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Response Plan

Inter-Sector Coordination Group Meeting

April 16, 2025

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Opening Remarks

ISCG Co-Chairs

Agenda

1. **Return Planning**
2. **Preparedness Planning**
3. **AoB**

Action Points

Follow Up

Meeting	Action Point	Status
4-Apr-25	Inter-Sector Co-Chairs to hold meeting with sectors on updating the Inter-Sector Workplan	Ongoing
4-Apr-25	Inter-Sector Co-Chairs to update on LRP finalization steps and timeline	Next ISCG
4-Apr-25	OCHA to share Funding Shortages Survey results	Ongoing
4-Apr-25	Protection Sector to present on Protection Risk Analysis in upcoming ISCG meeting and to provide action plan on way forward.	Next ISCG
N/A	Sectors to share revised sector Logframe reflecting the budget reduction. If the budget adjustment entails any changes in your respective sector strategy, we recommend updating only the figures without modifying the content or narrative. Deadline: by 21 Mar 2025 – **Pending**: Health, PRT	Ongoing
17-Jan-25	Sectors to submit their LRP 2025 Annual Workplan.	Completed
17-Jan-25	Sectors to submit their LRP 2025 Working Group and Core Group ToRs. Deadline: by 17 March 2025. **Pending:** Education, Health, Child Protection	Ongoing

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Return

Amalina Majid, Repatriation Officer (UNHCR)

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LRP 2025 Return Planning

Amalina Majid, Repatriation Officer (UNHCR)

Voluntary returns to Syria

123,328

estimated Syrian individuals who crossed from Lebanon to Syria since 8 December 2024

Estimated figures of Syrians crossing from Lebanon to Syria through official and unofficial crossing points.

- Many not known to UNHCR
- Includes up to 50% Syrians abroad transiting through Lebanon and those documented Syrians with residency, engaging in short and pendular visits.

