

Lebanon Host Communities Support Project:

# LHSP Evaluation

United Nations Development Programme

مشروع دعم المجتمعات اللبانية المضيفين

UNDP-S

Adam Smith  
Institutional

SAF/14/1

# Table of Contents

---

<b>Acronyms/Abbreviations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>8</b>
LHSP Background	8
Scope and Methodology of the Evaluation	8
Structure of the Project	9
<b>Programme Process</b>	<b>10</b>
MRR Process	10
Project Implementation	11
MSS Process	12
<b>Programme Governance and Management</b>	<b>14</b>
Engagement with Municipalities	14
Government Roles and Responsibilities	15
M&E and Reporting	16
Coordination	17
<b>Summary of Results and Achievements</b>	<b>18</b>
Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities	18
Capacity of Local Actors to Deliver Services	18
Local Level Dispute Resolution and Community Security	20
Strengthen Capacity of the Lebanese Government to Respond to the Crisis	20
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>22</b>
Criteria for Municipal Selection and Funding	22
Empowering Government Actors	22
Scaling Up	23
Peace-building Component	24
Livelihoods Component	24
Capacity Development for Municipalities	25
Resilience Agenda and Strategic Orientation	25
Internal Organisation of LHSP	26
Programme Design and Theory of Change	26
M&E and Reporting	28
Modality for Donor Support	29
 <b>Figures</b>	
Figure 1: Illustration of Theory of Change .....	28
Figure 2: Proposed Theory of Change .....	28

**Tables**

Table 1: Number of Projects by Type and Total Value	11
Table 2: Number and Value of Projects by Sector	19

# Acronyms/Abbreviations

---

CDR	Council for Development and Reconstruction
LCRP	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
LHSP	Lebanon Host Communities Support Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoIM	Ministry of Interior and Municipalities
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MRR	Maps of Risks and Resources
MSS	Mechanisms of Social Stability
OoPM	Office of the Prime Minister
TG	Technical Group
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

# Executive Summary

---

The Lebanon Host Communities Support Project (LHSP) was established in 2013 in order to respond to the Syria Crisis. It is the largest programme<sup>1</sup> in the UNDP's country portfolio and UNDP's main contribution to the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. The Government of Lebanon has indicated that it should be one of the main vehicles for donor assistance for the Lebanon crisis. Adam Smith International has been retained to conduct an evaluation of LHSP focusing on the programme's design, its achievements, management, and future directions. The research, analysis and drafting for the evaluation was done in September and October of 2016.

The main elements of the programme process are as follows:

- **"Maps of Risks and Resources" (MRR) process.** The MRR is a participatory process by which local stakeholders identify and prioritise projects to address the risks and problems created by the crisis. This has been implemented in all 251 of the localities identified as most vulnerable by the UN. The delivery of the process has now been taken over by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), which overall has a very high level of ownership of the process. MRRs are being used by municipalities to engage with donor-funded projects and coordinate aid, and are seen by many municipalities as effective and empowering tools. It is notable however that Syrians do not participate in the process and there are expected to be delays between completion of the MRR process and implementation of projects due to the lack of a clear funding pipeline.
- **Project implementation mechanism.** LHSP has delivered 382 projects in 120 municipalities, with combined budgets of \$38.4m. Some of the largest sectors funded are waste water, recreational spaces and education. The mechanism is impressive: it is scalable and well-designed to produce quality projects using transparent procurement procedures. Tied funding with short funding periods, however, makes implementation challenging and can also undermine the prioritisation done at local level.
- **"Mechanism of Social Stability" (MSS) process.** The MSS is a process to help local actors map conflict, design peace-building activities and a structure to deliver them, as well as to provide some initial training and facilitation for those activities. The process is logical and well-structured and the methodology for participatory conflict mapping is strong. The process has been launched in 44 areas, covering 75 villages or municipalities. The process was dropped in 9 of these areas and is completed or ongoing in the others. At the time of writing, activities were ongoing in the majority of areas in which the process had been completed. The MSS process, however, is often resisted at local level and some donors do not have strong visibility over it.

