

Minutes of Meeting Inter-Sector Coordination Group Meeting

Meeting Location	Hybrid: MS Teams & UNHCR 8 th Floor Conference Room	Meeting Date	13 Jun 2025
Chairpersons	Dr. Ola Boutros, LRP General Supervisor (MoSA) Kristin Arthur, Senior Inter-Agency Coordination Officer (UNHCR) Edgard Chehab, Assistant Resident Representative (UNDP) Eyram Dzitrie, Humanitarian Affairs Officer (OCHA)	Meeting Time	10:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m.
Minutes Prepared by	Jana Nasr, Senior Inter-Agency Coordination Assistant (UNHCR)	Meeting Duration	2.00 hrs.
Participants	Annex 1		
Agenda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening Remarks 2. Update on New Arrivals 3. Ground Rules / Joint Operating Principles 4. LRP 2026 Planning Timeline 5. 2025 Multi Sectoral Needs Assessment 6. Tensions Overview 7. AoB 		

1. Opening Remarks

Dr. Ola Boutros, LRP General Supervisor (MoSA)
 Kristin Arthur, Senior Inter-Agency Coordination Officer (UNHCR)
 Edgard Chehab, Assistant Resident Representative (UNDP)
 Eyram Dzitrie, Humanitarian Affairs Officer (OCHA)

In their opening remarks, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) Co-Chairs welcomed the participants and presented the agenda. They also acknowledged that it is Kristin Arthur's last ISCG meeting, thanking her for all her hard work and contributions.

Dr. Ola Boutros thanked participants for their efforts in strengthening collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) to support vulnerable and internally displaced populations. She noted that this work is well aligned with the AMAN program and contributes to strengthening the linkages between humanitarian support and the national social safety net. The designated link should be completed, and the Data Sharing Agreement must be officially registered with the Ministry's Diwan. It is essential that each agency or organization designates a technical focal point, so that a folder can be created for data submission.

She also provided key updates, including the finalization of the government's return plan by the Inter-Ministerial Committee, which is expected to be endorsed by Cabinet on Monday, 16 June 2025. A follow-up meeting with UNHCR is scheduled to define implementation modalities under the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP). She also noted progress in the 332 localities and shared that MoSA and UNHCR have completed the profiling of new arrivals in Baalbek-Hermel. The report is being finalized and will be submitted to the Government. Lastly, she highlighted the recent Joint Task Force (JTF) meeting, attended by the Minister of Social Affairs, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, and the heads of UNHCR, UNDP, and OCHA which successfully presented the response and its outcomes.

Eyram Dzitrie then reviewed the pending action points on slide 4 of the presentation [here](#).

2. Update on New Arrivals

Marion Morgan, Community-Based Protection Officer (UNHCR)

Marion provided an update on the New Arrivals of Syrians:

- New arrivals of 106,290 Syrians have been monitored since 8 December 2024 including 60,540 in Bekaa & Hermel in late 2024, and 37,482 in Akkar and North governorates since March 2025.
- A small number of individuals of other nationalities have also been reported among the new arrivals. In addition, estimated 20,000 Lebanese have arrived.
- Around 1,480 individuals from the Druze community in Syria are reported to have arrived during May 2025 (to Bekaa and Mount Lebanon) following now largely de-escalated violence in Damascus suburbs and Sweida governorate in Syria.
- The [UNHCR Snapshot on Syrian Returns & Movements](#) provides additional information as of 31 May 2025.
- A coordinated multi-sectoral humanitarian response has been implemented, providing in-kind emergency assistance such as core relief items, shelter support, and life-saving medical services. An illustrative overview of the response strategy is available on slide 7 [here](#).
- UNHCR's position on return to Syria acknowledges that while some voluntary returns may occur, many continue to flee due to ongoing risks. UNHCR urges states to uphold international protection principles, including access to asylum and recognition of persisting or emerging threats in Syria.
- UNHCR is advocating for joint registration of Syrian new arrivals in coordination with the Government of Lebanon (GoL), noting that it is essential to ensure documentation, legal identity, and freedom of movement, and supports identification of protection needs, preserves the civilian nature of asylum, and enables targeted assistance and sustainable support mechanisms.
- Clarification is still needed regarding legal stay/residency before addressing shelter and settlement issues. There are noted protection risks if the legal status remains unresolved, based on lessons from the post-2015 period. Approval would help secure essential protection and support a principled, long-term approach.
- Beyond initial emergency humanitarian response phase, there is a need to structure and streamline response for individual protection and assistance. Refer to the [Protection Sector Prioritization Guidance](#) for additional information.
- Targeted recording for persons at heightened risk, including individualized protection response, key elements, and implementation plan, is detailed on slide 11 [here](#).