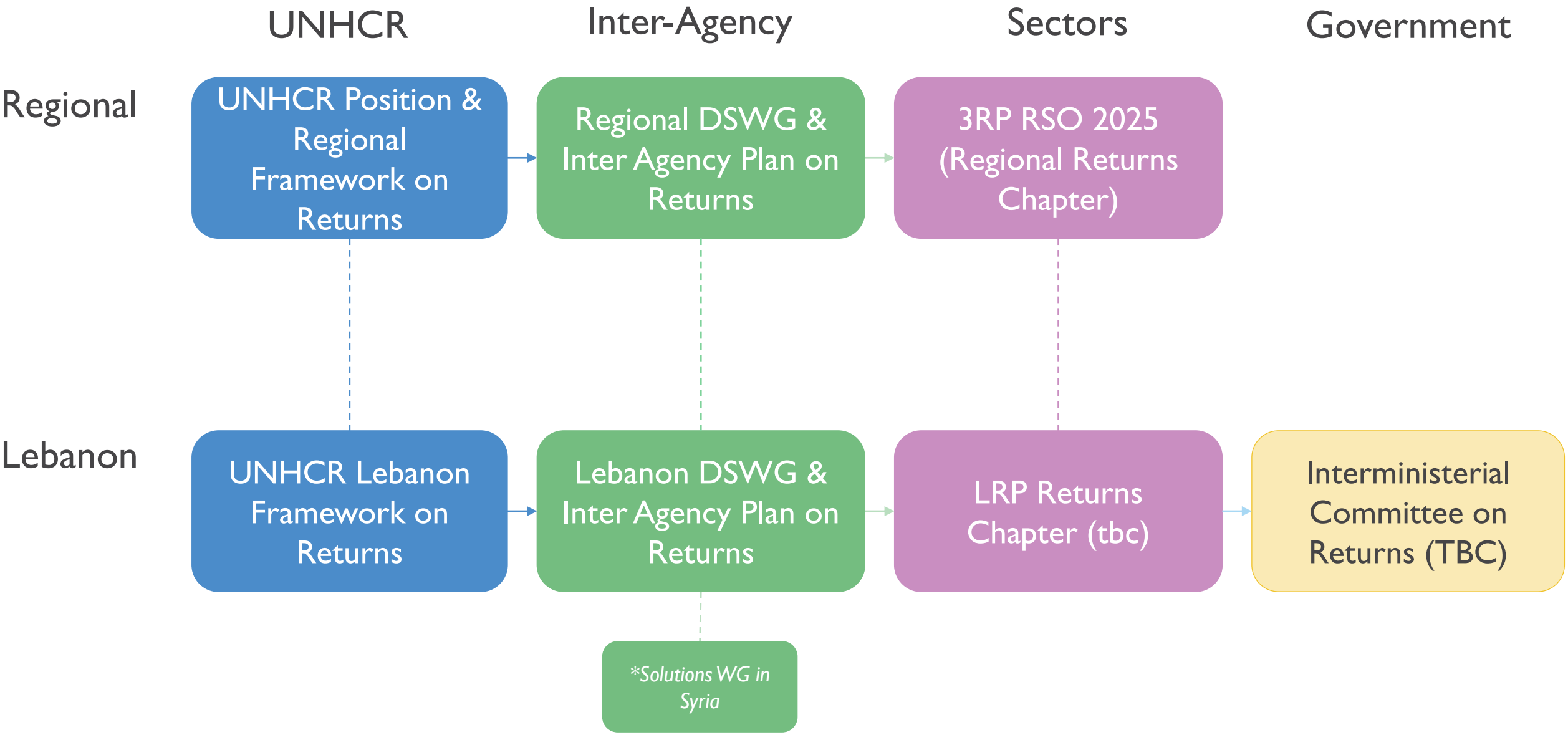
97,021

Syrian individuals inactivated from UNHCR's registration records in Lebanon during 2025 due to verified and presumed return

Verified and presumed return to Syria:

- Known to UNHCR
- 67% returned under duress and verified remained in Syria
- 32% presumed returned to Syria
- 1% GSO-identified self-organized returns

Overview of Framework Guidance on Returns



Inter Agency Planning Parameters

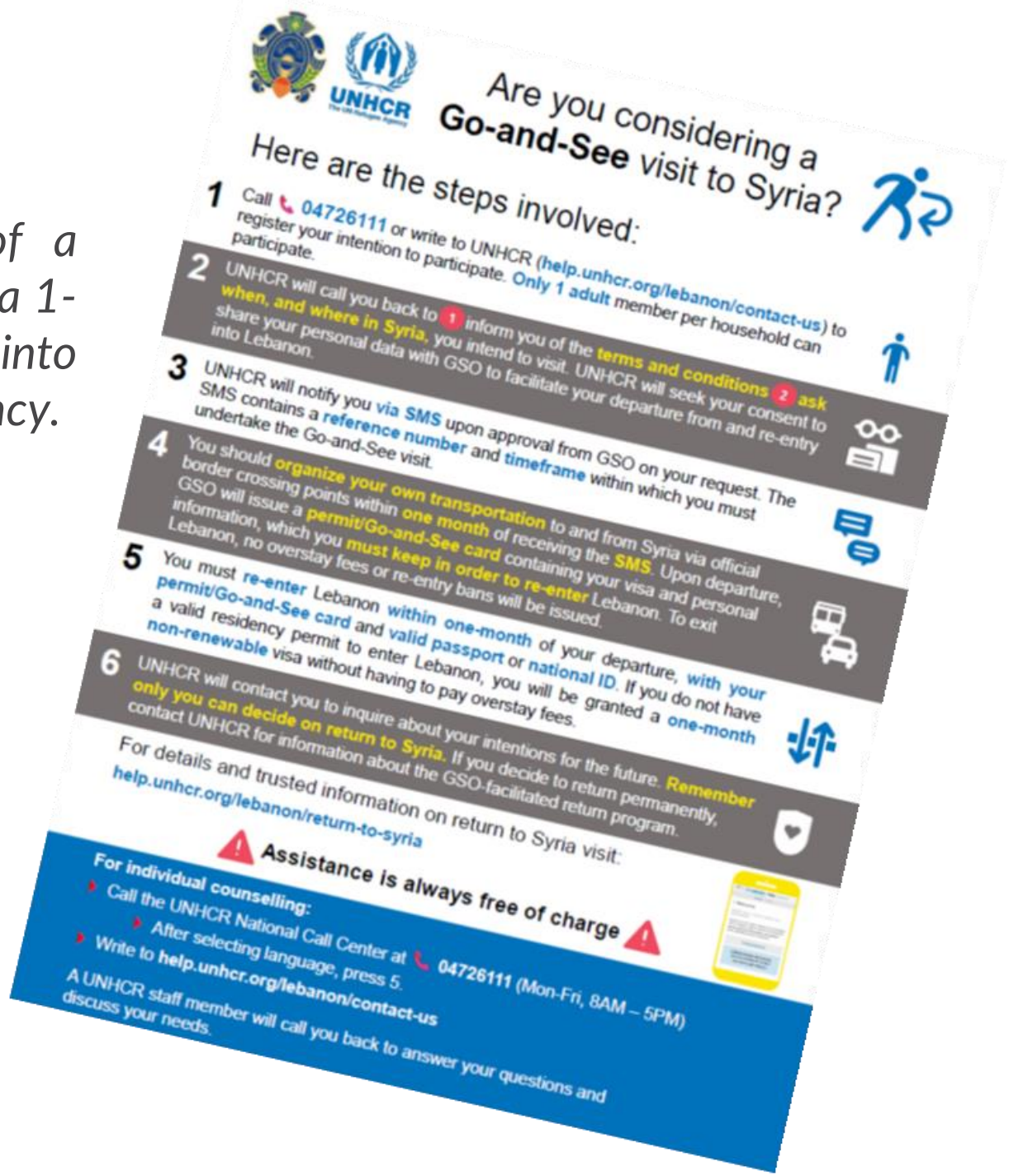
Up to **400,000** displaced Syrians including **5,000 PRS** estimated to return from Lebanon by year's end (best-case scenario)

