

## Terms of Reference – Livelihoods Sector

### 1. Background and Context

Five years into the Lebanese economic and financial crisis, and thirteen years into the Syria crisis, Lebanon continues to be stormed by the most devastating multi-layered predicament in its modern history. The escalation of hostilities started in October 2023 and further escalated to a full-scale war in September 2024, intensifying the pressure on the economy, services and jobs<sup>1</sup>. Displacement due to the escalation of hostilities has exacerbated the already existent instability, with women and girls making up 51 per cent of the internally displaced population<sup>2</sup>. While most of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) are returning to their homes, many are still at collective shelters or living in rented homes due to the destruction of their villages waiting for solutions.

Key sectors such as the production of goods, tools, and equipment have been severely impacted, leading to a decrease in the overall production output of basic goods, which along with the unemployment of full-time, part-time, and daily workers would severely decrease the supply level and potentially increase prices, affecting individuals and households across all gender identities. The ceasefire agreement in late 2024 brought some space to lead the socio-economic environment towards normalcy, however, the fragility of the agreement and the unpredictability of its prospects further compound the complexity of the situation, with gendered implications for access to resources and opportunities. This is added to the already existing tensions and competition on resources between Lebanese communities and displaced Syrians or Palestinian refugees, all of whom are impacted in different ways based on their gender and social roles. The optimism around peace efforts encourages the LRP response sectors that the cessation of hostilities will shift the focus of response towards return and recovery, where the needs for stabilization and recovery are immense, and the livelihood sector will play the key bridging role in this transition. The response is aligned with the priorities of new incumbent political government in Lebanon which uttered reforms and economic recovery on top of their priority list<sup>3</sup>.

### 2. Response Strategy

Livelihoods is one of the 10 response sectors identified within the LRP 2025 and remains one of the critical sectors that would link the transition between humanitarian and longer-term development initiatives, directly contributing to the advancement of the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. The livelihood sector is co-led by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), Ministry of Labor (MoL), Ministry of Economy and Trade (MoET) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) at the national level and supported by more than 70 partners, drawn from UN Agencies, national and international organizations.

The sectors' Theory of Change encompasses two interlinked components that contribute to medium and longer-term recovery and stabilization and alleviates the tensions resulting from competition over livelihoods opportunities and establishment of businesses.

- If businesses in key economic sectors are supported, then local economic development will be stimulated, leading to job retention and creation. Cooperation with the private sector and governmental institutions will promote an enabling environment for income-generating activities, reducing the gender gap and contributing to better working conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> [Kindly refer to the UNDP/ARK data on this](#)

<sup>2</sup> UN Women, Gender and Displacement in Lebanon at the Juncture of the Ceasefire, December 2024

<sup>3</sup> [Lebanon's cabinet prioritises reform and economic recovery in first meeting](#)

- If the capacities of youth, women and over 50-year-old people are built and strengthened through training directly linked to job market opportunities in key economic sectors, then they will be able to support themselves through access to employment.

The livelihoods sector strategy is part of the LRP 2025 document where the sector has anchored its response on 3 outcomes and 7 outputs, offering space for numerous interlinked activities contributing to the logical framework of the sector. The outputs are listed herewith to define the scope of interventions within the domain of the livelihood sector.

- Medium, Small and Micro enterprises (MSMEs), including women-led MSMEs and start-ups, are strengthened to recover from the impact of the crises and enable economic growth and decent job creation in the long term.
- Competitive integrated value chains strengthened and upgraded.
- Vulnerable men and women in their diversity have access to Cash for Work in productive public infrastructure and environmental assets that have a local economic and stabilization impact.
- Vulnerable men and women in their diversity have strengthened with appropriate technical skills to match the needs of the job market.
- Career guidance, awareness-raising sessions, job matching, financial literacy, and work-based learning opportunities offered to job seekers.
- The Government of Lebanon (GoL) supported the approval of decrees/regulation/awareness-raising material on decent work conditions.
- Inclusive and Gender-Responsive policies, strategies and plans supporting job creation, MSMEs and livelihoods developed to improve the business eco-system.