While some improvements could be made in each area, overall the programme approach is very strong.

The main elements of programme management and governance are:

- **Engagement with municipalities.** The programme prioritises the 251 most vulnerable localities - these are defined as the localities with the highest proportion of Syrians to the Lebanese population (including the poorest Lebanese). A funding formula gives a fixed allocation of \$100,000 per locality plus a portion awarded on a per capita basis. The approach used is technically sound and very well suited to the context. In particular, it is transparent and prevents the process from becoming politicised. There may be an issue concerning the accuracy of population statistics but this is probably solvable.
- **National level roles and responsibilities.** The programme has strong leadership and ownership from national authorities, especially MoSA. The programme's Technical Group serves the very important purpose of linking locally-defined priorities to national level policies and plans.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation and reporting.** The programme has very strong project-level monitoring and reporting. The programme also has evidence of results at the level of impact or outcome, via the SenseMaker methodology. While a full M&E framework is not yet in place, the key elements needed for it are present.
- **Coordination.** The programme is involved in coordination at the national level, via UNDP and LCRP structures, and at the regional level, via inter-agency LCRP working groups. Municipalities are also using MRRs as coordination tools. These coordination activities are not, however, fully reported to donors.

---

<sup>1</sup> In this report LHSP is described as a "programme" rather than a project. "Programme" is the appropriate terminology for a set of Government objectives implemented through a large number of different activities and projects.

With respect to programme management and governance, the general picture is that all of the needed elements are in place, although these elements can be strengthened.

Overall, the programme's main achievements in its four targeted areas of results are:

1. **Livelihoods and economic opportunities.** LHSP has delivered 86 livelihoods projects with combined budgets of \$11m. This includes a wide range of activities including 'livelihoods infrastructure', support to cooperatives, support to business start-ups and SMEs and vocational training. Statistics on job creation for most of the economic projects were not available at the time of writing. It is generally agreed that impact in this sector has been somewhat constrained by short-funding timelines and the hesitance of some donors to fund comprehensive, "whole of value-chain" interventions.
2. **Capacity of local actors to deliver services.** LHSP has delivered 296 projects related to local service delivery with combined budgets of \$27.6m. Municipalities have been the primary beneficiaries of these projects and as such have experienced significant development of their capacity to deliver services - although probably still somewhat short of the total investment needed. The MRR process and resulting projects have had a number of other positive benefits for municipalities, including improving their attitudes to participatory processes and developing their confidence to develop project proposals and take them to donors. LHSP has not yet taken on formal capacity development processes.
3. **Local level dispute resolution and community security.** LHSP has proven that its interventions can have a positive impact on tensions and local conflict dynamics, via the SenseMaker methodology. It has a number of recorded instances where reduction in tension as a result of its interventions has occurred. It has an effective and fairly saleable methodology for planning and implementing peace-building activities. Spending on peace-building was \$4.6m. A completed and fully implemented M&E framework would allow for more comprehensive reporting of results.
4. **Capacity of the Lebanese government to respond to the crisis.** LHSP has had a very positive impact on MoSA. MoSA has fully embraced its leadership of the programme at national level and local level (via its Social Development Centres). The technical capacity and attitudes of SDC staff have been enhanced. There is also some evidence of government-led planning processes at the national level starting to change as a result of LHSP having created linkages between the centre and the local level. Spending on capacity development within MoSA was \$1.2m.

Overall, government, donors and UNDP should be satisfied with results to date.