- Assumes **best-case scenario in Syria**:
  - ✓ Relative stability established and sustained in Syria
  - ✓ Beginning of political process to establish inclusive and orderly political transition
  - ✓ Law and order secured and armed clashes prevented
  - ✓ Financial resources secured, basic services restored, access to livelihoods and rule of law
- Assumes **best-case scenario in Lebanon**:
  - ✓ Security conditions remain stable
  - ✓ Negative rhetoric on displaced Syrians do not escalate or trigger involuntary return
  - ✓ Go-and-see continues, with overall positive feedback
  - ✓ Government implements policy improvements removing barriers to return, including waivers
- Assumes **funding secured** in host countries and inside Syria

Go-and-see Visits

GSO-facilitated "Go-and-See" Visits

Structured GNS visit for one adult member of a displaced *Syrian household, known to UNHCR, for a 1-month period to Syria, including readmission into Lebanon with a one-month, non-renewable, residency.*



UNHCR

Are you considering a **Go-and-See** visit to Syria?

Here are the steps involved:

1 Call 04726111 or write to UNHCR (help.unhcr.org/lebanon/contact-us) to register your intention to participate. Only 1 adult member per household can participate.

2 UNHCR will call you back to 1 inform you of the terms and conditions 2 ask when, and where in Syria, you intend to visit. UNHCR will seek your consent to share your personal data with GSO to facilitate your departure from and re-entry into Lebanon.

3 UNHCR will notify you via SMS upon approval from GSO on your request. The SMS contains a reference number and timeframe within which you must undertake the Go-and-See visit.

4 You should organize your own transportation to and from Syria via official border crossing points within one month of receiving the SMS. Upon departure, GSO will issue a permit/Go-and-See card containing your visa and personal information, which you must keep in order to re-enter Lebanon. To exit Lebanon, no overstay fees or re-entry bans will be issued.

5 You must re-enter Lebanon within one-month of your departure, with your permit/Go-and-See card and valid passport or national ID. If you do not have a valid residency permit to enter Lebanon, you will be granted a one-month non-renewable visa without having to pay overstay fees.