Raffi Kouzoudjian, Assistant Information Management Officer (UNHCR)

Raffi Kouzoudjian explained the New Arrivals Process:

- Data is collected via KoBoToolbox at the household level by field teams.
- IM/Data Management teams review submissions, clean data, & remove duplicates.
- Verified households are uploaded to RAIS, and each is assigned a unique file number.
- Partners access the RAIS module to review newcomer data, check past assistance, and avoid duplication.
- Key features include:
 - RAIS users (UNHCR and partners) can search the data, check past assistance, and avoid duplication in service delivery.
 - Partners can view assistance history to coordinate responses.

- The system ensures that no household receives the same assistance multiple times from different actors.
- The centralized process supports informed programming by providing a clear record of who has received what, when, and from whom.

3. Ground Rules / Joint Operating Principles

Georges Achi, Co-Chair Access Working Group

Georges Achi discussed the Ground Rules for Humanitarian Action developed by the Access Working Group:

- Building on the *Joint Operating Principles* draft that was developed in 2023-2024 but not formally endorsed by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), the Access Working Group has developed a *Ground Rules* document in 2025 following extensive consultations with humanitarian stakeholders to ensure it reflects collective priorities and operational realities.
- Now endorsed by the HCT, the *Ground Rules* document is intended to respond more directly to the current operational landscape.
- The development of the *Ground Rules* document was driven by these considerations:
 - **Internal Consistency:** To ensure all humanitarian actors in Lebanon operate according to shared minimum principles, thereby preventing inconsistent approaches that can set problematic precedents.
 - **Standardized Engagement:** To address the variance in how humanitarian actors engage with local and national authorities across regions and promote a more harmonized and predictable approach.
 - **Political Opportunity:** With the formation of a new government earlier in 2025, the humanitarian community now has a timely opportunity to reset its relationship with authorities and adopt more structured, unified practices.
- The overarching aim of the *Ground Rules* document is to clarify and establish a set of basic minimum standards for how humanitarian actors operate and interact with both national and sub-national authorities. The intention is to strengthen humanitarian access and create a more coherent, effective operational environment across Lebanon.
- The document is not meant to be another unused policy paper. Its impact depends on practical implementation by all partners. All actors are encouraged to align their operations in accordance with the document's principles.

Ania Zolkiewska, Co-Chair Access Working Group

Ania listed the following topics covered in the *Ground Rules* document and provided an overview of a few. She encouraged participants to refer to slides 19 to 33 [here](#) for additional information:

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| ● Humanitarian Negotiations | ● Selection of Beneficiaries |
| ● Coordination with Local Authorities | ● Identification of Vendors, Suppliers and Contractors |
| ● Transparency of Humanitarian Action | ● Protecting Against Interference (HR, Taxes, etc.) |
| ● Safe, Timely Unimpeded Passage | ● Predictable Framework for Registration |
| ● ID of Humanitarian Workers | ● Data Protection and Sharing |
| ● Maintaining the Civilian Nature of Humanitarian Action | |
| ● Distributions and Lists | |

4. LRP 2026 Planning Timeline

Stephanie Laba, Inter-Agency Coordination Officer (UNHCR)

Stephanie Laba presented the draft LRP timeline for 2026 on slide 39 [here](#), noting that the process has been simplified in comparison to previous years. The floor was then opened for sector coordination teams to share their feedback:

- **Alignment with Needs Assessments:** The Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) had been initiated and is expected to support the 2026 LRP planning process. Concerns were expressed about the geographical coverage of the MSNA, and a request was made to clarify which data sources would be available to inform planning discussions. It was clarified that preliminary MSNA and other assessment data would likely be available by early October, ahead of the Planning and Needs Analysis workshop, which would include data on specific cadastral areas.
- **Extension of the LRP:** It was acknowledged that 2025 is serving as a transition year, during which coordination and planning approaches will evolve. A more refined coordination structure is expected for 2026, with an emphasis on increased focus, reduced scale, and better alignment with funding realities. It was clarified that the LRP will be extended into 2026 as a one-year continuation, not a new multi-year plan.
- **Coordination Structure of the LRP:** Concerns were expressed regarding the lack of clarity on the future coordination structure of the LRP. It was acknowledged that planning for sector strategies cannot be disconnected from the coordination structure. Several sectors noted they had already begun adjusting to reduced capacity and possible structural changes. While no final decision on the 2026 coordination structure has been made yet, multiple proposals have been shared by ISCG Co-Chair agencies (UNHCR, UNDP, OCHA) with the Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, and consultations are ongoing at multiple levels (UN, LHIF, LHDF, and the GoL). Updates will be shared as they become available.
- **Integration of Development and Humanitarian Activities:** Concerns were raised about the integration of development components under the LRP framework, particularly within sectors such as Health. It was highlighted that some development activities may fall outside of the LRP scope and thus require coordination with the UN Cooperation Framework. The importance of clear guidance and alignment was emphasized to avoid fragmented approaches. It was reiterated that the LRP remains a humanitarian-stabilization framework, though some stabilization-related development activities may be included at the discretion of sectors.
- **Sub-National Consultations:** Questions were raised about the format of sub-national consultations, with suggestions to maintain a lighter model, as practiced in the previous year. A remote/stocktaking approach was proposed unless further input from sub-national coordination groups suggest otherwise.
- **Global Guidance and Scenario Planning:** It was acknowledged that global-level guidance is forthcoming and should be considered when defining what is fit for the Lebanon context. Suggestions were made to include indicative milestones or scenario-based planning assumptions to guide sector planning.

5. 2025 Multi Sectoral Needs Assessment

Clara Lefrancois, Country Director & AAWG Co-Chair (REACH)

Clara Lefrancois presented an overview of the 2025 MSNA:

- This year's MSNA is reduced in scale due to funding constraints and aims to:

- Assess the multifaceted needs, coping strategies and humanitarian situation across all districts of the four most affected governorates (South, Nabatyeh, Baalbeck, Bekaa) and Dahyeh focusing on Lebanese nationals, migrants, and Palestinian refugees.
- Support an evidence-based prioritisation of the response acknowledging the differences in need across regions, population groups and sectors
- Inform cross-crisis analysis.
- The timeline is displayed on slide 45 [here](#).
- The methodology of the assessments includes a questionnaire, household face to face surveys, and representative sampling at district, camp, and governorate level as applicable to the relevant population group. Details are listed on slide 46 [here](#).
- The draft questionnaire has been shared with sectors for their review.

6. Tensions Overview

Nisreen Jaafar, [Conflict Analysis and Mainstreaming Officer \(UNDP\)](#)

Nisreen Jaafar presented an overview of the current tensions landscape:

- Intra-Lebanese relations have shown signs of improvement but remain volatile, heavily influenced by ongoing political and security developments.
 - Despite the instability, there is a positive perception regarding the quality of intra-communal relations.
 - Violations of the cessation of hostilities agreement continue to strain political discourse in a post-conflict reality.
- Significant skepticism was observed regarding reconstruction and aid bias but there is increased confidence in the GoL's participation in reconstruction.
- State-citizen relations, while optimistic, remain cautious, with many expressing hope for the future, but also worries about access to basic services, utilities, and commodities.
- While levels of crime and violence remain high, many communities reported an improved sense of security following the cessation of hostilities.
- Inter-communal relations continue to be shaped by geopolitical tensions, sectarian divisions, and high levels of crime.
- A new influx of populations has further strained local resources and security, adding to the pressure on host communities.
- Finally, the rise in crime levels, combined with negative public sentiment and increasingly restrictive measures, remains a growing concern for many stakeholders.
- More details on the findings, including graphs and analysis, are available on slides 52 to 60 [here](#).

7. AoB

Amanda Melville, [Protection Cluster Coordination Officer \(UNHCR\)](#)

Amanda Melville presented an update on the ongoing Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) protection monitoring:

- The priority needs of IDPs remain consistent with previous months, with health, food/nutrition, and shelter continuing to rank highest.
- Among Lebanese IDPs, fewer intend to remain in their current location, indicating a potential trend toward return.

- In contrast, an increasing number of Syrian IDPs report intentions to remain, which may be linked to factors such as employment opportunities or having settled into rental arrangements in host communities. This shift suggests that some Syrian IDPs may be transitioning toward permanent relocation.
- A significant and positive shift was reported in the availability of services:
 - There was a notable decrease in the percentage of KIIs reporting unavailability of services—particularly in health, education, banking, and child protection.
 - GBV services and access to information also saw marked improvements.
 - These changes suggest growing perceptions of improved service delivery and access in both return and displacement contexts.

Annex 1

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