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UNDP

Conflict Sensitive Engagement with Local Authorities in Lebanon

Conflict Sensitivity Toolbox 2

1. Background

The Conflict Sensitivity Toolbox series is produced under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan's (LCRP) conflict sensitivity mainstreaming work, led by UNDP Lebanon in collaboration with House of Peace. In 2021, three guidance notes were developed to support implementing partners under the response framework. In 2022, this work is being further expanded with three conflict sensitivity toolboxes to provide partners with practical tips for getting started with conflict sensitivity within the unique context of Lebanon.

The second toolbox: *Conflict Sensitive Engagement with Local Authorities in Lebanon* aims to support partners to ensure that such engagement does not inadvertently do harm and is conflict sensitive. This toolbox has been developed through a consultative process with LCRP partners including UN agencies, international and local organizations, in order to identify concerns and best practices related to conflict sensitivity.

2. What is conflict sensitive engagement with local authorities and why is it important?

Improving or worsening inter-communal (refugee-host) and intra-communal (host-host or refugee-refugee) relationships have a long-lasting impact on the situation in Lebanon. Conflict sensitivity is pivital in ensuring that humanitarian and development interventions don't exacerbate or prolong existing conflicts, but rather contribute to mitigating tensions and improving the overall situation in the country. Moreover, engagement with local authorities be it the municipality, Mokhtar, or security forces for example (more in section B) is unavoidable and it needs to be approached sensitively due to the impact it has on all operations in the field. Hence adopting conflict sensitivity principles is highly needed during this engagement.

Conflict sensitive engagement with local authorities is a communication approach/strategy that intentionally takes into consideration the risks and factors that can increase or mitigate tensions and ensure sustainability of provided services, by maintaining open, transparent, and balanced relationships with different local authority actors.

The interaction between humanitarian and development organisations with local authorities has an impact on the relationships between communities (host and refugee) in each area of intervention. For instance, tensions between an NGO and a municipality or a Mokhtar around a service, might push the latter to spread rumours about the NGO programs or their target groups which can reinforce aid perception bias that is predominantly worsening perceptions between refugees and host communities. On the contrary, constructive relationships with local authorities can contribute, for instance, to prohibit evictions which mitigate and prevent tensions.

Hence, conflict sensitivity is highly important when engaging with local authorities in Lebanon. Further to this, inter-communal relations are at an all-time low – 34% of Lebanese and Syrian respondents report that they perceive relations as negative, an increase from 24% in January 2021 primarily due to competition over jobs. Antagonistic statements by political and religious figures are on the rise. Protection space is shrinking, including a surge in eviction threats and in actual evictions. With the removal of subsidies on basic goods, the communities remain highly concerned about their ability to access medicine and other goods and public services, which can further strain inter-communal relations.

34% of Lebanese and Syrian respondents report that they perceive relations as negative[1]

Local authorities play a key role in navigating all of these tensions. Local level institutions are still maintaining community approval, even as trust in central government institutions has been deteriorating since 2019. The role of municipal police in dispute resolution remains highly polarized and the role has decreased mirroring operational or financial challenges. NGOs and UN are trusted due to their increased roles in service delivery, but this comes with high levels of expectations - determined in large part by how NGOs and UN agencies interact with local authorities.

[1] UNDP Tension Monitoring System - August 2022

3. How is the toolbox structured?

The toolbox for *Conflict Sensitive Engagement with Local Authorities* is meant to provide a roadmap for thinking while designing, implementing and monitoring programs and communication strategies. It includes specific questions, available resources and practical tips to navigate relationships with local authorities. This toolbox contains not only conflict sensitivity resources, but also resources on other closely related topics which can help in achieving conflict sensitive outcomes in broader terms.

Because every organization and every area of intervention have their own specificities, the toolbox cannot provide answers that fit every situation. It is not meant to solve each and every challenge faced with local authorities. Additionally, due to the fast-changing nature of the context, partner organizations are encouraged to develop their own internal conflict sensitivity capacities while benefiting from this and other toolboxes. This document in particular, would help your team to take actions suitable for your specific needs from a conflict sensitivity point of view.

