDP) compile and track down requests from authorities, meet on ad hoc basis to discuss requests for referrals among LCRP partners, and liaise with authorities through MoIM and MoSA Coordinators for further follow up and communication. Include NGO forum regional focal points.	GAP?
	Build on joint advocacy and messaging under 'prevention' measures, anticipating worsening conditions.	Ongoing
	Adapt sector-specific preparedness plans considering the deteriorating economic conditions and likely spiraling needs, including support to municipalities (under SoST sector) through equipment & trucks provision that can be used for roads opening, and rivers basins management to prevent flooding in winter etc.	GAP
	Identify ways to enhance capacity / training of the municipality police linking to security reform and development actors (noting lack of payment over years).	GAP

	Provide technical assistance and capacity building to municipalities on operation and management, projects proposals, financial management (to enhance their revenues/expenses), crisis and resources management to be customized upon the local context and needs, as well as, on community engagement and conflict mitigation and mediation. Provide technical assistance and capacity building to municipalities on anti-corruption practices and transparency, as well as on troubleshooting technical issues e.g., establishment of technical offices at UoMs level.	
	Support municipalities with digitalizing their services and data collection which will enhance their performance and coordination among key stakeholders.	
	Media/social media: explore whether advertisement campaigns run by UNHCR on activities can be expanded across partners / published in local media to better explain the nature of assistance and targeting (joint communication).	UN Comms Group
Livelihoods	- Increase awareness of partners on how to be more inclusive with women participation (start with the re-circulation of the guidelines prepared in 2022). - Ensure that municipalities are aware of the criteria and conditions of the project and ensure their buy-in on that. - Build partnerships with local organizations to leverage expertise and resources this can help ensure that programs are targeted to the most vulnerable populations and are more likely to be sustainable over the long term.	

Risk 6: Access Issues and Closing Operational Space

Overview of Risk: Over the past years, and across the different governorates, **access issues have surfaced sporadically**, increasing with the outbreak of COVID-19 when a range of national and local restrictions and challenges have impacted the operational access of the humanitarian community. The deteriorating socio-economic situation has impacted the ability of local authorities to respond to the needs of communities according to their mandate. This in turn is putting pressure on humanitarian organizations to respond to mounting needs across populations. In some instances, the rising pressure is leading to access issues to partners in the field. While over the lifespan of the LCRP, humanitarian access constraints were **mainly linked to bureaucratic impediments, recent issues include measures taken by authorities**, independent measures adopted by municipalities, in some instances, landlords (collective shelters and informal settlements alike), and community members. These **access constraints have different causes** stemming from political instrumentalization, materialization of pressure on partners given the inability of some local authority actors around service provision, and other localized issues that surfaced by landlords pertaining to the management of refugee affairs; all of which have had implications on the operational space for humanitarian partners.

Note: analysis and follow-up on access issues to be coordinated with HCT Access Working Group.

RISK MATRIX – RISK 6: ACCESS ISSUES AND CLOSING OPERATIONAL SPACE		
Current Impact on Operational Environment	**Likelihood/ Impact**	**Future Risk and Impact**
Access issues related to **roadblocks, protests, or intra-communal clashes**. (2019-2023, in various periods).	Likely/ Medium	Compromising safety of partners and their ability to provide services in an effective, safe and dignified manner leading to gaps in support to vulnerable populations. Stopping access leading to further delays and abilities to carry out programmes (applicable across all the below). Areas of concern include: [SOUTH]: Overall effect on movement in some areas (South) would be limited however, lifeline road (mainly Saida) would limit access and movement especially across areas; with more tendency for intra-communal clashes between protestors and non-protestors (as in risk 3). [BML]: Beirut district, BSS, Jal el Dib, Antelias, Jounieh, Zouk Mosbeh, Furn el Chebbek, Choueifet. [BEKAA]: Central Bekaa (Chtoura,Taalabaya, Saadnayel, Qab Elias), Dahr el Baidar, Baalbek. with more tendency for intra-communal clashes between protesters and non-protestors. [NORTH]: Tripoli (Bahsas), Abou Ali Roundabout, Deir Amar (Minieh), Abdeh (Akkar).

