



## Lebanon Protection Sector

### Protection Working Group Terms of Reference (TORs)

2026

#### Background

In 2025, Lebanon's Protection Sector confronted complex challenges following the fall of the Syrian government in late 2024 and the cessation of hostilities in Lebanon. These shifts led to significant movements of displaced Syrians and IDPs, increased returns to Syria, and a growing influx of minority groups to North Lebanon and Baalbek-El Hermel. Despite these developments, protection needs remain critical, especially in insecure border regions and among groups facing discrimination, social exclusion, or barriers to services—including vulnerable Lebanese, displaced populations, Palestinian refugees, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, older persons, and female-headed households. General Protection trends are monitored through five core indicators that define the protection situation across all population groups, namely: lack of legal residency; perception of safety when walking alone; access to services; exploitation; and security incidents in affected areas, such as airstrikes and shelling.

The protection environment is further strained by Lebanon's enduring socio-economic crisis, institutional fragility, and regional instability. Deepening poverty, unemployment, and limited access to essential services have heightened exposure to trafficking, exploitative labour, homelessness, and violence. Compounded by new displacement, damaged infrastructure, and constrained humanitarian space, the most affected groups—particularly women, adolescent girls, children, and older persons—face increased risks of gender-based violence, disrupted education, and psychosocial distress. Mental and physical health needs continue to rise among both displaced and host communities, requiring integrated protection approaches that combine specialized services, community-based mechanisms, and sustained outreach.

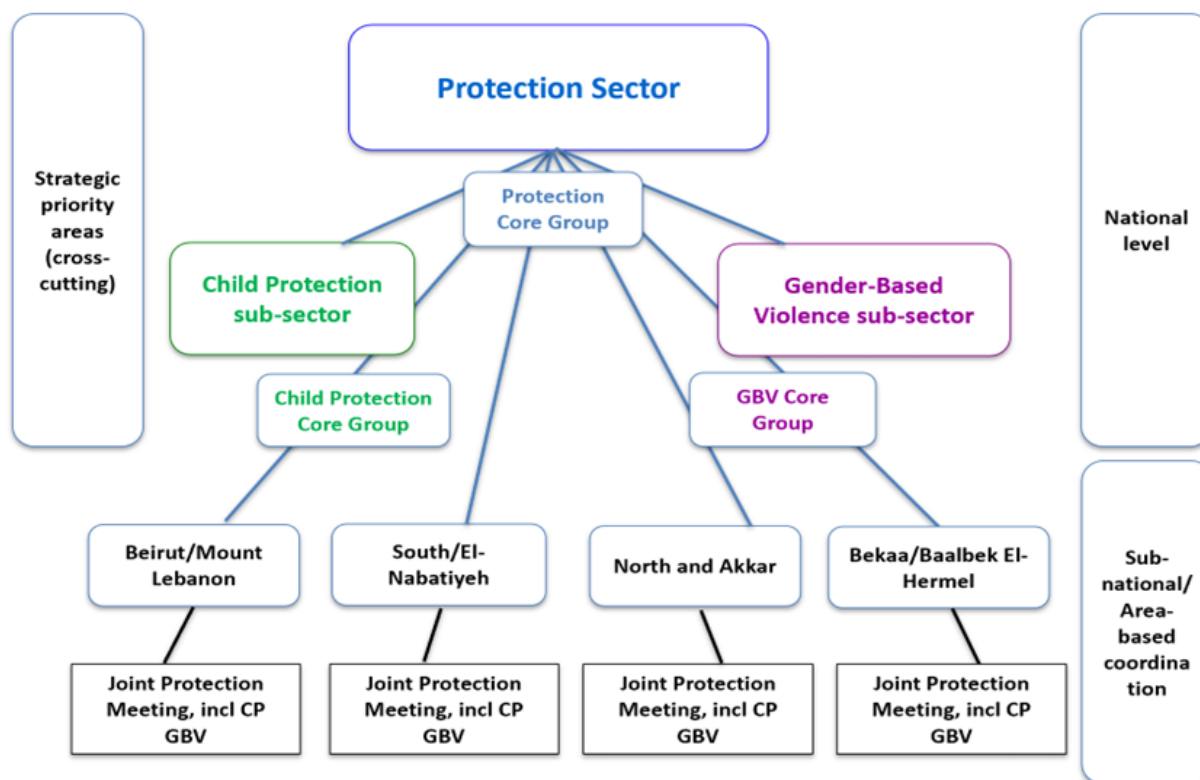
In response, Protection Sector partners, under the [Protection Sector Strategy](#) under the Lebanon Response Plan, coordinate immediate life-saving interventions and support institutional reforms for long-term resilience. Efforts focus on improving access to national protection systems and essential services, strengthening legal frameworks, and promoting inclusive service delivery for all at-risk groups. The sector also maintains a strong presence to safeguard those unable to return, advocates for legal status regularization and the principle of non-refoulement, and prioritizes survivor-centered, rights-based protection.