The toolbox is structured as per the following sections:

Section	Main items
● **Getting Started with Conflict Sensitivity**	● Having an internal conflict sensitivity definition ● Conflict Sensitivity Policy and focal point
● **Context Analysis**	● Context analysis planning and application ● Actors, relationships, and power dynamics mapping ● Connectors and Dividers
● **Opportunities & Risks**	Dilemmas and suggested actions around: ● Mission and public perception ● Data and information ● Operation Environment ● Safety and Security ● Services and Resources ● Access
● **Communication and Engagement Strategy and Plan**	Specific tips when: ● Developing your engagement plan with local authorities ● Preparing your delegation/yourself ● Preparing your messages ● Preparing for a meeting ● On meeting day ● After the meeting
● **Capacity Building**	● Conflict sensitivity, negotiation skills and other topics

Every section has several items. Some items are there to initiate internal discussions and reflections; others provide practical exercises or tools to be applied; some items are direct suggestions and tips for actions; and some highlight issues that need to be taken into consideration.

The toolbox is also meant to complement the Conflict Sensitivity Guidance Notes, I, II, and III developed in 2021 by UNDP and HOPe, and other sectoral and technical guidance notes.

4. Who can use the toolbox? When?

Since all LCRP partners, from UN agencies to local and international organisations, engage with local authorities, though at different scales, this toolbox tries to cover common aspects that could be of interest to most of those actors. Hence, it can be used by all LCRP partners as well as partners beyond the LCRP working in Lebanon.

Within the same organization, staff at all levels and departments can be part of the communication strategy or part of formal and informal communication with local authorities. Hence, the toolbox can be reviewed and used by anyone, though some items might not be relevant to all users.

Little to moderate knowledge in conflict sensitivity is needed to become familiar with some of the used terminology. However, in the following sections, references for beginner and advanced resources are included. The guidance note on Getting Started with Conflict Sensitivity in Lebanon # I would be of a great value here.

Intended users of the conflict sensitivity toolbox

- Senior/middle managers involved in program design
- Senior managers and human resource staff responsible for developing and governing internal policies and procedures
- Outreach team
- Communication and advocacy team
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning team
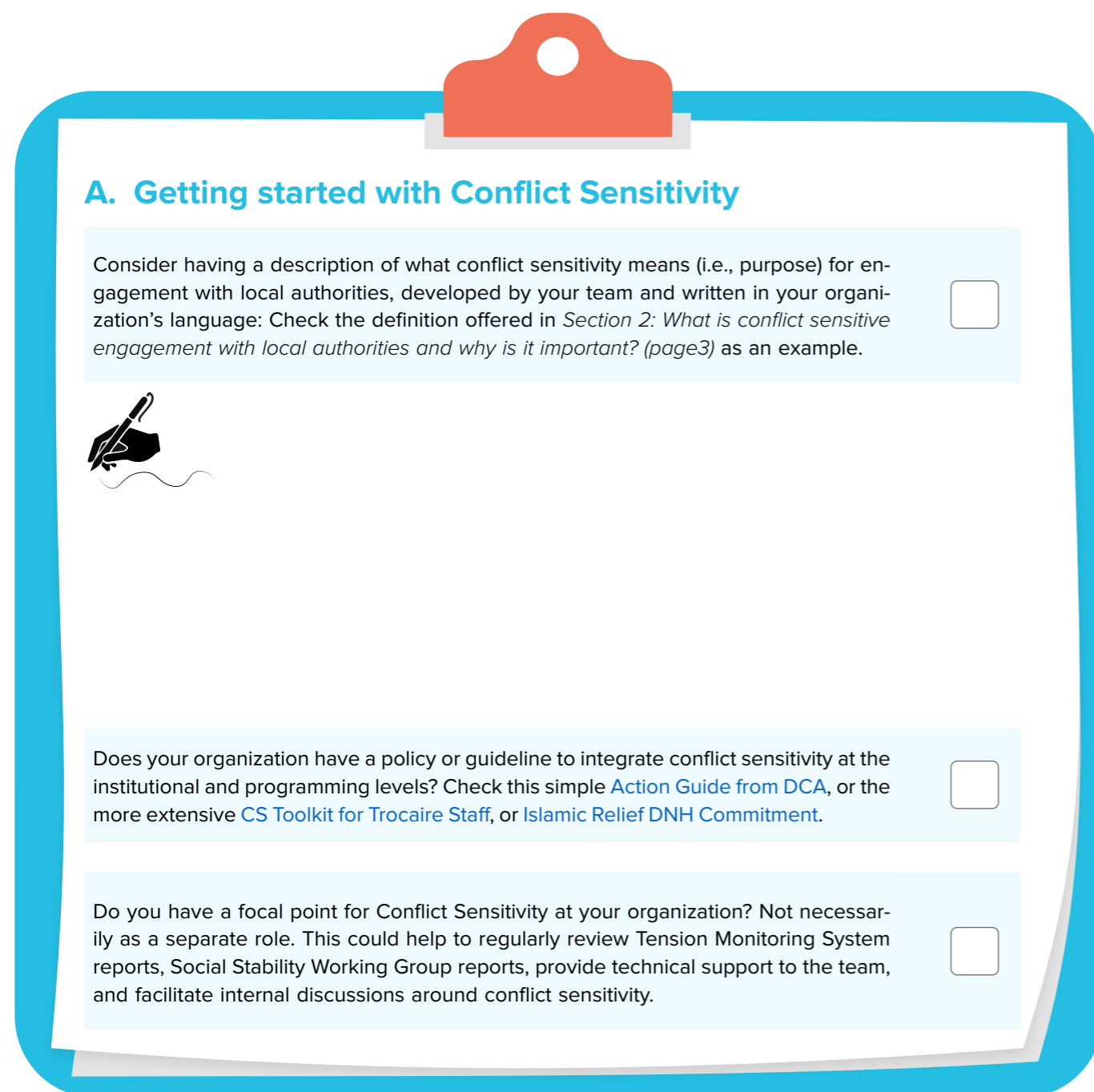- Program managers/coordinators