6 UNHCR will contact you to inquire about your intentions for the future. Remember only you can decide on return to Syria. If you decide to return permanently, contact UNHCR for information about the GSO-facilitated return program.

For details and trusted information on return to Syria visit: help.unhcr.org/lebanon/return-to-syria

Assistance is always free of charge

For individual counselling:

- Call the UNHCR National Call Center at 04726111 (Mon-Fri, 8AM – 5PM)
  - After selecting language, press 5.
- Write to **help.unhcr.org/lebanon/contact-us**

A UNHCR staff member will call you back to answer your questions and discuss your needs.

Self-organized voluntary return (supported by UNHCR)

- 1. Return counselling and pre-assessment/referral to partners
- 2. Return assessments at Return Centers (VRF)
- 3. Return cash grant (USD 100 per individual)
- 4. Self-organized return through official crossing points
- 5. Exit Lebanon and GSO stamp VRF
- 6. File closure and data-sharing with UNHCR Syria

Organized Voluntary Return

- 1. Return counselling and pre-assessment/referral to partners
- 2. Return assessments at Return Centers (VRF)
- 3. Return cash grant (USD 100 per individual)
- 4. Organized return transport from Staging Areas
- 5. Exit Lebanon and GSO stamp VRF
- 6. File closure and data sharing with UNHCR Syria

Matrix: Return Activities

Sector	Activity	Agencies/Organizations	Govt
PROTECTION	Legal aid/assistance	UNHCR, NRC, UNICEF, UNRWA (PRS)	MOIM,MOSA
	Capacity-development	UNHCR, SCI, IOM,	GSO, LAF
	Protection/Border monitoring	UNHCR, UNRWA (PRS)	GSO, LAF
	Protection data collection and analysis	UNHCR, UNRWA (PRS)	
	Communication with Communities	UNHCR, WFP, IOM, SCI, NRC, UNICEF	MOSA
	Community engagement	UNHCR, WFP, IOM, UNICEF, CARE, SCI, UNRWA	MOSA
	Protection case management	UNHCR, IOM, SCI, UNICEF, ICRC, WFP, UNFPA, UNRWA	
	Protection voluntariness assessments	UNHCR, UNRWA (PRS)	
BASIC ASSISTANCE	Return Cash Grant	UNHCR, UNRWA (PRS), SCI	
	Organized return transportation	IOM, UNHCR, UNRWA (PRS)	GSO
EDUCATION	Advocacy fast-track academic transcripts	UNHCR, UNICEF, NRC, SCI, UNRWA (PRS)	MEHE
LIVELIHOODS	Skills and livelihood training (tbd)	IOM, UNICEF, SCI, ILO, UNRWA (PRS)	MOSA
HEALTH	Pre-return health screening	IOM, WFP, UNICEF	MOPH
	Pre-return health intervention	IOM, UNICEF, SCI, UNRWA (PRS)	MOPH
WASH	Latrines and sanitation facilities	UNICEF, IOM	MOEW
SHELTER	Rehabilitation of border posts	IOM, UNHCR	GSO

Cross-border Enabling Activities in Syria

- **Rehabilitation** of official border points
- Cross-border coordination with **Interagency Solutions Working Group** inside Syria (data sharing and referral mechanisms)
- **Labour market assessments** in key areas of intended return
  - Targeted technical and vocational training in Lebanon
  - Cash-for-work opportunities
  - On-the-job training with SMEs in Syria for practical skills development
  - Cash grants and training to enable home-based businesses
- **Mapping HLP** restitution mechanisms in Syria and evidentiary documents

Monitoring & Review

- **Return trends:** Are Syrians returning? What demographics? Which areas?
- **Return intentions**: Are intentions and perceptions changing? Based on what information and conditions?
- **Voluntariness of return:** Are returns voluntary? Push factors? Pull factors?
- **Complaint and feedback mechanisms:** Do they exist? Are they being adapted into programming?

