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**Terms of Reference**

**Protection Sector**

**National Protection Working Group**

**Background**

Lebanon hosts the largest Syrian refugee population in the region. In addition, in Lebanon there are more than 52,000 Palestine Refugees that fled from Syria as a consequence of the conflict. Since the outset of the influx in 2011, the Government of Lebanon and UNHCR have established an inter-agency (IA) mechanism to coordinate the humanitarian response. It now encompasses coordination within and across all sectors in all field locations and in Beirut, and has drawn on UN agencies’ and NGO comparative expertise, supported by an integrated information management system. Each sector has a working group which is led by government, UN and NGO agency according to these terms of reference. Working Groups for each sector are also established at field level to ensure strong and effective coordination close to the point of delivery and to enable decentralized operational decision making reflecting the protection priorities of the area. They also report to the national PWG.

**Structure**

The national Protection Working Group (PWG) is open to all humanitarian operational partners intervening in the Protection sector, be they Government, UN/inter-governmental organisations, or non-governmental organisations (both national and international) that are abiding by established humanitarian principles in the delivery of their humanitarian interventions (including SEA commitments) and have particular expertise in the field of Protection.

The PWG at the national level draws participation from protection-related forums and areas of responsibility. These include:

* Protection Working Groups (PWG) at the field level
* Child Protection in Emergencies Working Group (CPiEWG) at the national level
* SGBV Task Force at the national level
* The cross-sectoral Disability and Older Age Working Group, created at national level in June 2013

The PWG shall be led by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and UNHCR as per their leadership and specific accountability in the sector’s response.

In addition to the responsible UN agencies, the WG may appoint a NGO representative as co-lead. The NGO representative must be selected through a participatory and transparent process, and by wide agreement of the WG partners. The NGO co-lead should be from an organization with (a) recognised technical expertise in the sector, (b) operational capacity in the sector in the geographic area covered by the WG, and (c) the willingness and capacity to commit time and resources to the co-lead responsibilities. The WG may decide to have the NGO co-lead on a rotation basis.

**Accountabilities**

Consistent with the overall objectives, priorities and targets in the RRP, sector strategy documents, and other relevant national and regional strategies, the sector leads are accountable for:

* effective coordinated approach on protection issues as well as protection programming and programme implementation, supported by common needs assessments, gaps and capacities analysis, programme design, evaluation and reporting to maximize impact, prevent overlap and minimize gaps;
* sector planning and strategy development/ refinement, also through participatory initiatives reflecting age, gender and diversity mainstreaming (AGDM approach);
* ensuring that agreed in-country and global humanitarian/ protection standards and guidelines are met;
* contingency planning, preparedness, and capacity building in the field of protection;
* common advocacy and resource mobilization platforms; and,
* monitoring progress against key indicators and targets for the protection sector as set out in the RRP and other guiding documents.

**Responsibilities**

Sector leads share the following responsibilities:

1. Call regularly scheduled meetings to set strategies and monitor progress toward common targets, and share summary action points with all partners;
2. Share information about the evolving protection situations and trends, needs/gaps analysis to guarantee a common understanding by all partners of the sector’s needs, to ensure that the strategy’s objectives and targets are met;
3. Ensure that the sector has and shares accurate information about who is doing what where and when, to facilitate well-coordinated programme planning and implementation;
4. Encourage the use of common needs assessment and monitoring tools, and ensure timely and accurate reporting by all partners;
5. Promote the regular review of the sector strategy, and oversee that partners’ strategies are in line with the overall sector strategy and global standards specific to the sector;
6. Provide relevant inputs to the RRP and other relevant national and regional strategies and processes;
7. Provide technical support and guidance to the PWGs in the field, as well as to partners, and promote capacity building;
8. Participate in inter-sectoral inter-agency meetings and other relevant inter-agency processes to ensure that appropriate linkages are made with other sectors’ objectives and strategies and that protection is effectively mainstreamed in the work of the other sectors;
9. Maintain the relationship with relevant Government counterparts, the donor community, and other relevant humanitarian and development actors;
10. Identify common advocacy messages on core legal and physical protection concerns, especially for groups with specific needs and ensure that they are informing discussions in inter-sector meetings, the RRP6 Steering Committee, and the HCT;
11. Devise communication/ outreach strategies towards beneficiaries; and
12. Participate in contingency planning and preparedness processes.

**Core Group 🡪 See Annex I**

Given the number of participating agencies to the national PWG, in consultation with the sector Partners the PWG has agreed to form a Core Group of agencies for more in-depth review and guidance on matters of concern to the WG, and to enhance strategic direction, planning and inclusive decision-making.

**Technical Task Forces**

The PWG may agree to form specific Technical Task forces, on a temporary or permanent basis, to provide a forum of experts to address certain thematic issues that require concerted action.

**Principles of partnership**

PWG partners will commit to

adhere to recognized protection standards;

ensure predictable participation within the sector and engagement in its collective work including by nominating a focal point and alternate to participate to the PWG meetings;

ensure capacity and willingness to contribute to the strategic response plan and activities;

mainstream key programmatic cross-cutting issues (including age, gender, diversity);

work cooperatively with other sector partners and share information through the established mechanisms, including on organizational resources;

be ready to facilitate participation, including from local organizations.

An option is given to organizations who wish to attend in an observer status.

**Validity**

There is no time limit for the validity of these TORs; the TORs can be revised when the members agree to revise the document.

**Annex 1 - ToR of the Core Group (as per RRP6 Steering Committee Recommendations)**

**Protection Sector**

**National Protection Working Group - Beirut**

**Core Group**

Given the considerable number of participating agencies, in consultation with the Protection Working Group partners, a Core Group (CG) of sector partners is formed, for more in-depth review, guidance and proposal on matters of concern to the WG, and to enhance strategic direction, planning and inclusive decision-making.

The CG is collectively identified by the WG partners and is composed by agencies based on their

(a) operational engagement in the response under the RRP;

(b) representation of the various stakeholders in the sector;

(c) participation in the sector working groups and country presence/ coverage.

Co-leads are ex officio members of the CG, and will report to the full membership of the WG on the work by the CG. The CG membership should be representative of the overall sector partnership.

The CG will:

* Provide guidance and develop/refine the sector strategy, including with respect to setting priority interventions, targets and indicators;
* Monitor implementation of the sector’s objectives against the RRP and assist in the identification of significant gaps;
* Provide strategic oversight on the prioritization of resources within the sector and on the division of labour amongst the sector’s partners;
* Propose common processes related to the sector’s response, such as contingency planning, joint or sector-specific assessments, use of common data collection and information management tools for endorsement to the Working Group;
* Facilitate cross-sectoral coordination with other sectors;
* Strengthen advocacy efforts, including between the sector and donors;
* Support internal and external evaluation of the sector, and sharing of lessons learned.

**Members of the Core Group:** Sector coordinator, MOSA Representative, DRC (INGO), NRC (INGO), Oxfam (INGO), Help Age/Handicap International (representing the DaOAWG), Alef (NGO), UNHCR, UNRWA, UNICEF, IOM, SGBV Task Force and CP Coordinators (as needed).

**Endorsed by the National PWG on 23 April 2014**