#### Leadership and Structure

- **The PWG is led by MOSA, coordinated by UNHCR** and co-coordinated by an elected NGO on a rotating basis, see link to NGO co-coordinator TORs



- The PWG is the overarching coordination structure of the Protection Sector ensuring coherence in strategic planning, response, and advocacy, including through the Lebanon Response Plan
- In line with the [Protection Sector note on Streamlining](#), a decision was endorsed to maintain the sub-sector Working groups focused on Child Protection (CP WG) and Prevention and Response to GBV (GBV WG) at the national level only. At the field level, the sub-sector of the Protection Sector was merged into one Protection Meeting addressing the operational Protection, Child Protection and GBV risks and needs at the field level. The sub-national coordination platforms (North, South, Bekaa and Beirut/Mount Lebanon) exist as operation-oriented forums to implement the strategies set by the national PWG and its sub-sectors and to coordinate service provision close to the point of delivery. The sub-national, joint Protection Meetings report to the national PWG and the national CP and GBV WGs as relevant.
- The Protection WG is supported by the **Core Group (CG)** elected by the PWG through a transparent process to provide advice to the PWG coordinators on issues relating to strategic planning, development of technical notes, gaps and needs analysis, confirming sectoral priorities, and the overall collaborative and inclusive functioning and performance of the Protection Sector. The CG includes the coordinators of the PWG and elected representatives of International INGOs) and national NGOs (NNGOs), including disability-focused and/or refugee-led organizations.
- In addition, the **PWG operates time-bound Task Forces (TFs)**, some of which are inclusive of child protection and GBV partners and coordinators. The task forces are established to develop specific guidance and develop targeted work plans on specific subjects (see below organigram).



## Goals and Objectives

The **Protection Working Group** leads the coordination and provides overall strategic and technical guidance to protection actors at country level. Its **main goal** is to ensure that all affected people, including Syrians, vulnerable Lebanese, other refugees and migrants are effectively protected and able to exercise their rights without discrimination through a coordinated, collaborative and inclusive approach.

The **main objectives** of the PWG are to ensure coordinated, effective, coherent and predictable interventions amongst its different stakeholders, and support Government' efforts and strengthen national systems to respond to the protection risks and needs of affected populations; to promote their meaningful participation and engagement in issues that concern their lives; and to work towards solutions.

## Guiding principles

The coordinators and members of the PWG are committed to uphold and [promote core protection policies and standards](#):<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Professional Standards for protection Work](#), 2018; [Minimum standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#), 2019; [Inter-Agency Minimum Standards for Gender-Based Violence in Emergency programming](#), 2019; [Policy on Age, Gender, Diversity](#), UNHCR 2018; [IASC Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action](#), 2019; [Protection Mainstreaming Toolkit](#), GPC 2022.



- [State responsibility](#) and system strengthening
- [Right-based Approach](#) and putting affected people at the centre
- Do-no-harm, Humanity, impartiality, and non-discrimination
- Age, Gender and Diversity, including focus on persons with disabilities
- [Accountability to Affected Population](#) & Meaningful dialogue and participation
- [Zero Tolerance to Sexual Abuse and exploitation](#)
- Personal Data Protection
- Integrity
- [Principles of Partnership](#)
- International Refugee Law outlined in the [1951 Convention and its 1967 Protocol as well as in regional refugee instruments](#).
- [Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement](#)

## Accountability

The PWG through its coordinators is accountable for:

- Ensuring timely, coordinated, efficient and inclusive action to prevent and mitigate protection risks, and meet the protection needs of affected persons.
- Providing support to the Lebanese Government, strengthening national systems and capacities, and promoting, whenever possible, the inclusion of refugees into national systems.
- Promoting the participation of local actors in the coordination of the response and supporting community-led initiatives that builds on the capacity of the communities and favour their meaningful participation in the protection response.
- Ensuring that members of the NPWG uphold principles and standards in their action.
- Applying systematically an age, gender and diversity lenses in assessment, program design and implementation, including in data collection and protection monitoring and analysis.
- Ensuring that relevant and robust coordination and information-sharing mechanisms are in place among WG members, supported by Information Management mechanisms and based on data protection considerations.
- Ensuring that all NPWG members are accountable to affected populations including through two-way communication and feedback mechanisms that are appropriate, consultative, and accessible.
- Contributing to enhance the technical capacity of protection actors involved in the response.
- Advocating for protection principles and for adequate funding for protection activities and initiatives

## Core functions of the Protection Working Group



Under the responsibility and accountability of the national-level Protection Working Group Coordinators, the Protection WG will perform the below functions to achieve the set objectives:

### **Strategic leadership**

- Lead the process to define a sector strategy (see [2026 Protection Sector Strategy](#)) to identify and respond to protection needs of the affected population.
- Lead the development of an inclusive protection response plan for the LRP based on the protection sector and sub-sectors' strategies, with strategic objectives and result indicators.
- Work together with the Child Protection, GBV sub-sectors to ensure that plans and interventions are fully integrated in the overall planning and response of the protection sector.
- Set and promote minimum standards, guidelines and good practices to inform the protection response in Lebanon, including through the four sub-national protection WGs.
- Include protection interventions and mainstream protection into preparedness efforts, integrated programs, and contingency plans

### **Sectoral Analysis**

- Provide strategic guidance and advice on analysis of protection risk, capacities and needs, to inform the protection strategy, response and evidence-based advocacy.
- Conducting desks reviews on existing sources of information on the protection situation.
- Analysing national legislation, procedures, and systems and identify barriers to access for refugees and other affected population groups such as PRS/PRL and migrants as well as other systemically marginalized groups.
- Mapping existing protection services and their capacity through available tools.
- Integrating protection elements/ issues into interagency and multisectoral needs assessments, including by promoting age, gender and diversity mainstreaming, including in data collection.
- Conducting protection-specific assessments, when required, to inform or adjust the sector response.
- Ensuring coherence in research and assessments initiatives amongst PWG members and other relevant stakeholders, including academic institutions.
- Determining information gaps and the need for further assessment and analysis.
- Review and advise inter-sectoral and protection specific assessments to ensure ethical data collection standards and cohesiveness of protection information.

### **Overall Coordination of the sector protection response**

- Coordinate the response in accordance with the Protection Sector Strategy, in cooperation with state institutions.
- Develop, or adapt, and disseminate relevant protection guidelines and standards to ensure quality protection delivery.
- Ensure coherence between all actors when working on needs/gaps analysis and foster aligned planning and reporting in line with the sector strategy in the LRP.



- Monitor the response and progress towards the set objectives.
- Collaborate with State institutions and other actors to facilitate the access of refugees and other persons in need of international protection and protection services.

### **Technical Support and capacity development**

- Identify capacity development needs of the partners involved in the protection response
- Provide technical guidance on response and service delivery to WG members, including sub-national protection WGs through capacity development initiatives (e.g. on needs assessments, project design, proposal development, outreach and advocacy);
- Support in developing/adapting standard operating procedures and referral pathways in coordination with the CP and GBV sub-sectors and other relevant Task Forces, as well as other sectors.
- Sensitise other sectors and contribute to build their capacity on protection mainstreaming and on applying age, gender, diversity to their programs and activities.

### **Information management**

- A dedicated Information Management Officer supports the Protection Sector in the development of the [sector log frame](#) and the analysis of sector targets. Requests for sector member inputs are made on monthly basis and shared by the Sector IM.
- Manage information to improve knowledge and support analysis, sector decision-making and to identify gaps in the protection response.
- Facilitate the production and dissemination of protection-related information products across WG members and with other sectors and coordination forums, particularly on (a) protection risks and needs; (b) availability and type of interventions by protection partners through the interagency Service Mapping or adopted referral pathways.
- Produce matrices/dashboards on assessment and protection monitoring results, on through the Service Mapping of existing facilities and protection service locations.
- Systematically monitor the response against indicators and report on activities in line with the LRP.
- Track existing funding received by the protection sector through interagency funding reporting mechanisms, in cooperation with the sub-sectors (CP, GBV etc.), including for advocacy purposes.
- Encourage communication and information sharing across sector partners to advance strategic priorities, with respect for principles of data protection and use of information-sharing protocols.
- Contribute to in-country - and regional as applicable - refugee and interagency humanitarian coordination multi-sector updates and advocacy efforts to further affirm the centrality of protection.