- Review of Interagency Voluntary Action Plan:
  - Planning figures vs Actual returns
  - Programme adaptations

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LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Stephanie Laba, Inter-Agency Coordination Officer (UNHCR)

LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Overview

1. Introduction
2. Outcomes
3. Operational Context and Planning Assumptions
4. Core Components of the Return Plan
5. Risks and Mitigation
6. Funding Requirement

LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Introduction

- 2025 marks a potential turning point in the Syrian displacement crisis.
- The fall of the Assad regime (Dec 2024) has sparked renewed hope among displaced Syrians for return.
- Lebanon hosts:
  - ~1.4 million displaced Syrians
  - ~27,000 Palestine Refugees from Syria (PRS)
- As of March 2025:
  - Over 123,000 Syrians have returned to Syria
  - 97,000 verified by UNHCR, with 67% returning under duress
- Best-case scenario:
  - Up to 400,000 returns (including 5,000 PRS) by end of 2025
- The Return Chapter outlines:
  - Joint efforts by UN agencies and Lebanese authorities
  - Focus on safe, dignified, informed, and voluntary returns
  - Continued support to those who remain in Lebanon

LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Outcomes

Outcome 1:
Ensure Safe, Dignified, and Informed Return

Outcome 2:
Strengthen Coordination Across Agencies and Borders

Outcome 3:
Sustain Protection and Basic Services in Lebanon

LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Operational Context & Planning Assumptions

Post-regime collapse in Syria presents cautious optimism. Lebanon faces economic collapse, social tensions, and service degradation.

Key Assumptions:

- **Returns:** Up to 400,000 Syrians (incl. 5,000 PRS)
- **Timing:** Peak between May–September 2025
- **Origin:** Mainly to Aleppo, Homs, Idlib, Raqqa, and Rural Damascus
- **Modalities:** GSO-organized, UNHCR-supported, and spontaneous
- **Determinants:** Safety perceptions, access to services, freedom of movement, stability
- **Policy & Funding:** Exit waivers, civil documentation access, adequate donor support

LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Core Components of the Return Plan

1. **Preparatory Activities:** Engagement with GoL (MoSA, GSO, LAF) and role clarification and capacity building.
2. **Community Engagement:** RPIS surveys, FGD, hotline, return-focused website, verified info via community structures.
3. **Counselling & Processing:** In-depth family sessions, Return Centres: medical checks, VRF issuance, cash grants.
4. **Transport:** Logistics support, border clearance, advocacy for penalty waivers.
5. **Cross-Border Coordination:** Syria Solutions WG, linkages to cash-for-work, legal aid, HLP mapping.
6. **Monitoring & Feedback:** Real-time tracking, voluntariness assessments, complaint mechanisms

LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Risks and Mitigation

1. **Insecurity in Syria:**
   →Conflict analysis, protection monitoring, area risk maps

2. **Involuntary Return Pressures:**
   →Counselling, voluntary verification, advocacy

3. **Funding Gaps:**
   →Donor outreach, activity sequencing

4. **Limited Services in Syria:**
   → Early recovery links, pre-departure training, legal aid

The DSWG will adapt the plan based on risks, funding, and the regional context.

LRP 2025 Return Chapter

Funding Requirements

- Return-related activities require USD 150 million
- Part of the broader LRP USD 2.99 billion appeal
- Funding to support transport, cash grants, health screening, and cross-border programming
- Requires both repurposing and new donor injections

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Preparedness Planning

Eyram Dzitrie, Humanitarian Affairs Officer (OCHA)

Scope of preparedness planning review

- Field-Driven, Multi-risk, preparedness – initially until June

- The primary goals of this plan are:
  - To strengthen the coordination and alignment of emergency preparedness efforts.
  - To ensure timely and effective responses to the diverse risks identified in Lebanon.

- This plan builds on previous frameworks such as the HCT Contingency Plan (February 2024), UNHCR's Contingency Plan for influx from Syria, Business Continuity Plan and the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) 2025. These tools are supplemented by up-to-date information on contingency stocks, the inter-agency service mapping, and lessons learned from the 2024 escalation of hostilities.