5. How can it be used?

This toolbox is best regarded as a roadmap for thinking, rather than a one-time exercise. It is helpful to treat it as a living document that you can resort to at all stages of your project duration.

Most importantly, the toolbox is recommended to be used at the early stages of program design (e.g., kick off meetings), also throughout the project implementation and evaluation (e.g., regular evaluation meetings).

Some items in the toolbox address micro issues (i.e., programs), that can be dealt with locally and internally at different managerial levels. Some other items highlight macro issues (i.e., policies) that need to be communicated and addressed with donors or other agencies.

Go through all suggested items, and filter those not relevant to your organization or intervention. Tick off items completed, or make comments on what actions you are considering to take.

A. Getting started with Conflict Sensitivity

Consider having a description of what conflict sensitivity means (i.e., purpose) for engagement with local authorities, developed by your team and written in your organization's language: Check the definition offered in *Section 2: What is conflict sensitive engagement with local authorities and why is it important? (page3)* as an example.

Does your organization have a policy or guideline to integrate conflict sensitivity at the institutional and programming levels? Check this simple Action Guide from DCA, or the more extensive CS Toolkit for Trocaire Staff, or Islamic Relief DNH Commitment.

Do you have a focal point for Conflict Sensitivity at your organization? Not necessarily as a separate role. This could help to regularly review Tension Monitoring System reports, Social Stability Working Group reports, provide technical support to the team, and facilitate internal discussions around conflict sensitivity.
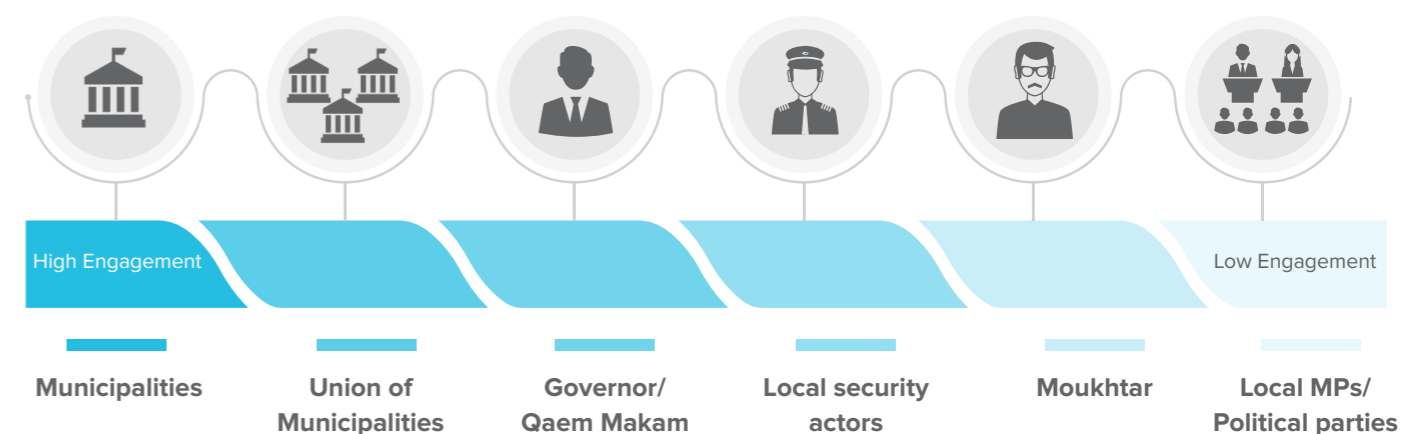
B. Context Analysis

Consider reflecting on the following trends with your team during the inception and the proposal writing phases.