Access issues related to circulars issued by the Ministry of Interior requesting partners to **submit a written request** to MoIM prior to any distribution targeting both Lebanese and Syrian beneficiaries which led to delays and suspension of distribution until approval was obtained (2020) / delays in Governor-MoSA liaison for approvals (2022). Similar circulars, memos, and ad hoc requests for written approval coming from individual governors, municipalities, and other local authorities (2022-2023).	Likely/ Medium	Likely to be implemented across regions which may lead to data protection issues and infringe upon the humanitarian principle of impartiality. Inability to plan and effectively implement programming based on delays in receiving permissions. To date, this has mainly affected the Bekaa and the North.

Higher pressure on partners, interference of authorities in humanitarian activities due to a potential **further devaluation of the Lebanese pound and price increases**, leading to conditional or restricted access.		Aid perception bias may lead to access issues or confrontations during field visits and distributions. The rising needs and inability of local authorities to respond to their mandate could also lead to the interference of authorities and communities in the outreach and selection process of beneficiaries, as well as the harassment of organizations and their staff members. Areas of concern include: [BML]: Choueifat, Damour, Bourj Hammoud. [South]: [Bekaa]: Douris, El Qaa, Arsal, Zahle, Qab Elias. [North]: Tripoli, Akkar, Wadi Khaled.

Access issues related to **aid bias perception** from the host community (2017-2021). Example: North (Tripoli/ Abou Samra, Mina) and Akkar, Arsal Conditional access issues (2020-2020). The **inability of partners to respond to all the rising needs**, has, in some instances, led to tensions and/or conditional access to some areas.	Very likely/ High	Access issues due to prioritization and fuel shortages leading to disruption in the supply chain such as food. Conditional access. Linked to risk 3. ● Escalations during distributions may occur. Aid perception bias may lead to access issues including physical confrontations (with partner staff) and less security capacity to ensure rule of law. ● Halting of activities by partners may occur from specific areas as the context becomes more impeded with restrictions and resistance from local authorities as well as communities. ● The inability to obtain sufficient fuel and accessing of commodities may lead to access issues and delayed interventions especially during emergencies. ● The potential dollarization of assistance may also lead to frontline staff risks of physical confrontations and perceptions of personal security being compromised leading to some agencies withdrawing from high-risk areas and less staff willing to be engaged. ● An increased number of requests in vulnerable urban areas, more Lebanese have been requesting assistance and questioning the selection criteria but has not led to a trend in interventions by local authorities, but a risk of escalation remains available. ● Increased vigilance in distribution mechanisms has been used before in Palestinian camps due to fears of escalations and hence this is something we can see being done more in other distribution schemes.

Access restrictions related to **requests for detailed information** from the Municipality/non-state actors/LAF/LAFi/ISF. (2017-2023). *Examples include Bisarieh, Saida District where partners were requested to provide beneficiary lists.* *North: in some areas in Batroun district, sessions conducted by partners were suspended by police officers who were requesting information on the beneficiaries.*	Likely/ Medium	In terms of localization, access to some areas will be looked at in a different way (tapping to local actors to access some areas which will be easier in the future). Areas of concern: [BML]: Beirut Southern Suburbs [SOUTH]: border villages in the South (Marjeyoun and Bint Jbeil). [Bekaa]: North Bekaa.

Access issues related to **increased violence or crimes** such as theft, carjacking and random shooting.	Likely/ Medium	Linked to risk 3 - areas of concern: [BML]: Zaaytrieh, Roueiset, Hay el Sellom, Bourj El Barajneh, Ghobeiry, Sabra, Chatila, Ouzai, Sahraa el Choueifet. [BEKAA]: Riyak, Taanayel, Makneh. [NORTH]: Tripoli (old souks).

Access issues related to bureaucratic impediments.	Likely/ High	The issue of the difficulties in the renewal of documentations; especially with the risk of a caretaker government which is also leading to increased risks of exploitation and unequal access to legal rights when issues escalate. The overall lack of preparedness of some institutions and the ability to provide services will reflect on programming and access to beneficiaries.

