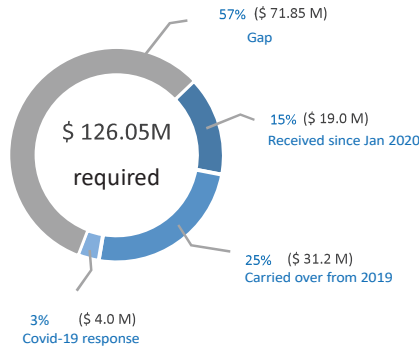


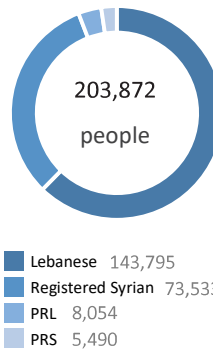


This dashboard summarizes progress made by partners involved in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and highlights trends affecting people in need. The Social Stability Sector in Lebanon aims to achieve the following results: **OUTCOME 1:** Strengthen municipalities, national and local institutions' ability to alleviate resource pressure; **OUTCOME 2:** Strengthen municipal and local community capacity to foster dialogue and address sources of tensions and conflicts; **OUTCOME 3:** Enhance LCRP capacities on tension monitoring and conflict sensitivity.

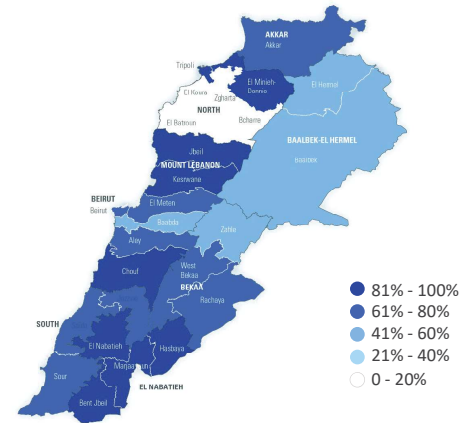
Funding Status as of 30 June 2020



of population reached by SoSt Partners



Mapping of negative Lebanese-Syrian relations for July 2020



PROGRESS AGAINST TARGETS



Outputs

reached / target

# of local participatory planning processes conducted	0 / 100
# of municipalities & union of municipalities benefiting from capacity building support	32 / 212
# municipal and community support projects implemented to address priority needs identified following participatory processes	9 / 200
USD invested in municipal and community support projects	\$ 1.5 m / \$ 66.2 m
# of new local and municipal dialogue and conflict prevention initiatives	2 / 135
# of youth-led initiatives implemented	24 / 251
# of youth engaged in social stability initiatives	6,833 / 35,000
# of municipalities reporting on social stability to MOIM central security cell	n.a / 600

0%

100%



Outcomes

LCRP 2017
Baseline

Reached by
June 2020

2020
Target

OUTCOME 1

	SYR	LEB	SYR	LEB	
% of people reporting positive impact of municipalities on their lives*	45%	64%	51%	53%	85%
% of people living in vulnerable areas reporting competition for municipal and social services and utilities as source of tension*	22%	34%	20%	25%	30%
% of people living in vulnerable areas who feel that they can voice concern with authorities in case of dissatisfaction*	29%	51%	31%	57%	70%

OUTCOME 2

% of people living in vulnerable areas able to identify conflict resolution mechanisms/actors in their community they would turn to*	92%	92%	94%	95%	95%
% of people displaying propensity for violence*	31%	53%	33%	67%	40%

OUTCOME 3

Proportion of LCRP partners informed on stability risks and trends and able to integrate conflict sensitivity in their programming**	75%	n.a			80%
Number of LCRP sectors taking steps to include social stability considerations in their work***	1	4			6

*: UNDP& ARK, Regular Perceptions Survey on Social Tensions

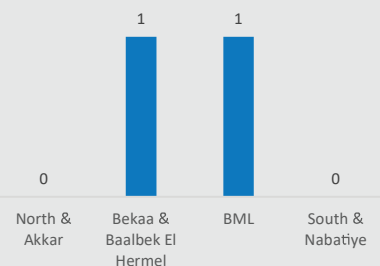
** : Conflict Sensitivity Mainstreaming Survey

