National LCRP Social Stability Sector Working Group- Minutes of Meeting

Meeting location	MS Teams	**Meeting time**	11:00 AM
Led by	Randa Hobeiche- MoIM Ola Boutros- MoSA	**Meeting date**	May 30, 2023
Coordinated by	Rasha Akil- UNHCR William Barakat – UNDP		
Minutes by	William Barakat	**Meeting duration**	2hrs

AGENDA

1. Overview of the Contextual Environment.
2. Impact of the Current Situation on LCRP Operations.
3. Q1 2023 Achievements, Funding Gaps Analysis & Ways Forward.
4. O&M[1] Best Practices of Municipal Basic Services Interventions.
5. Ways forward for Engagement of CSOs[2] by "Live Love Lebanon".

1- Overview of the Contextual Environment (Dec 2020- Apr 2023)

An overview of the contextual environment and intra-communal incidents & tension for the reporting period of December 2020 - April 2023, was provided by COAR (Center for Operational Analysis & Research) and LCPS (The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies). The analysis is based on quantitative and qualitative data, including security and socio-economic incidents, and around 'Horizontal' tension (between people), and 'Vertical' tension (between people and institutions). Kindly find below the key highlights and for further information kindly contact Ghida.ajjan@coar-global.org, Samuel.c.heller@gmail.com, and Makram.ouaiss@lcps-lebanon.org.

Main Drivers of Incidents & Tensions:

- Community insecurity incidents (54% of total incidents) can escalate tensions as blame is placed on each other.
- Factors worsening living conditions contribute to tensions: subsidies' removal, limited access to services, decreased salaries' value, bank restrictions, elections, and emergencies (COVID-19, port explosion).

Spikes in Incidents & Tensions:

- Incidents and tensions increase due to isolated events or sudden changes e.g., lift of subsidies, fuel shortage, elections, and currency depreciation.

Vertical Incidents Direction:

- Demonstrations, roadblocks, and riots primarily related to services, banks, and subsidies.

[1] Operation & Management.
[2] Civil Society Organizations.

Horizontal Incidents Direction:

- Clashes over scarce goods, inter-sectarian conflicts during elections, pressure on resources and services, and community insecurity incidents.

Vertical & Horizontal incidents:

- When tension drivers lead to both vertical and horizontal incidents, horizontal incidents are more intense. Economic desperation, sectarian divisions, and historical deprivation/ marginalization contribute to increased horizontal violence.

Observable Trends

- "Normalization" of hardship: The population has been, with time, familiarized with added deprivation, hence, "normalized" these conditions.
- Protest fatigue: Diminishing belief that such protest actions will lead to meaningful change, as well as many protesters' preoccupation with their economic needs and with survival.
- Large-scale emigration: may have also sent previous activists abroad and reduced protest energy.
- Sudden rise in bank-related violence: and decreasing usefulness of coping strategies such as relying on remittances from family and selling property and valuables.

2- Impact of the Current Situation on LCRP Operations

The Senior LCRP Inter-Sector Coordinator at UNDP, Michael Schaadt, updated on the impact of the current situation on LCRP operation space, and the updating of the LCRP Business Continuity Plan (BCP). The BCP is a living document that assesses the impact of emerging risks on LCRP operations and identifies prevention, preparedness, and mitigation measures. For further information contact Michael.schaadt@undp.org.

One of the key highlights is the importance to seek the support of both sector-leading Ministries, the Ministry of Interior & Municipalities (MoIM), through Randa Hobeiche at Randahobeiche@yahoo.com and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), through Dr Ola Boutros at Olaboutros@gmail.com, in terms of engagement and sensitization of Government counterparts, in ensuring conflict-sensitive interventions.

ACTIONS

→ The LCRP Business Continuity Plan will be updated by June 7, 2023. Sector Partners are encouraged to share their feedback before the deadline.

→ Partners are encouraged to consult the LCRP conflict sensitivity toolboxes- **DOWNLOAD THE REPORTS**, specifically on engagement with authorities. For further support and advisory contact Elina.silen@undp.org and Nisreen.jaafar@undp.org.

3- Q1 2023 Sector Achievements, Funding Gaps Analysis & Ways Forward

An overview has been presented on the key achievements of the first quarter in 2023 versus the annual targets, with thanks to the IM team and the 32 Social Stability reporting partners. For technical support on reporting on the ActivityInfo platform, contact Mohammad.nasser@undp.org and Bader.abdelnabi@undp.org.

In addition, updates have been shared on the reported funding updates by partners indicating 25% funded as of March 2023 versus the annual needs-based budget of $171 M. The discussion aimed at analyzing the funding

gaps and highlighting underfunded outputs in 2023 e.g., under youth empowerment (output 2.2), along with related ways forward and messages to elevate to donors and partners. Kindly find attached the presentation and for further support at the National coordination level contact William.barakat@undp.org and Rasha Akil at Akil@unhcr.org.