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS MEASURES – RISK 6: ACCESS ISSUES		
PREVENTION		**STATUS / GAPS**
Inter-Sector national – with NGO Forums and HCT Access Working Group	Advocacy towards the GoL to ensure access clearance requests are in line with humanitarian principles.	Ongoing
	Preparation of a guide on required administrative procedures and requirements for INGO/LNGOs operations in Lebanon, based on engagement with GoL to ensure streamlined procedures reduce the burden on both authorities and partners.	GAP
Inter- Sector national & regional	ATF engagement at national level (ensure feedback loop between regional IS and ATF).	Ongoing
Inter-Sector regional	Advocacy on the regional level to ensure that the practices at the regional level are in line with the guidelines and procedures put in place at the central level.	Ongoing
	Map out and engage with access influencers. SOUTH: Local authorities are access influencers in the region in general. In some areas, where the access issues are due to local authority measures (and the parties associated with) resulting in denied access which could not always be overcome with ministry or governor's office intervention (BSS). CBOs and community leaders play a role in facilitating access in some instances too (whilst ensuring heir lack of political affiliation and the community acceptability) e.g., churches or mosques that helped in communication or distributions and outreach of ppl in need for assistance. In Palestinian camps, popular committees and UNRWA facilitate access. BML: local authorities are access influencers in the region generally. In some areas, where the access issues are due to local authority measures (and the parties associated with) resulting in denied access which could not always be overcome with ministry or governor's office intervention (BSS). CBOs and community leaders play a role in facilitating access in some instances too (whilst ensuring heir lack of political affiliation and the community acceptability.	Ongoing with gaps
	Reporting and analysis of access challenges.	Ongoing
	TTF engagement and mechanism for flagging access related issues at regional level.	Ongoing
Sectors	Mapping of and coordination with active local NGOs and CSOs beyond LCRP.	Ongoing
	More inclusive planning and targeting (link to CS guidance note) – see risk 5.	Ongoing
Livelihoods	- Working through local partners with available and accessible spaces at the community. - Establishing a strong communication channel with the local authorities and the IS (including MoSA and MoIM). - Adhering to legal requirements (signed agreements, information sharing with MoSA/obtaining approvals to operate).	Ongoing with few gaps

Livelihoods (preparedness measure)	● Shifting to online modalities only when in-person activities are challenging and risky to continue with. ● Working with regional coordinators (to reach out to LHDF) to identify organizations working in the same area to collect lessons learnt and mapping).	GAP

Risk 7: Operational risks linked to transfer values and shift in currencies

Overview of Risk: In 2021, the ability to provide the full 'value' of assistance to beneficiaries, utilizing foreign currency funding from donors, was threatened by the depreciation of the Lebanese Pound, with many partners only able to negotiate a preferential exchange rate well below the 'parallel' market rate with their financial service providers with consequent erosion of the value of assistance and operations. New arrangements to access an exchange rate close to the market rate have reduced this risk, however renewed currency fluctuations continue to create concerns.

In mid-2023, the vast majority of cash actors under the LCRP have now shifted to providing assistance in 'dual currency' (ie. USD or LBP) in order to mitigate the above challenges. However, the adequacy of agreed transfer values for cash assistance have reduced given the ongoing currency depreciation, with partners frequently raising concerns that assistance is no longer sufficient to meet basic needs as prices spiral. Some partners have increased mixed modality approaches (e.g., including combining in-kind food assistance).

The current situation risks leading to a lack of harmonization/coordination of modalities and transfer values which may exacerbate a sense of unfairness between those who receive assistance and those who do not as well as the beneficiaries of different organizations.

Meanwhile, shortages of subsidized goods affect vulnerable people across populations, with specific incidences of refugees being denied access (including curfews preventing movement before a certain time, or denial of access to goods without Lebanese ID). Increasing prices in shops highlight the risk to beneficiaries of any increasing pressure on humanitarian actors to shift from hard currency cash distributions to vouchers/cards.

RISK MATRIX – RISK 7: OPERATIONAL RISKS LINKED TO TRANSFER VALUES AND SHIFT IN CURRENCIES		
Current Impact on Operational Environment	**Likelihood/ Impact**	**Future Risk and Impact**
• **Beneficiaries receive assistance at an insufficient transfer value** to meet basic needs (below the SMEB) that is not re-evaluated amid spiraling prices (e.g., import custom fees fluctuation).	Very likely/ High	• Assistance is no longer meaningful, leading to increasing significant unmet needs across populations – tension – decreasing protection space. Risks of evictions. • Increasing pressure on operating agencies and heightening impact of negative coping mechanisms, requiring response across sectors. • Concerns relating to the stability of the entire banking system in the future, which may impact operational actors' and beneficiaries' access to cash.
Reduced access to goods for beneficiaries: some shops increasing prices for refugees and/or limiting or refusing to sell subsidized goods to refugees.	Likely/ Medium	• In case of future increase of support provided in USD to refugees, beneficiaries not provided access to certain goods at a regular market price.
	Very likely/ High	• Vulnerable populations' purchasing power is substantially reduced by lack of access to subsidized/cheaper goods leading to a worsening of humanitarian needs.
Livelihoods cash for work insufficient.	Likely/ Medium	• Beneficiaries not finding value in paid amount thus refraining from participating in the activities.