TREND 1

Different local authority actors exist in your area of intervention with different levels of power and influence, different priorities, and different needs and concerns. Be aware of all actors that influence your area of intervention and make intentional decisions of where to invest time and effort in communication.

Based on the consultation workshop, this is the ranking and scale of local authority actors based on the level of engagement (frequency/scope of communication, collaboration, and partnerships) with LCRP partners:

High Engagement   Low Engagement

| Municipalities | Union of Municipalities | Governor/ Qaem Makam | Local security actors | Moukhtar | Local MPs/ Political parties |

TREND 2

Relationships with local authorities are different from one actor to another and from one area of intervention to another. In addition, the relationships can also change over time: sometimes rapidly. Therefore, it is dangerous to make assumptions; we need to analyse and update our understanding of the uniqueness of each local context regularly.

Have you budgeted for a context analysis in your project to look at the specificities of each area of intervention? ☐

Have you allocated time for it in your work plan (not only at the inception phase but also within the project implementation)? ☐

Have you carried out context analysis and applied it to inform or adapt your programs? ☐

Have you considered including representatives of local communities and representatives of local authorities to ensure a variety of perspectives in your analysis (including women, PwD, youth, elderly)? ☐

Have you integrated gender sensitivity measures for your context analysis? Check Gender Sensitive Conflict Analysis: a Facilitation Guide, 2020, by Safer World, in addition to this simple course on Gender-Based Analysis Plus by the Government of Canada. ☐

Actors Mapping: Consider identifying key local authority actors in your area of intervention who might influence your program. Determine their level of Legitimacy, Resources, and Networks to identify KEY actors with high influence. Highlight the main needs and main concerns of each actor. This will help you customize your strategy for communicating with each key actor in respectful and effective ways.

Area	e.g. Bourj Hammoud				
Actor	Legitimacy (elected/ appointed/ imposed)	Resources	Networks/ Connections	Main need	Main Concern
e.g. Moukhtar	Elected/ high popularity	Lack of institutional financial resources. Political support	Affiliated with a political party...	Technical support and financial resources	Losing popularity
....					

Relationships & Power Mapping: Consider conducting actor and relationship mapping to unpack different power dynamics between local authorities themselves and with other stakeholders including your organization (LNGOs, INGOs). Identify best entry points when approaching different actors. Check this Conflict Analysis Framework: Field Guidelines and Procedures by CDA page 45. ☐

Connectors & Dividers analysis: Have you identified key Connectors and Dividers in your area of intervention between refugees and Lebanese and among Lebanese people themselves, as well? Check Guidance I, Understand the Context. Also, check the Tension Monitoring System dashboard, VASyR and other external reports. ☐

Have you explained your working/contracting/implementation modalities well to your partners before engaging in any activity with the local community? ☐

Ensure communicating those factors/risks with your donors. Write an email to your donor titled "Conflict Sensitivity considerations" that includes factors related to the field, and to their policies to enhance accountability by all actors. ☐

Do you have a procedure for "good enough" context analysis during emergency interventions? Check CARE emergency toolkit, or World Vision GECARR ☐

C. Opportunities & Risks

Reflect on the following opportunities, challenges and suggested measures when engaging with local authorities and add new ones specific to your context:

01 | **Mission and public perceptions:** *What is expected from each side and how their actions are perceived by the served communities.*

Humanitarian and development actors and local authorities have an interest to be perceived positively by local communities as service and aid providers.

▶ See how you can consider the image of local authorities in your intervention as a way to build trust. Be mindful not to compete over local communities' acceptance intentionally or unintentionally (e.g. don't talk negatively about local authorities in front of local community members).

Sustainability of services is a major common interest between organizations and local authorities to ensure consistency of delivery from one side and exit strategy of organizations from the other side.