- The plan also includes specific sub-national preparedness plans for each region in Lebanon (drafts shared by Bekaa and South ISCG colleagues)

Scenario risks and planning figures (DRAFT – under review)

- **Controlled conflict**: Progressive escalation in strikes and assassination inside Lebanon, with periodic flare ups and sporadic strikes in urban centres (Tyr, Dahiyeh, Nabatieh, Saida, Baalbek). Limited pendular movements of IDPs possible. Prolonged occupation of parts of southern Lebanon; and efforts to prevent permanent returns to border villages. Conflict remains controlled, short of all-out war.

100,000*	
Bekaa	20,000
BML	10,000
North	10,000
South	60,000

- **Localized Flare-Ups of Violence**: Political and social tensions are high, and localized violence could quickly escalate into broader conflict. This may result in displacement, limited-service access, and heightened insecurity, particularly for vulnerable groups.

20,000	
Bekaa	5,000
BML	5,000
North	5,000
South	5,000

- **New Arrivals from Syria**: The continuing instability in Syria has led to a steady influx to Lebanon, with over 100,000 arrivals reported in early 2025. These new arrivals could exacerbate existing tensions between host communities and displaced populations, as well as create challenges for local authorities in managing the crisis.

130,000	
Bekaa	90,000
BML	
North	35,000
South	5,000

**The Access WG updated scenario for the next 3-6 months (till September) indicates that a controlled conflict could result in up to 250,000 IDPs*

Response Capacities and Gaps

Sector	Key Items to preposition (250,000 persons impacted)	Current/Pipeline stock (as of Mar 2025)	Gaps in stock (# of items)	Cost of gaps in stock (US$ M)	Previous Cost of gaps in stock (US$ M)
Basic Assistance	Pre-positioning essential non-food items (NFIs)	x	x	x	1.3
Food security and Agriculture	50,000 Ready to Eat food (RTEs)	x	x	x	3
	253,000 dry food parcels (2 per HH for 1 month)	x	x	x	7
	Fresh produce (vegetables & fruits)	x	x	x	1.33
Education	60,000 Student kits and learning materials	x	x	x	0.6
Health	Health contingency stocks (Cholera kits, Emergency Health Kits, IARH kits, etc) to the MoPH designated health facilities.	x	x	x	7.8
Shelter	Shelter kits to be distributed to those who relocate to informal settlements	x	x	x	3.6
	Repair kits to be distributed to those relocating to inadequate shelters	x	x	x	2
Protection	Diapers for older people and people with disability (10,000 items)	x	x	x	0.1
GBV	dignity kits: 10,000 dignity unit cost 15USD as sectoral standard	x	x	x	0.15
Child Protection	1500 recreational/PSS kits to 1500 children	x	x	x	0.0375
WASH	Bottled Water	x	x	x	2.25
	Hygiene Kits (up to 250,000)	x	x	x	5
	Emergency fuel	x	x	x	1.5
	Emergency Water Points (public and Storage (HH))	x	x	x	0.42
Nutrition	18,400 Ready to use (RTUs) Nutritional Supplement for 6-23 months old children	x	x	x	0.65
	4,400 Ready to use (RTU) Nutritional Supplement for Pregnant and Lactating Women	x	x	x	0.14
Social Stability	Equipment support to Municipalities, UoM, etc.	x	x	x	
Emergency Cash		x	x	x	13.1
Total					**49.9 M**