This report found that the design of the programme is strong and highly suited to its context. It makes a number of recommendations to strengthen it further:

1. **Develop an approach for dealing with population data issues.** Problems with the data on Lebanese and Syrian populations make selection of municipalities and the funding formula less objective. However, simply updating the data may cause exactly the same situation to arise again in a few years. UNDP and the government should study the extent to which this is problematic and consider the costs and benefits of different approaches. It may be necessary to consider more creative, lower-cost solutions if accurate and timely population data cannot be guaranteed.
2. **Strengthen the role the Technical Group and all Technical Group members.** While recognising MoSA leadership, the ownership and participation of the Council of Development and Reconstruction and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities should be increased. The Technical Group should also engage on issues above and beyond project approval, for example evaluating programme performance and pushing for improvements to planning both at local and ministry level.
3. **Scale up and consider increasing focus.** In order to have material impact on the issues facing host communities, the programme should grow in size. This will probably require taking on larger projects and perhaps also repeating the implementation process in communities already covered. Working at the cluster level is a logical way to take on large infrastructure and livelihoods projects. Focusing on fewer sectors will also make it easier to reach levels where it is possible to have a material impact on priority sectors.
4. **Revisit the structure and management of the peace-building component.** The conflict mapping process should be integrated into the MRR process. This will also have the additional benefit of allowing some degree of participation of Syrians in the overall process, even if they are not involved in the actual prioritization process. The peace-building activities that are developed after the conflict mapping should be delivered through SDCs as part of a capacity development process. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that the completed M&E framework (see below) enables strong reporting of peace-building results.

5. **Take the necessary steps to implement livelihoods projects systematically and comprehensively.** A rigorous and effective methodology for livelihoods should be agreed upon, with appropriate planning processes and partners. Livelihoods should then be better resourced.
6. **Introduce formal capacity development activities for municipalities.** Capacity development is needed in order to make the changes LHSP is starting to create sustainable, and to ensure that projects can be operated and maintained. A formal capacity development process addressing basic public administration should therefore be introduced, under the leadership of MoIM. This should focus on rolling out and supporting the implementation of standard guidelines and procedures approved by MoIM. A similar process should be implemented outside of LHSP intervention areas, with MoIM ensuring consistency of approach across all locations.
7. **Make the “resilience agenda” a cross-cutting theme in the programme design.** In its current design, the programme can support a resilience agenda, especially if other recommendations in this evaluation are implemented. However, it is probably not necessary to make resilience an explicit programme objective. Resilience can be considered a cross-cutting theme, or something that can be “mainstreamed” through the programme design.
8. **Manage and communicate possible issues arising from UNDP structure.** UNDP should make efforts to increase clarity on which of its activities are implemented by LHSP and which are not. If the recommendations of this evaluation are all implemented, LHSP will have a number of large components: UNDP should therefore be willing to consider spinning off some components into separate programmes if necessary. Livelihoods and formal capacity development for municipalities would be possible options.
9. **Develop a clear and agreed upon theory of change.** To guide the future development of the programme, Government, donors and UNDP should develop and agree upon a more comprehensive theory of change for LHSP. It should clearly state the intended results of the programme at different levels. It should address difficult questions such as whether the programme targets actual stresses on service delivery, or only perceived stresses. The theory of change should make clear what the value added of delivering through LHSP is.
10. **Upgrade programme M&E and reporting.** UNDP should develop and implement a full M&E framework based on the agreed upon theory of change. This should include definition of indicators for the main expected results, and introduction of a practice for collecting data in order to be able to report against them. A target-setting system for every time donor funding is received should be adopted. LHSP reporting should include a balance of narrative of activities and reporting against targets.
11. **Aligning funding modalities with a strengthened programme design.** Government, donors and UNDP should review the design of the programme going forward, and come to a clear position that its implementation requires longer funding timelines and less tied funding. Based on this agreement, donors should be able to start the internal processes needed to provide multi-year, untied funding.

# Introduction

---

## LHSP Background

The UNDP Lebanon Host Communities Support Project (LHSP) was established in 2013. It was established to respond to the Syria crisis, primarily by providing emergency/stabilisation type projects for municipalities. As the project has grown and gone through three phases, it has started to take a longer-term view, with an increased focus on improving service delivery and livelihoods.