***: LCRP 2020 Planning Process

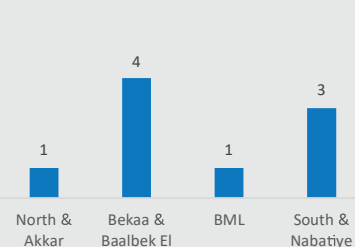


ANALYSIS

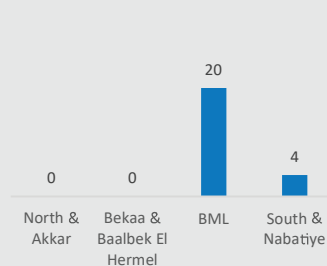
of new local and municipal dialogue and conflict prevention initiatives



municipal & community support projects implemented



of youth-led initiatives





KEY CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS LCRP IMPACT(S)

Over the first six months of the year, Social Stability Sector partners continued to work to prevent and mitigate intra- and inter-communal tensions by supporting municipalities to deliver services and alleviate resource pressure, support communities to foster dialogue (including peacebuilding activities) and expand tension monitoring. Due to the protests, socio-economic crisis and COVID-19 pandemic, the Sector's initial action plan was disrupted and some activities postponed. This situation also triggered a need for increased and renewed interventions from partners not necessarily grasped by previously defined interventions in the workplan of the sector. Effectively, several partners reported adjusting their activities or changing their focus based on several needs assessments during the first months of the year.



Facts and Figures

88% of people believe the Lebanese people have been good hosts to refugees since 2011

85% of people agree that the presence of so many Syrian refugees is placing too much strain on Lebanon's resources like water and electricity

33% of Syrian families have experienced verbal or physical harassment in the last three months

32% of people reported that current relations between Lebanese and Syrian individuals are negative in their areas

(Source: ARK & UNDP, Regular Perception Surveys of Social Tensions in Lebanon: Wave VIII - July 2020)

Social Stability partners reached most of their mid-year targets to alleviate resource pressure on municipalities by providing a combination of capacity building and infrastructural interventions and materials for municipalities to deliver services to communities. Overall, a total of 37 municipalities or Unions of Municipalities (UoM) (37% of the target) now have improved capacity to deliver municipal services that directly contribute to tension prevention and mitigation. Forty-two municipality staff were trained and are now better able to own delivery processes of municipal services to citizens, to communicate with communities, and to reorganise their support functions (namely HR, finance, procurement and other administrative processes now organised in line with relevant regulations). Women staff represent 16% of trainees. While this is a relatively low percentage, it is in line with the proportion of women working in municipal administrations. The construction or rehabilitation under basic services and community support projects enabled municipalities to alleviate pressure on education, health and agricultural sectors and improve service provision for beneficiaries. Since the beginning of the year, nine projects covering nine different municipalities were carried out. They include the rehabilitation of orchards and of vocational training centers among others. Furthermore, several initiatives proposing remote capacity building and infrastructure rehabilitations are also ongoing and planned for finalization by the end of the year¹.

Solid Waste Management (SWM) has often been a source of tension between communities, drawing specific attention from Sector partners. Support for direct SWM service delivery continued and overall, municipalities diverted 5,265 tons of waste during the first six months of 2020 with partner support. In addition to providing municipal services, this also contributed to mitigating tensions related to solid waste. Specifically, capacity building and operations management support allowed municipalities to capitalize on infrastructural investments provided in the last 24 months; thus, anchoring investments in sustainable and durable service delivery². As in 2019, the total tonnage of diverted waste is largely above the yearly objectives of the LCRP (5,260 tons as opposed to an initial objective of 175 tons). This is only one part of the work supported by partners to limit tensions around waste management. Complementary work that has not been reported yet includes ongoing activities from the workplan along as other tasks that were performed for the COVID-19 pandemic. It highlights not only the extent of the support provided by Sector partners but also the tremendous increase of needs.

In addition to local initiatives, the capacity to respond to rising tensions was improved at the national level thanks to the joint work of specialized teams working alongside ministries to strengthen internal processes and national policies. Specific outputs were reported, namely several guidance notes were published by the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM)³ and Ministry of Environment (MoE)⁴.