### **Advocacy**

- Identify core protection advocacy topics and develop appropriate joint advocacy messages (particularly through a dedicated Advocacy Task Force) to advance the centrality



of protection in the humanitarian and stabilization response, including on funding for protection activities.

- Facilitate donor meetings and bilateral advocacy meetings with selected donors to brief on the protection situation, the work of the Protection Sector highlighting key gaps and advocacy asks.
- Facilitate advocacy workshops across all members including CP and GBV sub-sectors.
- Support UNHCR's advocacy interventions when and if violations of international refugee law, protection standards and principles occur.
- Advocating for cross-cutting issues, including age, gender and diversity, gender equality programming and ensuring protection mainstreaming is reflected in the overall response.
- Through the advocacy task force, collect, disseminate, and promote good practices within the protection sector as well as good national practices relevant to international protection and durable solutions.

### **Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP)**

- Contribute to inter-sector efforts to ensure that AAP is at the centre of the humanitarian response by sharing knowledge, information and by participating in inter-sector AAP systems and products.
- Support protection actors to implement community-based systems of communication, feedback and complaints mechanisms to guarantee participation and inclusion, as well as equitable access to protection services.
- Ensure that preferred ways of communication by refugees and affected communities are properly assessed and inform the sector's modalities of dissemination of information and collection of feedback.
- Ensure that PWG members are knowledgeable and trained on the Prevention of Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (PSEA), including through engagement in interagency initiatives (PSEA network).

### **Strengthening national protection systems**

- Contribute to interagency efforts in strengthening links between the LRP response and development initiatives that are either under the auspices of the Government and/or international development actors (e.g., sharing of protection analysis, information on legislation and practices, legal barriers to access to rights and inclusion of refugees in national systems).
- Support the strengthening of national protection systems through coordination of initiatives, mapping of opportunities and gaps, joint advocacy, capacity building and technical support as well as resource mobilisation.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of national Protection Sector Coordinators**

- **Building trustful and respectful partnership:** establishing and maintaining partnerships with relevant development and humanitarian actors, including government, NGOs, UN, and WLOs, OPDs, RLOs and other coordination forums.



- **Ensuring effective implementation of the protection response strategy and sector planning:** lead agencies to chair national meetings in an effective way and ensuring that protection strategies and priorities are integrated into national plans and policies; annual planning for sector, strategy development, PIN/Severity development, mid-year review, prioritization and gap analysis, etc.; provide technical and coaching support to sub-national protection sector coordinators including local NGOs; at the request of the OCG, organize dedicated meetings with sub-national focus to support new trends or emergencies to inform the interagency response.
- **Protection analysis and trend monitoring:** implementation of coordinated cross-population Protection Monitoring through the national Protection Analysis and Monitoring Task Force (co-chairs elected).
- **Monitoring and leading the Protection Sector Information management (IM):** developing the sector log frame and all Protection Sector IM tools at country-wide level (dashboards, Service mapping/Geo-split, Severity, etc.); developing joint monitoring and quality assurance tools, tracking progress against indicators, and making recommendations for improvement; facilitating information sharing and exchange of best practices/lessons learned across the PWG members, the sub-sectors WGs and the sub-national WGs; analyse sectoral IM tools and products and present at national and, if required, at sub-national level.
- **Develop standards and ensure quality programming:** Development of sectoral standards and oversight of partners quality programming; provide technical support for partners and ensure the availability of essential protection, GBV/CP services in line with the LRP. Reporting to and sharing relevant information from/to the members of the PWG and to the relevant Sub/technical working groups, task forces, and the sub-national WGs; ensure safe and ethical, protection-principled interventions are implemented and coordinated.
- **Capacity building:** assess capacity building needs of the sector and facilitate/ co-facilitate or mobilize resources for trainings, orientations or other capacity building interventions; this should be done in close collaboration with field-based coordinators to support field capacity building needs.
- **Leading technical areas and relevant Task Forces:** providing guidance and support to the PWG members, including through the Core Group, and to sub-national coordination mechanisms; lead sectoral advocacy efforts to ensure that protection is central in the overall response.
- **Representing the Protection Sector at the ISCG** (in inter-sector planning and strategic meetings, and other in-country and regional platforms, as appropriate): present Protection Sector priorities and support the ISCG co-chairs and sectors with protection mainstreaming interventions.
- **Resource Mobilization:** analysis of funding gaps and advocating/ mobilizing resources for the Protection Sector response on behalf of the PWG, in collaboration with the inter-sector coordination leadership.
- **Emergency Preparedness and Response:** develop and monitor the sector's contingency and business continuity plans, and develop a joint strategy and priorities (particularly if