▶ Discuss sustainability openly with local authorities without assuming responsibility over them. Assess with them their capacity to continue delivering a certain service after you exit their area. Try to draft a realistic mid-term plan including clear progress indicators.

Some municipalities have low influence over the community in the region; particularly small municipalities in comparison with big INGOs in the same area.

▶ Make sure to collaborate with small municipalities, and to include them effectively in your programs as this can be a great opportunity to improve their roles and enhance their perceptions and legitimacy.

Due to increased needs and expectations of local authorities priorities have shifted more towards meeting short-term needs rather than medium to longer term ones.

▶ Consider including components with immediate impact when suggesting medium to longer term interventions with local authorities (e.g., solar energy installation, water pumping solutions).

Some municipalities try to create bonds with NGOs/INGOs for political reasons, especially when they consider these organizations as gatekeepers to large number of people or funding.

▶ Always check whether aid is diverted for political purposes. Ensure independence from political influence in all your interventions. Prioritize the selection of projects with relatively low operation and maintenance costs.

▶ Design projects in a way to include equipment/machinery/spare parts needed to facilitate maintenance costs and ensure sustainability.

▶ Enhance your internal transparency and anti-corruption procedures.

The composition of some municipal councils is very diverse in terms of political affiliation of the council members.

▶ Make sure to involve everyone in your discussions and agree together on the priorities and distribution of roles.

Local authorities have an interest to be reelected or reappointed.

▶ Specific attention around election periods to avoid aid to be misused as electoral bribe.

High visibility of local and international organizations at the expense of local authorities might further weaken perceptions about local authorities and weaken the role of existing local structures and institutions.

▶ Include local authorities personnel in your capacity building plan. Use media and visibility as an incentive to enhance collaboration with local authorities.

Unions of Municipalities might not be representative of all villages in the area or might be in competition with other local authorities over influence and decision making.

▶ Make sure to consider areas that might have been unintentionally excluded from your communication with Unions in your context analysis and actor mapping.

02 | **Data and Information**

Some local authority actors have data on local communities that can be of a high value for needs assessment and project design. The data might not be complete and need to be reviewed and updated.

▶ Include local authorities in needs assessments to benefit from their data at an early stage, give them credit for their past or current work, which mitigates future pressure on selection criteria.

▶ Train municipalities and Mokhtars to digitalize their work, and provide them with necessary equipment.

Local authorities complain of insufficient information about aid and distribution methods or processes.

▶ Make sure to share with local authorities the information you share with local communities about your services and registration process, if applicable.

Local authorities may spread misinformation and rumors about the target groups and eligibility criteria of the services offered by organizations to increase pressure by host communities towards organizations (e.g., rumors that you only serve refugees).

▶ Update your information on your social media, and develop your complaint mechanism to detect where such misinformation came from. If the source was local authorities , ensure to address it with them in a friendly manner through official communication that can be made public without embarrassing the local authority (e.g., open letter addressed to the local authority and shared through your social media, inviting them publicly to share your available services with the local community).

03   Operating Environment

New projects create new job opportunities in the area of intervention including labor-intensive jobs.

▶ With all contractors, include a clause about recruiting and procuring locally with a clear percentage, and share this with the local authority.

▶ Review some requirements to meet good-enough standards that are available locally.

Sometimes, local authorities' needs are different from those set by the national authorities.

▶ Use the granular needs assessment as a way to build trust with local authorities, advocating on their behalf with donors.

Some activities might not be welcomed by some local authorities due to cultural or religious reasons.

▶ Ensure that activities are in line with the culturally accepted criteria of both local authorities and local communities.

▶ Analyze the situation and check if there is any misunderstanding, or if there is any legitimate reason why the activity is problematic and address that. If the problem is due to differences in values, be prepared to find alternative venues that are not close to local authorities influence areas.

Lack of trust towards NGOs.

▶ Don't assume the root causes for lack of trust. Try to understand why it is the case (e.g., background of donor, previous negative experience with another organization...). hold regular meetings to introduce your work and your mission. Trust takes time.

Mokhtars play a major role in issuing legal documents, or intervening to solve conflicts.

▶ Provide capacity building on human rights or other technical skills to advance their capacities and build further trust with them.

Some new Members of Parliament might be open to engage in constructive conversations with humanitarian actors.

▶ Consider opening channels with your local Members of Parliament. Be mindful not to be perceived as part of or affiliated with any MP political team of consultants.