PREVENTION & PREPAREDNESS MEASURES – RISK 7: Operational risks linked to transfer values and shift in currencies		
PREVENTION		**STATUS/GAPS**
Inter-Sector – with *Cash Working Group*	Advocacy for appropriate transfer value to ensure 'meaningful assistance' as well as increased reach of assistance to more people.	Ongoing
	Guidelines for harmonization of programs across sectors including on transfer values and currencies (through engagement with the Strategic Cash Taskforce and Cash Working Group).	Ongoing
	Negotiation with financial service providers: including to maintain exchange rate close to the market rate. Collective advocacy with banks under the leadership of the RC/HC to ensure access to cash to improve direct ability to meet needs.	Ongoing
	● Communications related to 'dual currency' (when deemed useful and not likely to exacerbate push-back): explanation by operational actors and donors how people benefit across populations, specifically programs targeting Lebanese. ● Increase linkages and support to existing targeting systems related to Lebanese. ● Advocacy to donors: to reach enough people in need.	Ongoing
Livelihoods/Basic Assistance/Food Security & Agriculture	● Bank transfer to the beneficiary themselves directly, not via third party (ensure beneficiary receives full value of assistance) *Livelihoods update 2023: preference to use third party service providers.* ● Increase the number of ATM machines that can be used across the country / prevent overcrowding. ● Insurance policy on loans to MSMEs to cover part of the costs (beneficiaries not able to pay back loans).	Ongoing
Shelter/WASH	Scale up cash-for-rent programs (conditional assistance based on checks with the landlords that rent is received), in anticipation of restrictions on unconditional cash distributions Cash-for-WASH program (noting large cost involved in delivering WASH – ITS intervention).	GAP due to lack of funding
PREPAREDNESS		**STATUS/GAPS**
Basic Assistance/ Food Security & Agriculture	Explore increasing open loop modality for cards (LOUISE) so beneficiaries can use in any pharmacy, gas station etc. with a POS machine. If such modality is adopted, awareness raising should be done to inform beneficiaries of the new options, including to Lebanese having access to similar options, and its positive impact on the economy/service providers.	GAP
LH/FSS/Water /Social Stability	Cash for work: communication with beneficiaries to clarify that partners are not benefiting from USD and handing out LBP. Livelihoods updates 2023: clear messaging with and to stakeholders on currencies used (value and currency).	GAP

INTER-SECTOR PREPAREDNESS MEASURES ACROSS RISKS		STATUS / GAPS
Regional Inter-Sector	Strengthen partnerships with relevant Government institutions and other actors (LRC, DRM, Governor's Office, security actors). Ensuring well-functioning coordination structures and arrangements are in place between the GoL and partners, particularly at the field level. Regular meetings are held at field-level coordination meetings which includes all key counterparts (IA, IS, RRTs, Technical Cells).	Ongoing
	Continue to use existing Rapid Response Teams to assist communities and families in need.	Ongoing
	Ensure that enough enumerators are trained on the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) through routine refresher trainings.	Ongoing
	Maintain regularly updated lists of Agencies and contacts.	Ongoing
	Communication trees to be updated and shared, refresher training sessions, review of good practices for RNA to be carried out regularly.	Ongoing
	Maintain IM capacity per sector as well as for Inter-Agency/Inter Sector.	Ongoing
	Referral mechanisms/pathways are in place. The Inter-Agency Minimum Standards on Referrals Guidance, which sets clear expectations on the roles and responsibilities of referring and receiving agencies in that process. Inter-Agency referral monitoring has expanded to include all sectors to increase accountability. LCRP partners continue to have access to training on referrals, available here:	Gap: Not all partners are familiar with the IA referral tools
	Update supplies in contingency stock held by agencies and partners.	Ongoing
	Mapping of partners with distribution and warehouse sites.	Ongoing
	Mapping of existing partners with ability to provide assistance i.e., geosplits.	Ongoing
	Ensure service mapping (5Ws) is up to date - an Inter-sector Service Mapping Tool is updated on a regular basis to improve partners' access to updated and accurate information on available services and assistance across all sectors.	Ongoing

Annex 1: Critical & life-saving activities that needs to be maintained in 2023.