The discussion included geographic connotations by key outputs and the importance of ensuring a geographic balance. For further support at the Field coordination level contact Tonina.frangieh@undp.org (North); Marianne.alhaibe@undp.org (BML); Hadia.ghadban@undp.org; (Beqaa); and Fida.safieddine@undp.org (South).

Some of the Key highlights/ actions from the discussion are in the below:

- ★ Lea Mascaro from ACTED (lea.mascaro@acted.org) – Donors have been warning about a decrease in funds for stabilization and public infrastructure in the next years.
- ★ Maria Geagea from International Alert (MGeagea@international-alert.org) – Most of the CSOs and Local NGOs receive short-term funds for peacebuilding interventions, which hinders their sustainability of in terms of ensuring a continuous social dialogue.
- ★ Farah Khawaja from UNHCR (KHAWAJAF@unhcr.org) – It is important to check the flexibility status of partners' funds to assess potential mobilization of earmarked funds towards current priorities e.g., UNHCR has been re-allocating funds to prioritize support to host communities and respond to the current context.
- ★ Ahmad Addam from House of Peace (a.addam@houseofpeace.ngo) – It is important to keep on analysing under which outputs funds are being injected, and what are the key resources and top donors to access funds.
- ★ Reem Askar from UNOPS (reemas@unops.org) – It is important to analyze what is working well and not so well, to prioritize programmes with the highest impact on social stability, including funds allocated under across different coordination frameworks (LCRP, ERP...).
- ★ Tharwat Nazha from USPEaK (tharwat.nazha@gmail.com)- It is important to prioritize support to youth under volunteerism, e.g., in deprived areas in Baalbeck and El Hermel, where youths have great potential and motivation to mobilize and support their communities.
- ★ Nabil Barbir from Live Love Lebanon (nabil@livelove.org): It is important to couple income generation activities to social stability youth empowerment initiatives, which would motivate youths to commit to programmes by covering their basic needs & livelihoods priorities.

ACTIONS

- The sector will actively follow up on donors' funding strategies for 2023 and 2024 under Social Stability to inform sector partners' decision-making and future planning.
- The sector will advocate for longer-term funding of peacebuilding initiatives that require sufficient time to ensure a significant impact on social stability at the local level.
- Annually, the sector will conduct an analysis of programmatic impacts during the mid-year review and planning process.
- The sector will explore additional ways to empower youth through social stability initiatives, including community services, active citizenship, and livelihood skills.

4- O&M Best Practices of Municipal Basic Services Interventions.

A presentation was provided by the UNDP Chief Technical Advisor of the LHSP (Lebanon Host Communities Support Programme), Denise Sumpf, on basic services & infrastructure interventions supporting municipalities. The discussion included examples on how to ensure operation & management (O&M) and sustainability of projects, with examples from the field, in the current context of Lebanon and deteriorating municipalities' resources. Kindly find attached the presentation and for further information contact Denise.sumpf@undp.org.

Some of the Key highlights/ actions from the discussion are in the below:

- ★ All UNDP's LHSP interventions are in partnership with MoSA, MoIM and the CDR (Council for Development and Reconstruction) at the National level, and with UoMs and municipalities at the local level, to ensure local ownership and boost Governance.
- ★ Since 2014, UNDP implemented under LHSP 696 projects at municipalities/UoMs, which reached 4,245,321 beneficiaries including 3, 123,499 Lebanese and 1,121,822 displaced Syrians.
- ★ Municipalities are reducing capacities and prioritizing O&M and limiting development work, in favour of maintaining minimum operation of very basic services.

ACTIONS

- Learn from lessons of previous years' projects and actively replicate and expand best practices under the most successful initiatives.
- Incorporate an income generation component into infrastructure and basic services projects to ensure their operation, sustainability, and provide income to municipalities.
- Explore impactful activities that stimulate donors' interest in allocating additional funding for O&M, including those with environmental and resource protection impacts. Instead of solely requesting funds for fuel, consider requesting additional funds for maintaining Civil Defense's equipment.
- Foster complementarity among organizations to achieve cost-efficient project implementation and make O&M funding more relevant to donors. For instance, one organization can provide vehicles/equipment or infrastructure support, while another organization focuses on livelihoods and O&M support under the same project.
- Offer capacity building to municipalities, local CSOs, and NGOs to mobilize local resources and skills in maintaining and repairing equipment and vehicles beyond sector partners' support.

5- Ways forward for CSOs' Engagement by "Live Love Lebanon

Support CSOs is one of the key elements of the sector strategy in strengthening the capacity of the local community to foster dialogue and defuse tensions. To enhance the support to CSOs, the sector is building on the experience of key partners to exchange experiences and support in mapping and engaging key CSOs.

In the current context, the mobilization of CSOs' resources and skills is crucial for boosting collaborative governance facing the increased social instability and the marginalization of youths.

Please find attached the related presentation and for further information contact Nabil Barbir at Nabil@livelove.org.

ACTIONS

→ Map out key CSOs and related platforms supported under the sector for better coordination.
→ Capitalize on existing resources and exchange tools under outreach & support to CSOs.
→ Identify challenges under support to CSOs and related recommendations.

6- Attendance Sheet

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