LHSP has become a major pillar of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan and is the main UNDP contribution to response. It is also by far UNDP Lebanon's largest project in its country programme. The government of Lebanon has signalled LHSP is one of the main Government programmes for the response and should be considered one of the main international assistance platforms for the crisis response.

The programme is led by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), in close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities (MoIM), the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) and the Office of the Prime Minister.

This evaluation was commissioned to provide strategic guidance for the project's medium-term development.

## Scope and Methodology of the Evaluation

The Terms of Reference of the evaluation focused on the following sets of issues:

- **Programme design.** The evaluation was asked to assess the quality of programme design, for example whether the programme is appropriate, logically sound and suited to its context.
- **Impact and results.** The evaluation was asked to describe the main achievements in the different components of the project.
- **Organisational arrangements.** The evaluation was asked to assess the role of central and national-level government agencies and the role of the programme's Technical Group.
- **Management.** The evaluation was asked to discuss a number of issues related to management of the programme including how to improve Monitoring and Evaluation and the effectiveness of engagement with municipalities.
- **Future of the programme.** The evaluation was asked to recommend issues including how and whether to scale up, how to address working with Clusters, whether and how to take on a 'resilience agenda'.

A key point regarding the evaluation is that it is mainly an assessment of the design of the programme and a set of forward looking recommendations. It is not a traditional validation of outputs, outcomes and results.

The methodology used for preparing this evaluation was as follows

1. **Desk review and analysis of LHSP-provided data.** The team reviewed UNDP and third-party publications and reports on LHSP. The team also analysed data provided by LHSP such as the project database and MSS tracking database.
2. **National/central level interviews.** The team conducted 4 days of interviews in Beirut, meeting with UNDP management, UNDP technical staff, current and former members of the Technical Group and representatives of the main programme donors.
3. **Field work.** The team conducted field work in 10 municipalities, covering the North, South, Mount Lebanon and Bekka. Field work included site visits, interviews with Mayors, former Mayors, members of Municipals Councils, interviews with Provincial Governors, interviews with MoSA Regional Coordinators, interviews with staff of facilities related to Local Economic Development, Focus Group Discussions with technical staff implementing the project process, Focus Group Discussions with project beneficiaries, and Focus Group Discussions with participants in the "Mechanism of Social Stability" process.



## Structure of the Project

The content of the report is as follows:

- Section 2 reviews the main implementation processes- the MRR, the project process and the MSS process. Each section describes the approach taken, what has been done, and raises any relevant issues.
- Section 3 reviews how the programme is governed and managed, addressing national leadership, engagement with municipalities and M&E. Again, each section describes the approach, what has been done, and raises relevant issues.
- Section 4 summarises the project's results and achievements. Results and achievements are organised according to the four components of the project. Some of the information is tentative or indicative.
- Section 5 includes recommendations based on the previous analysis. It covers all of the topics raised in the TOR, and several additional issues.

# Programme Process

---

## MRR Process

The 'Map of Risks and Resources' (MRR) is a participatory process for identifying project ideas based on stresses and risks created by the Crisis. The stresses and risks tend to relate to service delivery overburdened by high levels of Syrian settlement, concerns over environmental degradation and concerns over economic problems. Originally a two-day process, the MRR is now a five-day process culminating in a two-day multi-stakeholder workshop. This produces the MRR itself- a simple tabular analysis and project prioritisation.

LHSP has a clear and standardised approach to implementing the MRR process in a location as follows. First, the Municipality is engaged and participation is agreed. The Municipality then selects and invites participants- with some oversight and engagement from the MoSA to ensure that the selection is inclusive. During the workshop, participants form working groups or committees and conduct a problem solving process using tools provided by UNDP/MoSA to identify risks as well as causes and potential impacts of risks. Based on this problem-solving process, the participants then identify and prioritise project options, then identify the resources already in place and resources needed to deliver the projects. After the workshop, the information is used to develop the Multi-Sectoral Municipal Action Plan- a document identifying problems in each sector, along with project ideas to address them, organised over short, medium and long-term timelines.