04   Safety and Security

Mediating with local authority actors in case of increased tensions can contribute to avoiding evictions.

▶ Highlight the role of Local Authorities. Consider communicating any issue directly with the LCRP Inter-Agency Coordinators or the Central Tension Task Force to mediate. Showcase Local Authorities as champions playing a positive role in the community and shed light on their work.

Competition or disruption of activities by excluded municipalities during a project implementation in overlapping areas, might take place if one or more relevant Municipalities were excluded.

▶ in your actors mapping, scan all relevant actors in your area of intervention, and ensure including all relevant municipalities when working in overlapping areas.

Local authorities might abuse provided resources to sustain their clientelism channels and to discriminate against others.

▶ Include public survey in your monitoring tools to assess public impressions about the services provided in their area. Address any raised issues with the municipality arguing that negative perceptions will affect their acceptance among the local community.

In cases where human resources are not the issue, local authorities might still be reluctant to interfere in cases of conflicts which leave a space for tension to spread or increase in the future.

▶ Consider providing capacity building on conflict transformation and informal conflict resolution mechanisms to local authority personnel to find how conflicts can be turned into opportunities, and how they can benefit to improve their role in the community.

Local authorities can provide security support for protection to partners and their staff during specific activities.

▶ Highlight in your security and risk management plan how and when you resort to local authorities for support and protection. What measures are in place to mitigate unintentional harm. Make sure not to associate your organization with security personnel.

Risks

The use or demonstration of force or arms even in case of providing protection to humanitarian workers, can send wrong messages.

▶ Refrain from resorting to security personnel as much as possible. When needed, provide them with enough capacity building on how to deal with your local residents and beneficiaries.

05 Services and Resources

Opportunities

Local authorities might be lacking human and financial resources to deliver their services.

▶ Include in your needs assessment, a clear section about the capacity of local authorities in liaison to your planned activities. See where you can complement their efforts rather than duplicate or substitute.

Risks

Pressures on resources and services can push local authorities to be more exclusive in their service provision.

▶ Acknowledge the additional burden casted on local authorities due to the economic crisis. Check how you can contribute to alleviate some of that burden.

06 Access

Opportunities

Local authorities can support in facilitating access to some areas (such as informal tented settlements).

▶ Highlight the role of local authorities in your communication, while avoiding giving legitimacy to certain actors acting as dividers (e.g., Shawish).

Risks

Municipalities might interfere to impose or reject certain service providers or contractors.

▶ Make your calls open and accessible for all contractors. Share the calls with local authorities ahead of time and ask them to share them with their circles. Inform them about the selection process to mitigate their interference. Ensure high level of transparency and make relevant information accessible.

Intervention in areas where municipalities were dissolved.

▶ Check with the Inter-Agency, sector coordinatora and other organizations with whom they coordinate and consider reaching out to the Governor or Qa'em Makam.

D. Communication & Engagement Strategy and Plan

Consider developing a communication strategy including a specific section for engagement with local authorities. This can cover:

Procedures for mapping and identifying key actors during new interventions. ☐

Procedures for planning a negotiation process (this toolbox can be used for that). ☐

Instruments, channels and means of communication: offline and online. ☐

Methods of communication: frequency of formal meetings, follow-up procedures, internal feedback and referral and complaint mechanisms. ☐

Coordination with other organizations including LCRP partners. ☐

Check this Negotiation Manual by the Centre of Competence on Humanitarian Negotiation. This can assist your team who is engaged in preparing direct communication or negotiation with local authorities. Participate in training opportunities related to Humanitarian Negotiation Training for example those organized in Lebanon by NRC/LHIF. ☐

Consider including a section in all your project designs and workplans about engagement with local authorities. Allocate time for preparation and meetings. ☐

When developing your engagement plan with Local Authorities

Reflect on the below observation from the consultation workshop ☐

Q: To what extent you engage with Local Authorities for the following reasons:

Never ↔ **Always**

Reason	Score
Co-design program/project	2.5
During needs assessment	3.6
Informing/discussing selection criteria	3.1
Informing/coordinating activities	4
Mediating a problem in the community (e.g., eviction, erupted violence)	3.7
Addressing a compliant from the authority itself	3.6
Securing access	3.6
Outreach to local communities	4.3

Communication with local authorities should not be centered only around requests and operational needs of the organization. Consider engaging with local authorities prior to that to build trust (e.g., reflections on communities needs, co-designing projects) and address their needs and those of their communities. Determining the type of relationship with local authorities starts from the very first phase of any project cycle. ☐