### **3. Structure of the Livelihood Sector**

#### ***National Livelihood Sector***

- It shall be co-led jointly by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), Ministry of Labour (MoL), Ministry of Economy and Trade (MoET), and UNDP as per their designated mandates and specific accountability in the sector's response.
- The National Livelihoods Sector/Working Group is open to all humanitarian, development and stabilization operational partners intervening in the livelihoods sector. The membership extends to include Government, UN/inter-governmental organizations, or non-governmental organizations (both national and international) that are abiding by established humanitarian principles in the delivery of their humanitarian and stabilization interventions.
- The National Livelihood Sector/Working Group encourages Women Led Organization (WLOs), Women Right organizations (WROs) and Organizations for Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) to have an active and participatory role in the working group, ensuring an inclusive and gender-responsive approach to livelihoods.
- The membership will remain open for non-appealing partners of LRP to understand the collective response within the sector.
- The National Livelihoods Working Group functions as an information-sharing, coordination and networking forum. The forum would remain strategic in character but allowing Field Updates provided by the Field Coordinators/sector partners, based on high-level priorities/discussions as well as on innovative and relevant programs.

#### ***Sub-National Livelihood Sector***

- The Livelihoods sector has field working groups established in the North (T5 and Akkar),

Bekaa, South, and Beirut/Mount Lebanon regions.

- The sub-national forums should have their own detailed gender-responsive Terms of Reference and replicate the same structure of coordination as agreed on the national level.
- The scope of work for the sub-regional forums will largely emphasize the operational aspects of response, minimizing elements of duplication and promoting complementarity among the sector partners. The discussion should enrich the needs/gaps analysis of the sector, challenges and lessons learnt from the field and capitalize best practices among sector partners.
- In addition to the relevant Agencies and International and local organizations working in the livelihood sector, Field WG meetings must be attended by government representatives as well as the National Coordinator (UNDP).
- The sub-regional forums agreed to develop their own terms of reference, much in line with the working mechanisms with national sector and adopt fit for purpose changes within their sphere of work.
- The sub-national coordinators must share sub-regional updates with sector members at the National Livelihood sector monthly meetings. The minutes of meetings should be shared with all members of the National working group, as part of information sharing among partners and regions.

#### **Core Group**

- The National Livelihoods Core Group is entrusted for more in-depth review and guidance on matters of concern to the Livelihood Sector, and to enhance strategic direction, planning and inclusive decision- making.
- The Livelihoods Sector Core Group is led by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and comprises the Ministry of Labor (MoL), Ministry of Economy and Trade (MoET), UNDP and UNHCR (permanent membership) along with 4 UN agencies, 4 INGOS and 4 Local NGOs which are selected on a yearly basis.
- The CG members are selected through a participatory and transparent process, and by wide agreement of the WG partners. Usually in the first quarter of the year, the national coordinator asks WG members to express their interest in being part of the CG. Following an expression of interest, a survey is launched to elect new CG members. Core Group organizations should nominate their primary and secondary focal points and take regular part in the deliberations of Core Group meetings.
- WLOs/WROs are to be encouraged to submit an expression of interest to sit in the Core Group, which should promote application and specifically consider membership from WLOs/WROs/OPDs.

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

- **Government Counterparts**
  - Provide oversight for the working of the livelihood sector in Lebanon through regular participation in the deliberation of the livelihood sector.
  - Providing specific guidance for aligning the response of livelihood sector partners with government strategies and policies.
  - Facilitate bridging role and interfacing between livelihood sector partners and government line ministries.
  - Raise awareness on key policies or national action plans reforms aligned with the

mandate of the livelihood sector to enhance multi-stakeholders' contributions.