Two new dialogue mechanisms were also established at the community level, and existing mechanisms continued to be active in fostering dialogue and tension mitigation at the local level (173 were already created over the last three years). However, new initiatives fall behind the yearly objectives with only two new dialogue mechanisms fully established in 2020 so far (as opposed to an initial objective of 150). There are also 47 local groups currently actively engaged in their communities to perform their own conflict analysis and define peacebuilding activities that will take place until 2022.

1. Solely under the Lebanon Host Communities Support Programme (LHSP) developed under the framework of the UNDP response to the impact of the Syrian crisis in Lebanon (Lebanon Stabilization and Recovery Programme), 19 complementary other infrastructure projects were listed as ongoing and not achieved at the time of writing.

2. Such as NRC in the South, investing on municipalities where treatment infrastructure were built in 2019.

3. Guidance for human rights respect in municipal police interventions along with global support to municipal police initiatives in terms of communications.

4. MoE guideline on SWM under COVID crisis.

Given COVID-19 lockdown mitigation measures, activities were shifted towards leveraging on existing dialogue mechanisms and groups instead of setting up new ones. This allowed for quicker and more effective actions. The groups established in 2018 and 2019 were mobilized for assessments, context updates and tension mitigation in their communities in addition to the sector initial plan that accounts only for the creation of new groups. In general with COVID-19 general mobilization, projects carried out were focused on activities that could be done remotely. This resulted in shifting activities toward designing and implementing a communication campaign to counter fake news and stigmatization on social media, jointly elaborated by several international actors and MoPH. Sector partners also took the first six months of the year to invest in aid localization opportunities, with nine newly trained local organizations that are now able to establish dialogue mechanisms and steer tension mitigation at the local level. Mobilizing youth and journalists in these processes was challenging during this period. With the shift to mostly remote activities, only a limited number of youth were able to contribute to peaceful debates in their communities (the sector counts 6,833 youth engaged in peacebuilding initiatives at mid-year, with a final yearly objective of 35,000 youth to be reached in the second half of the year). However, this was achieved through social media moderation training which resulted in increased ability to identify and handle fake news. No new media organizations were mobilized and only eight journalists (seven men, one women) were successfully engaged, which represents 16% of the yearly objectives. Finally, training on conflict sensitivity and do no harm approaches are either ongoing or planned. LCRP partner training is planned for the second half of 2020. As of the mid-year point, seven monthly tension monitoring briefs out of fourteen planned for the year were published and disseminated through various channels, successfully feeding into strategy definition, coordination and capacity building of actors.



CHALLENGES

Rapid changes to the operating context in 2020 so far have hampered progress for sector partners. Both COVID-19 and Lebanon's compounded political and economic crises have increased pressure on partners, with funds being diverted and unavailable, as well as programme design and implementation difficulties and challenges to mobilize different actors. In parallel, needs have increased, as has pressure on partners to deliver services or support municipalities in service delivery to the increasing number of vulnerable people. These challenges occur in a context where the economic degradation directly contributes to increased tensions at the inter-communal but also now at the intra-communal level, along with the deterioration of state citizens relationship. As surveyed during the first half of the year, 23% of Lebanese reported negative relations between Lebanese themselves as opposed to 4% one year ago. This worsening of these key indicators stresses the need for renewed medium-term funding to address the above-mentioned challenges along with new activities to answer emerging needs.

Funds have been shifted to meet COVID-19 response needs, mostly in informal settlements. As of now and for the coming months, this led to the revision of the criteria of community-based initiatives supported by partners with a shift to micro-level initiatives (grassroot peacebuilding especially through aid targeting). The objective is to integrate both peacebuilding and aid together as a nexus, namely use delivery of goods, food, and cash support to finance services like electricity for peacebuilding purposes.

Municipalities are facing challenges in finding available budgets for activities, and this is likely to remain low. In 2019, the central government in charge of management of the Independent Municipal Fund (IMF) released the 2017 budget. Since then, further budget lines for 2018, 2019 and 2020 were reportedly not released to municipalities. Funding from the IMF remains on hold. This limits the ability of local authorities to provide basic services such as Solid Waste Management. It also limits partners' capacity to intervene as community support projects often require a co-funding from the local actors or local government counterpart. Program redesign including lifting of co-funding requirements by donors might be necessary to avoid a disruption of municipal services. In general, the current economic situation makes it difficult for partners to provide all kinds of service delivery with municipalities in general as basic procurement for civil work has become more complex due to bank restrictions and equipment price fluctuations.