Cross-Sectoral Preparedness Actions

Priorities	Preparedness Actions	Timeline	Status
Operational Response	• **Pre-position essential supplies in strategic locations within Lebanon** (Focal points: Sectors, partners) • **Strengthen logistical support to local authorities** (Focal points: all partners)	By Q2 2025	Ongoing
	• **Identify gaps in the existing emergency response with mitigation measures shaped by lessons learned** exercise. (Focal point: humanitarian actors)	By Q1 2025	Completed
	• **Test emergency communication systems** to enhance coordination, especially in remote areas. (Focal point: all partners)	By Q2 2025	Not started
Resource Mobilization	• **Secure sustained funding for critical services to maintain response capacity.** (Focal points: HC, donors and sector leads)	Continuous	Ongoing
	• **Advocate for flexible funding mechanisms that allow for adaptive responses to evolving crises.** (Focal points: donors and partners).	Continuous	Ongoing
	• **Develop harmonized donor compliance standards**, particularly for verification and reporting requirements, to ensure consistency across funding mechanisms. (Focal points: donors and partners).	Continuous	Not started
Access	• **Map potential access constraints** and develop an access strategy to ensure safe access to conflict zones and hard-to-reach areas. (Focal points: AWG)	By Q1 2025	Ongoing
	• **Strengthen or establish pre-arranged agreements** with local and international actors for smoother access negotiations (Focal points: Government Liaison, AWG and CMCoord).	Continuous	Ongoing
Emergency Shelters	• **Pre-validate a list of potential collective sites, using schools as last resort, in coordination with relevant authorities** (Focal points: Shelter, Education)	ASAP	Ongoing (discussion initiated)
	• **Conduct shelter readiness assessments** to identify gaps in shelter materials, water, sanitation and basic services. (Focal points: Shelter sector/WaSH sector)	ASAP	Not started

Cross-Sectoral Preparedness Actions

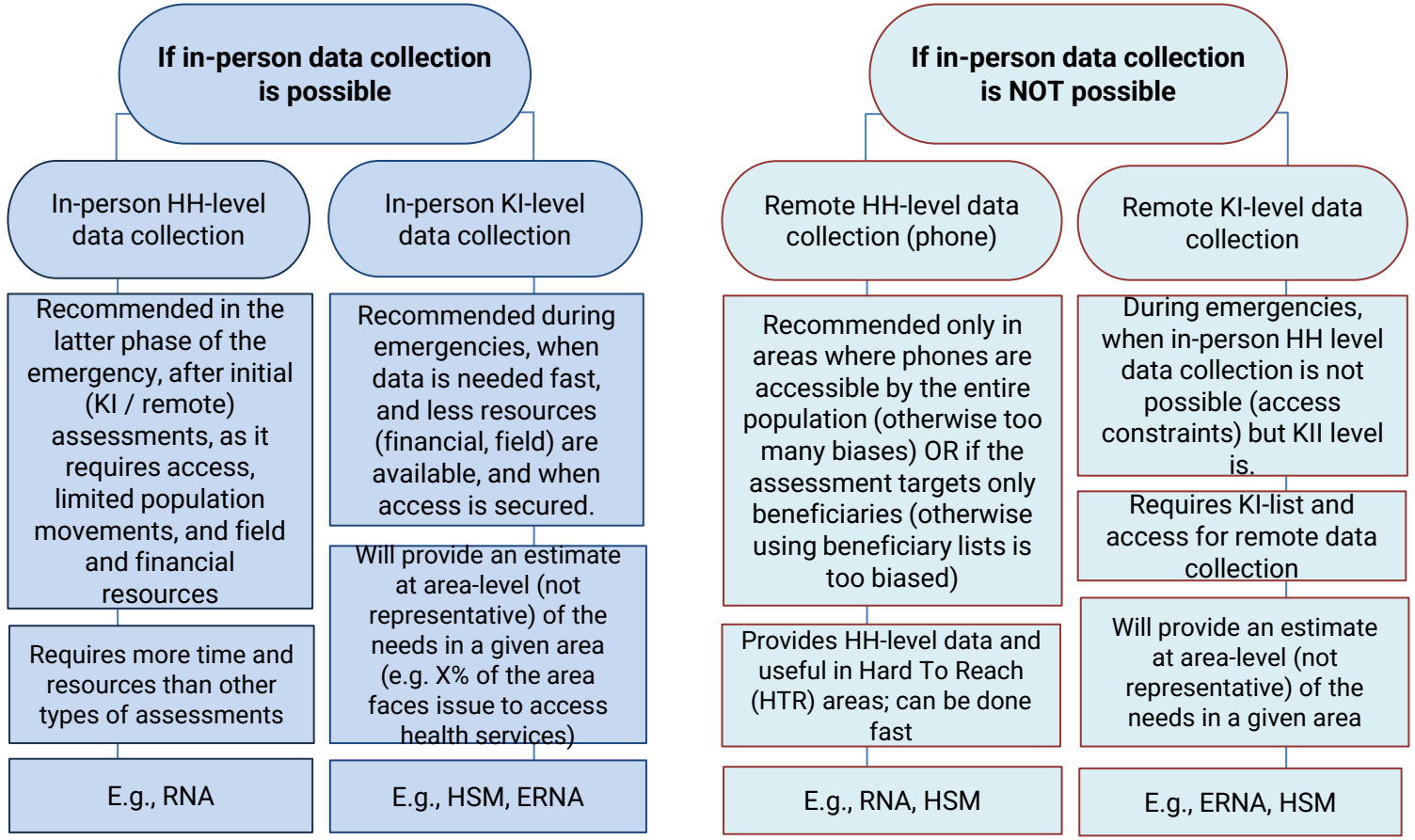
Priorities	Preparedness Actions	Timeline	Status
Coordination and Partner Engagement	• **Strengthen coordination frameworks between the ISCGs and relevant governmental entities, including existing ones,** with clear roles responsibilities, communication lines and referral pathways (Focal points: ISCG Co-chairs; HCT, govt)	Continuous	Ongoing
	• **Establish clear and standard guidance on how to register as an operational partner** (Focal points: ISCG Co-chairs; HCT, govt)	ASAP	Not started
	• Establish **joint operational frameworks** between key sectors to implement a multisectoral package of emergency assistance (Focal points: Sectors).	ASAP	Ongoing for cash
Information Management	• Establish/strengthen **data sharing agreements with MoSA & DRM** in advance (Focal points: HCT, ISCG).	ASAP	Planned
	• Prepare options for **coordinated rapid multi-sectoral needs assessments** (Focal points: AAWG, ISCG)	By Q1 2025	Completed
	• **Agree on Activity Info reporting and response monitoring frequencies** (Focal points: IMWG, ISCG)	Continuous	Ongoing
	• **Develop a tool identifying critical gaps across sectors**. (Focal points: IMWG, ISCG).	Continuous	Ongoing
	• **Update 3W information** (Focal points: IMWG, ISCG).	ASAP	Completed
Duty of Care	• **Establish comprehensive safety protocols and emergency plans** for humanitarian workers, including clear communication channels, security briefings, MHPSS resources and evacuation procedures for all staff. (Focal point: all partners)	Continuous	Ongoing