- **Sector Coordinator**
  - Organize and facilitate sector meetings and lead strategic discussions.
  - Represent the sector in inter-sector coordination forums and represent the livelihood sector in other sectors relevant to the work of Livelihoods.
  - Organize bilateral meetings with different stakeholders at sectoral and inter-sectoral levels.
  - Ensure alignment with national strategies and oversee reporting.
  - Maintain flow of communication among sector partners at both national and sub-regional level, and core group of the sector.
  - Promote a gender-responsive and inclusive approach in leading the Livelihood sector through gender-responsive guidance and recommendations.
  - Lead for the mainstreaming of gender in the sector's interventions in close collaboration with the Gender Focal Point and UN Women.
- **Sector Co-Coordinator**
  - The organization elected in the co-coordination role has the privilege to nominate Co-Coordinator for the sector, aligned with the mandate of the livelihoods sector and possessing core competencies related to coordination, technical support and operational acumen in the context.
  - Provide technical and operational support to the coordinator, and dedicated availability for the deliberations of the livelihood sector.
  - The process of electing NGO in co-coordination role is already elaborated in its terms of reference, where the expression of interest (EOI) is being launched among all sector members, and shortlisted organizations are presented to a voting process.
- **Sector Partners (Members)**
  - Designate focal points for the Livelihood Sector who actively participate in the communication, contribute to strategy development and participate actively in meetings.
  - Proactively share best practices, lessons learnt, guidance notes and findings from assessments, monitoring and evaluations.
  - Disseminate the information, guidance, decisions and tools developed in the Livelihoods Sector and harmonize these guiding principles within their organizations.
  - Present new livelihood projects during the sector monthly meetings for better synergies amongst sector members.
  - Adhere to agreed-upon standards and principles, in addition to livelihood guidelines and SOPs.
  - Report on activities as advised by the sector coordination team.
- **Observers:** Non-voting participants who contribute expertise or insight within the livelihoods sector.

## 5. Coordination Mechanism

- **Meeting Structure:**

- The National Livelihoods WG will aim at organizing a sector meeting on a monthly basis, preferably on 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month.
- Ad hoc meetings on urgent matters where the endorsement of partners is required could be organized as and when required.
- The sector meetings will be organized online, owing to maximizing participation.
- Partners will be encouraged to suggest agenda items for the monthly meeting, dedicating time slots for important thematic areas. Items on the agenda - besides a fixed space dedicated to standing agenda items – should provide space for lessons learnt, capacity building on thematic areas and cross-cutting issues, and briefing from experts from the private sector on important dimensions of the sector working group.
- **Communication Channels:**
  - Communication with sector partners is mostly through a formal email distribution list. Partners are requested to update the contact details for their focal points on yearly basis, and update change due to staff turnover and/or the focal points assigned with different responsibilities
  - The livelihood Sector is also maintaining an informal WhatsApp group to stay in touch with partners and reach out for important announcements.
- **Reporting Lines:**
  - The reporting of activities is required on 'Activity Info' portal on monthly basis, the standard portal of reporting in Lebanon and may provide additional information bilaterally for clear analysis and reporting to the inter-sector core group
  - Sector members are encouraged to develop M&E Framework that disaggregates data for gender, age and disability (SADD) for each relevant indicator.
  - The information management support unit of the Livelihood Sector is sending out monthly reminders to reporting partners.
  - The information received is cascaded in quarterly reports while the summary of the sector feeds into inter-sector dashboards for outreach and level of coverage and mainstreaming of lesson learnt.
  - Case studies and success stories (qualitative) are usually presented in the sector meetings at both national and sub-regional levels.

## 6. Revision of ToR

- **Frequency of Review:** the ToRs of the sector and core group are reviewed on an annual basis for any pertinent change. However, the same might be adopted if there is no significant change required in the existing terms of reference.
- **Amendment Process:** The process of revising ToRs is initiated among the core group members, which after revision need to be endorsed by the sector members at large.