Organize high level meetings with different key local authority actors in a specific region (not only municipalities) each year to introduce your organisation mission and vision without any operational requests. Be prepared to answer questions related to your programs (e.g., selection criteria). Coordinate with LCRP Inter-Agency at national and sub-national levels, Social Stability Sector, and Central Tension Task Force for connections with MoIM when needed. Consider organising this along with other organizations. ☐
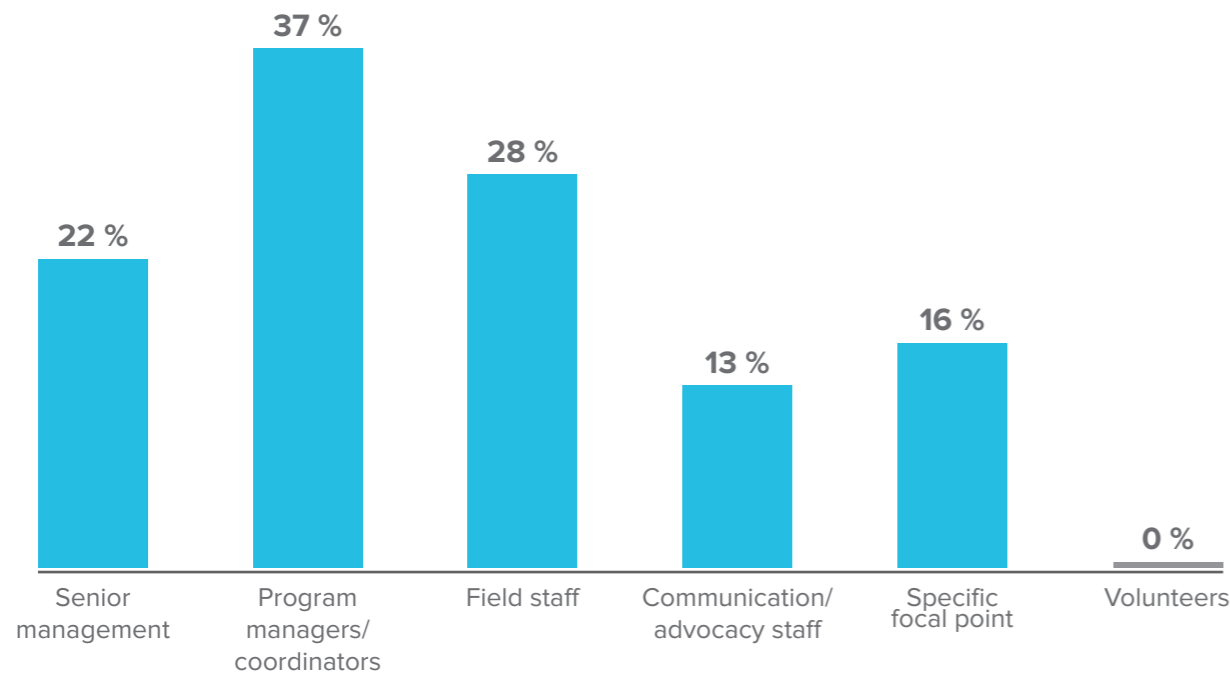
Schedule regular meetings with key local authorities for updates throughout your project cycle. This makes communication smoother especially in case of emergency (in comparison with ad-hoc meetings). ☐

Identify allies in your area of intervention with positive connections with local authorities. Those can act as mediators whenever needed. Consider building principled-based relationships with them. *The Actors Mapping* (page 9) is useful here. ☐

Reflect on this observation from the consultation session and how it applies to your organisation: ☐

Q: Who is responsible for communication with local authorities in your organisation?