across regions); assess need for surge capacity; provide guidance on the strategic direction of the emergency response to ensure alignment to national standards and adaption to the new emergency

### **PWG Members**

- Membership of the PWG is open to actors including national institutions, UN agencies and other international organizations, international and national NGOs and civil society organizations, and refugee-led and community-led organisations, as well as research and academic institutions, who have institutional expertise in protection and are committed to protection principles and standards; have a demonstrated capacity to contribute strategically or operationally to the protection response, particularly through being active (or planning to be active) in the protection component of the LRP.
- Ensure use of interagency and sector-specific Information Management tools such as:
  - [Service Mapping](#),
  - [ActivityInfo](#) for partner achievements,
  - [LASER](#),
  - [Referral Monitoring](#) and the
  - [Contingency and Preparedness](#) databases.
- For accountability and follow-up purposes, each member organization should nominate one designated focal point and an alternate to ensure continuous participation in meetings and engagement in decision making and discussions. The focal point or alternate is expected to attend each monthly and ad-hoc meeting. The person representing their organization should be a protection specialist with relevant expertise and authority. Member organizations can nominate a replacement in case of a prolonged absence of the designated focal point, or if the designated focal point leaves the organization which is to be communicated by the agency with the Protection Coordinators at national and sub-national level.
- Organizations may invite more relevant, technical staff to attend the PWG, where appropriate.

### **Main responsibilities of members**

- Represent and take decisions on behalf of their organizations.
- Regularly attend the PWG meetings, contributing meaningfully to policy and strategy discussions and actively take part in the implementation of the PWG strategy and work plan.
- Share information on protection situation/trends, on current and planned activities, on available and expected funding (including through Lebanon Aid Tracking system), on geographical and programmatic gaps.
- Coordinate planning and response with the PWG members, including through participating in joint assessments and collective discussion on the LRP.
- Endorse and disseminate interagency standards, guidelines and tools.



- According to the level of expertise, contribute to learning and capacity development activities organized by the Protection Sector or participate in the initiatives that will be offered by the Sector.

### Sub-national Coordination

In line with the [Note on the Strategic Approach on Protection Sector Mainstreaming](#) and aligning with the HTC approach towards streamlined and best fit-for-purpose coordination, the sub-national coordination in Bekka, North Lebanon, South Lebanon, Beirut/ Mount Lebanon will be maintained through monthly **joint Protection, GBV, and Child protection coordination** meetings. The sub-national coordinators play a critical role in coordinating protection interventions at the field level amongst operation protection actors, in sharing key protection issues specific to their area of operation with the national coordinators as well as the Operational Coordination Group (OCG).

The objectives of the Protection Sector streamlining are:

- simplify the coordination architecture at the field level by strengthening CP, GBV and Protection interventions
- align all protection partners with relevant technical guidance developed at national level and the CGs (strategy, guidance notes, SOPs, work plans, etc.)
- harmonize protection approaches and interventions across all areas of operation
- enhance information sharing on protection risks and response needs through:
  - attendance of appointed coordinators to the national level sector meetings and monthly provision of feedback on trends, operational and programmatic achievements or challenges based on sub-national meetings
  - participation of the sub-national coordinators at workshop and contribution to workstreams
  - participation to monthly meetings between national and sub-national coordinators

During acute emergencies, coordination across humanitarian architecture levels will intensify, with sub-national coordinators working closely with national coordinators and OCG at field level to ensure a timely and effective response, supported by additional resources as needed.