Coordination Structures and linkages with the Government

- **The LRP Intersectoral Coordination Group (ISCG) comprising 11 Sectors will support the technical coordination of the response led by the GoL through the MInistry of Social Affairs.**
  - The ISCG will facilitate coordination with ministries and inter ministerial committees to ensure that humanitarian principles are adhered to during all phases of the response. Each sector will continue to work closely with the relevant line ministries to ensure a coherent response.
  - Specific planning and coordination roles for displaced populations will be managed by UNHCR and UNRWA (according to their respective mandates), with the support of the ISCG in line with the inclusive LRP coordination structure.

- **In case special measures need to be activated this will be the decision of the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in consultation with the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.**
  - During the escalation of hostilities that peaked during the period of September-December 2024, the following government emergency coordination mechanisms were engaged: Disaster Risk Management (DRM) Unit, Government Emergency Committee (GEC), High Relief Council (HRC).
  - At the sub-national level, coordination (including Disaster Risk Reduction - DRR) will be managed by the governors' offices and local authorities (municipalities, heads of unions of municipalities).

Emergency rapid needs assessments (options)



Timeline and Key Actions

First 72 hours

1. ISCG co-Chairs convene an emergency meeting with relevant stakeholders to share preliminary information (scope of the crisis, government plans and assessment needs)
2. AAWG review jointly assessment tools and make recommendations
3. IMWG support to review partner mapping/3W/service mapping/Geosplit

Up to 10 days

1. Convene ISCG to discuss key points from AAWG/IMWG/subnational ISCG
2. Sectors provide feedback on information gaps and review assessment questionnaire

Beyond 10 days

1. Assessments take place
2. AAWG/ISCG/Sectors convene to discuss findings and inform response priorities
3. If necessary, sectors plan for additional sector-specific assessments

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Thank You