II.   Emergency Response Coordination under the LCRP

In Lebanon, the primary responsibility for coordinating and providing humanitarian assistance rests with the national authorities under the lead of the Ministry of Social Affairs, with which aid agencies will align their response.

The LCRP ensures that the coordination structures align with both the stabilization and humanitarian dimensions of the response under the overall leadership of the Minister of Social Affairs and the UN Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator. The LCRP response is coordinated through the Inter-Sector Response Management, led by MoSA. In accordance with their specialized mandates, UNHCR and UNDP act as co-chairs. The Inter-Sector Response Management includes LCRP sector leads from line ministries as well as sector coordinators and key response partners. This mechanism reports to the LCRP Steering Committee.

In the event of an additional emergency, the GoL's capacity to coordinate and respond to humanitarian needs is centralized through the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Unit. A national Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) strategy with systems and protocols is also in place, supported by UNDP. While mainly designed for natural disasters, DRM mechanisms can be triggered in the event of other emergencies. In addition, the DRM Unit has fully incorporated the RNA as an initial assessment tool to be used both for a Syrian caseload and for a Lebanese caseload.

In addition, the Prime Minister, supported by the DRM Unit, chairs a permanent inter-ministerial Higher Relief Committee, which is responsible for coordinating responses to emergencies in Lebanon. Locally, institutions such as mouhafazats (governorates), municipalities, unions of municipalities, and regional administrative directorates provide coordination on the ground. Governors are tasked with taking adequate and proportional measures to address emerging issues, including coordination with heads of municipalities and unions of municipalities. As emergencies arise, Governorates DRM operation rooms are established. To ensure linkages to the National DRM, a liaison officer is present at the Governate and can attend/present at the Inter-Agency upon request. In Governorates where the DRM Committee is active and functioning, UNDP and UNHCR participate in the Committees. In other areas, UNDP maintains a link with the Governor/DRM Committee as UNDP maintains a long-term relationship due to its support to the creation of DRM (prior to Covid-19). In terms of information flow, UNDP and UNHCR feed information back and forth to relevant bodies.

Emergency response for large-scale emergencies, preparedness measures and contingency planning are coordinated with OCHA and the HCT, working *across response frameworks.*

1. Needs Assessments

The RNA will continue to be the tool to provide an overview of the immediate needs, at the community/site level, of a given population because of newly arrived refugees; or the secondary displacement of refugees within Lebanon (Syrian or Palestinian). It is a stand-alone assessment tool applicable to a wide range of situations. Teams from different agencies are regularly trained, and the questionnaire is uploaded on mobile collection devices to ensure preparedness. Tools and methodology have also been endorsed by field offices, and the DRM Unit of the Prime Minister's Office has incorporated the RNA as an initial assessment tool in its own disaster preparedness planning.

2. Information Management

Information Management focal points have been identified within all sectors. An Information Management Working Group is functional at the central level and provides regular support to these focal points, including on existing information management tools and services. Information management capacity is present in the field in UNHCR field offices and partner agencies. The RNA initiative holds a roster of Information Managers at both Beirut and field levels able to undertake assessments and other information-gathering activities. The Inter-Agency Information Management Unit in Beirut holds base maps; location lists; refugee population figures; and other datasets that facilitate assessment, planning, operations, and reporting.

3. Response Monitoring and Reporting

Current response monitoring is conducted through the Activity Info platform. Overall response monitoring is under the responsibility of the Inter-Sector with support of sector leads. Sector monitoring will be under the responsibility of the sector leads in collaboration with all partners.

Findings are reflected in automated analysis as well as information products which consolidate analysis on response results and progress, situation trends, challenges, etc. They can be helpful tools to guide the work and priorities of partners supporting the LCRP. Specific products include quarterly LCRP Inter-Agency Situation Update, Statistical and sector dashboards (monthly, quarterly, and annual), quarterly funding updates, LCRP annual report as well as quarterly In Focus Report on specific thematic cross-cutting topics.

4. Remote Modalities for Provision of Services and Assistance

Remote modalities have been used in Lebanon to ensure the delivery of protection services in the context of nationwide protests that broke out in 2019 with the erection of roadblocks across the country, and then in response to movement lockdowns. In 2021 and 2022, the inter-sector (following initial recommendations by the Protection Sector) took stock of the impact of remote modalities on the sectors' ability to meet needs, identified lessons learnt and set collective recommendations to adapt practice for the future.