With the streamlining of sectors and a transition towards a more centralized coordination approach, the roles and responsibilities at sub-national level were amended and reduced to **four core areas** (see [Strategic Note on Protection Sector Streamlining](#) for details). The below outlined four areas of responsibilities will suffice as sub-national TORs:<sup>2</sup>

#### **1) Coordination of partners: chair monthly meetings, preparation of material, minuting, provision of feedback and support needs to the national sector**

---

<sup>2</sup> There are no separate sub-national TORs available, but the national TORs present include the sub-national roles and responsibilities.



- Prepare and ensure agenda items in close collaboration with the GBV and Child Protection coordinators at sub-national level.
  - Maintain the sub-national mailing list to inform and update partners on the key developments, interventions, capacity building opportunities, calls, documents.
  - Maintain the communication with all operational Protection partners to address the key challenges and trends.
  - Ensure ad-hoc technical meetings, when necessary, i.e. in case of an emergency.
  - Serve as a focal point for the sub-national partners for consultations and inquiries.
- 2) Protection situation/ trend monitoring including CP and GBV: monitor protection risks and situation in the area; share updates on protection risks and response to the OCG, keeping the national PWG informed**
- Address the emerging risks in the respective geographic areas with the use of IM tools and other relevant data (with support from national-level IM)
  - Provide input to national coordinators on emerging trends as needed.
  - Support Protection, CP and GBV mainstreaming across interventions and raise protection mainstreaming needs to the national-level coordinators for support
- 3) Programmatic coordination: Oversee programmatic response in the region including identifying emerging programmatic needs and liaising with partners to address them; guiding partners on programmatic needs and priorities**
- Ensure that the sector priorities agreed upon the national level are transparently communicated to field partners.
  - Ensure an effective Protection Sector response through close collaboration with the relevant stakeholders including Legal, Community-based, CP and GBV.
  - Ensure services are mapped through the IA Service Mapping tool following a discussed and agreed geo-split of partners across cadastres.
- 4) Highlight key response gaps at field level through agency-based partner engagement and monitoring of protection service delivery, challenges, and development of actions to address the risks at respective locations through operational partners:**
- Ensure standing agenda item on capacities and geo-split of partner to cover sector priority activities.
  - Where possible, ensure evidence-based information from partners at the joint Protection Coordination meeting at the field level.
  - Share those gaps during monthly meetings with national-level Protection sector coordinators.
  - Ensure the coordination and representation with OCG at the field level and communicate emerging needs or challenges back to the Protection coordinators at sub-national and national level.
  - Attending monthly coordination meetings with the national PWG coordinators.



### Election of sub-national joint Protection Coordinators

- As per CG agreement, the sub-national coordinators should not exceed three coordinators covering Protection, CP and GBV coordination functions.
- Election should be fair and transparent and mainly based on expertise and operational involvement in protection and sub-sector interventions and responsibilities.
- Ideally, elected agencies should be comprised of one UN, one local and one INGO.

### Working Modalities

- **Frequency:** the PWG will meet on monthly basis. Ad-hoc meetings may be called at short notice when critical issues arise. During emergencies, the frequency can be adjusted based on Core Group and members consultation and agreement. When appropriate, i.e. when discussing assessments, strategies, emergency planning or otherwise necessary, the national PWG co-chairs will undertake joint meetings engaging sub-sectors and sub-national coordinators.
- **Meeting time:** the WG meeting takes place monthly announced ahead of time by one of the coordinators; a standing calendar invite is circulated at the beginning of the year.
- **Modality and location:** as per voting of members in 2025, the desired modality is hybrid. Meetings will be held at UNHCR or any other member office with capacity to host the meeting and can provide a meeting location that is accessible for persons with disabilities, including accessible washrooms.
- **Topics and agenda:** the agenda shall be shared with the members few days ahead of the meeting (at a minimum three days before the meeting), with the possibility to include points suggested by the PWG members. To facilitate participation of local actors, efforts will be made to provide translation support in meetings, as required.
- Action points shall be recorded and circulated along the meeting presentation before the next meeting.

### Amendments to this TOR

- The duration of this TOR will be **12 months** after which time it will be reviewed to determine if it needs to be updated or not.
- Amendments to the TOR may be proposed by any of the member of the Working Group through a **written request** by email or Core Group agreement.

END

---