Finally, partners have observed a decreased mobilization of local communities in fostering dialogue initiatives. This was explained by the focus of participants on other matters that they consider more pressing (such as ensuring stable revenues, engagement in protests among others). Given that this is critical in creating a favourable protection environment for vulnerable groups, especially considering the current situation, further work to mobilize of beneficiaries will be required.



KEY PRIORITIES AND GAPS FORESEEN FOR 2020

For the second half of the year, the sector's key priorities mainly revolve around two elements: strengthening partners capacities in tensions monitoring analysis and conflict sensitivity and ensuring the continuity of service delivery at municipal level to relieve pressures on resources and services as key points of tensions. The current crisis is increasingly leading to further tensions as well as incidents of violence. There is a high risks that these will increase throughout the second part of the year. A key priority for their sector will therefore be to build further capacity for conflict sensitivity mainstreaming and ensure that conflict sensitive approaches are tailored to the local context while relying on lessons learned and international best practices.

The second key priority for the Sector is to ensure continuity of social stability activities under Outcome 1 and Outcome 2 despite limited operational capacities and the rapidly evolving situation on the ground. Investing in research and analysis is needed to understand the evolving needs and to boost partners' capacity to meet those needs in the current operating environment. This will only be possible if funding gaps are addressed. As of now, funds released until the middle of the year were relatively limited and many opportunities did not materialize yet, namely community engagement mechanisms that are below the target halfway through the year. Other gaps and opportunities to be further studied and funded as identified by the sector are revolving around three key themes:

- developing area-based approaches;
- increased community support projects for vulnerable Lebanese; and
- increased work on communications related to peacebuilding along with countering fake news.



CASE STUDY

International Alert - A Dialogue Group Embarks on Research in a Dynamic Context

The Bekaa Dialogue Group is a conflict prevention mechanism established in 2015 as part of International Alert's Swiss-funded project. The group brings together Lebanese and Syrian activists to share their experience and expertise in order to address the concerns of the local communities, lead on initiatives such as awareness sessions and dialogue activities and promote understanding and build relationships between communities. The Covid-19 lockdown has reduced opportunities for initiatives in 2020 and planned townhall meetings were cancelled. Recognising that the context in the Bekaa has changed dramatically after the October 2019 protests and Lebanon's deepening economic crisis, the Bekaa Dialogue Group opted for conducting research in two municipalities with distinct social tensions and political dynamics: Majdal Aanjar and Riyak. The research was planned in response to increased community tensions arising from pressure on basic services and from the municipalities' limited capacities to respond to all community needs.

The community assessment with the two municipalities aims to generate a better understanding of the current needs, which will inform a tailored toolkit for municipalities to mainstream conflict and gender sensitivity in delivering services and help them design conflict- and gender-sensitive community initiatives. Following the assessment, in the second half of 2020 the Bekaa Dialogue Group will participate in the development of the toolkit and the implementation of community initiatives in partnership with the municipalities. Despite challenges with remote data collection, members of the group learnt how to use research methods to assess conflict and strengthened contacts with municipalities. In the upcoming phase, the municipalities, with the support from the Dialogue Group, will plan and implement initiatives that support social stability and do no harm.

"We believe that the assessment we are doing with municipalities is much needed at a time where municipalities of diverse communities need support in delivering services more justly. The process has provided the municipalities we are working with, with better understanding as to the importance of building trust with the communities not only to improve municipal fees collection, but also to have communities be part of the solution, instead of the problem." – a member of the Bekaa dialogue group who is part of the research process.

This is the first time the Bekaa Dialogue Group implements a research activity and seeks to identify how the Group can support municipalities in improving their services delivery. The capacity and trust established within the group over a multi-year dialogue process has allowed the group to both act as a conflict prevention mechanism and contribute to municipal capacity strengthening.