- Senior management: **22 %**
- Program managers/coordinators: **37 %**
- Field staff: **28 %**
- Communication/advocacy staff: **13 %**
- Specific focal point: **16 %**
- Volunteers: **0 %**

When preparing your messages: "*The point of a humanitarian negotiation is not to prove one vision is superior to the other but to build a trusting relationship conducive to reaching an operational agreement* ". ☐

Don't forget to always acknowledge/remind that the primary responsibility of saving lives should be held by the local and national authorities and your responsibility is to support those efforts. This is necessary (regardless of the actual situation) to maintain a solid discourse around accountability, mitigating the substitution effect, and to induce change in perceptions even on the longer term. ☐

What is the unified message/request/complain/response we would like to share with a specific key actor? Prepare the messages in Arabic. This must be updated regularly. ☐

Make space to include the perspective of local authorities. ☐

Prepare a shorter version of your message if you couldn't secure all necessary time to share your message in full. ☐

What are channels/outlets suitable for each message: social media, official meetings etc. ☐

Invite your focal point to meet with your identified allies. ☐

Consider holding regular meetings with other organizations working in the same area (or encourage your implementing partners to do so) to reflect jointly on each organization's collaboration with municipalities, limitations, any complementarities, or potential for referrals. Consider including local actors identified as Connectors in your analysis. ☐

Managing expectations is crucial to avoid disappointments and negative reactions. Be clear (but not powerless) in your messages about your limitations in the face of the dire economic situation. ☐

Consider having a quarterly message communicated with your donors that cover challenges and dilemmas related to their policies and regulations. This is one type of ongoing advocacy to address macro issues (e.g., predetermined intervention areas, imposed selection criteria or percentages). ☐

"The point of a humanitarian negotiation is not to prove one vision is superior to the other but to build a trustful relationship conducive to reaching an operational agreement [2]

What is the **specific** and **realistic** objective of the meeting with local authorities ? (e.g., reaching better understanding of challenges related to the selection of external contractors). Having clear and specific objectives sets the framework of discussion taking into consideration all factors (e.g., time and deadlines).

Do you have an agenda for the meeting? Have you shared it with the local authority ahead of the meeting?

Have you considered the timing of the meeting?

Identify **agreed facts** related to the discussed matter between both sides to start the dialogue (e.g., the dire humanitarian situation, pressures on municipalities...)

Identify **contested** facts to be clarified with factual evidence (e.g., numbers of refugees, types of provided support by NGOs)

Identify **convergent norms** or **principles** to be highlighted and appreciated (e.g., protecting the stability of Lebanon, providing aid to host community as well).

Identify divergent norms to be negotiated (e.g., the right of refugees to access services).

[2] https://frontline-negotiations.org/home/resources/field-manual/

Prepare your red lines based on your organization's mission and values, and your donors' requirements. Red lines are guidelines for your engagement. Be clear about them. Anticipate your counterpart red lines as well.

Prepare your argument of why your red lines are as such highlighting conflict sensitivity concerns to increase local authorities' awareness around these concerns and issues.

Prepare your second and third best options for your negotiations. If you cannot show flexibility, trust can hardly be built.

List potential follow-up mechanism to be discussed during the meeting.

Check with partners if they have MoU signed with the local authority you are engaging with. Any lessons learnt from their engagement?

Consider any culture-specific issues that need to be taken into consideration during the meeting (clothing, food and beverage, fasting, seating).

On the meeting day

Highlight the purpose, objective, and agenda of the meeting. Ensure your counterpart endorsement. ☐

Adopt principled negotiation approach and look for win-win options. Focus on interests not on positions. Explain your need/interest and seek understanding of what lies beneath expressed positions (i.e., your counterpart need or interest). ☐

See where your needs and the needs of local authorities' institutions meet. ☐

Avoid talking negatively about other organizations. This can send a wrong message about competition between humanitarian organizations. ☐

Try to come up with practical and measurable steps to be followed up on. ☐

After the meeting

Share the minutes of meeting internally within your organization. ☐

Share the minutes of meeting with your counterpart where applicable. ☐

Agree on who and how will be following up on agreed steps. Make space for bilateral monitoring. Identify measures of success to determine the right monitoring mechanism. ☐

Prepare agreements or MoUs to be signed where applicable. ☐

E. Capacity building

Consider capacity building in negotiation skills and approaches for your focal points and program coordinators. Adopt principled negotiation and interest-based approach for your capacity building. Consider Humanitarian Negotiation training organized in Lebanon, for example by NRC and LHIF.

Consider providing training to your employee staff and volunteers on the principles of conflict sensitivity, GBV, Safeguarding, and PSEA.

Organize meetings between interested international and local agencies in your area of intervention, to discuss possibilities for an interagency capacity building initiative. Refer to Toolbox 3: *Institutionalizing Conflict Sensitivity at the Organizational Level* .

Consider including representatives of local authorities (e.g. municipalities) in your capacity building plans to build stronger bridges with them and capacitate them around humanitarian principles, approaches, and negotiation.

Acknowledgement

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