The main results with respect to the MRR process are as follows:

- **Rollout.** The MRR process has been done in all of the 251 localities defined as 'most vulnerable' communities identified by UN agencies. MoSA is now planning to begin the process of updating some MRRs for some communities that completed the process relatively early.
- **MoSA ownership.** During phase 3, implementation of the MRR process was taken over by MoSA. MoSA is highly engaged in the process, not only ensuring that the process is delivered but also providing the technical facilitation of workshops and taking steps to ensure quality, for example by putting pressure on municipalities to ensure broad and inclusive participation. MoSA has also published all of the MRRs on its website.
- **Uptake and usage of MRR at local level.** There is evidence of MRRs and the MRR process being adopted by stakeholders on the ground as tool for programming and aid coordination. A number of mayors are using MRRs to engage with donors and NGOs: as one mayor interviewed for this evaluation put it "We are using this experience in almost every meeting with donors, INGOs, and other municipalities to highlight the importance and successes of it". In the words of another: "The MRR mechanism was really good and we learned. We always have the MRR booklet in the office and it's used when needed." It is reported by LHSP staff that some municipalities have been able to get donor funding to implement all projects in their MRRs. Some municipalities have taken on the process, or expressed an interest in taking on the process, despite not being covered by LHSP. Finally, MRRs are being used as coordination tools in regional LCRP inter-agency working groups.

While the MRR has been a very useful and productive initiative, some issues can be raised:

First, it is an explicit part of the project design that Syrians are not included in the process. In some cases, there is a 'behind-the-scenes' dialogue with informal representatives of Syrians, but Syrians are never at the table. This is considered a 'red line' by the Government and could be justified from the perspective of the project being for host communities. This feature should nonetheless be noted. One MoSA official stated what seems to be the government's position in the following way: "the Municipality is for the Lebanese and foreigners should not interfere as their stay is temporary".

Second, projects suggested in the MRR are almost never implemented right away. Donor funding arrives unpredictably, and the LHSP cannot commit to concrete timelines. In fact, LHSP explicitly prefers to complete the planning process without funding being available because funding usually comes from humanitarian funding pools and these tend to come with a one-year timeline. For many projects, design and implementation alone is difficult to complete within one year. LHSP therefore ensures that planning is completed before the funding window opens so that all 12 available months can be used for the design and implementation period. LHSP tries to play down expectations that the MRR will be funded, but this is very difficult and probably not realistic given the number of projects that have actually been funded across the country. As one MoSA official puts it: "Though MoSA officials always stress that no funding is guaranteed to any of the projects identified in the MRR, the process still raises the expectations of the beneficiaries".

Third, while steps have been taken to improve quality, more work remains to be done. On the technical side, more validation of some of the project ideas may be needed, especially in very technical areas like livelihoods. In terms of process, efforts to make participation diverse and inclusive are not yet formalised or systematic and rely mainly on the ability and good will of MoSA staff. Measures to require workshop participants to somehow engage more broadly with the community have also not yet been introduced. Such measures would allow LHSP to assure donors and government that the planning information contained in MRRs genuinely reflects the views of a large group of local population, rather than those of a small group of local interests.

## Project Implementation

In a few cases, projects are implemented by municipalities through a cash transfer scheme, but usually projects are implemented directly by UNDP. The process of implementation is as follows:

At some point after an MRR is completed, UNDP is able to make funds available to community according to its formula (described in section 3.1) below. Presuming funds are not earmarked, the municipality works with UNDP and MoSA staff to select projects that will be implemented, according to criteria previously defined by LHSP. Once a project or set of projects has been selected, UNDP staff work with the municipality and other relevant stakeholders to complete a project proposal form. There is usually some additional consultation at this point with respect to the design of the project- for example if it is an education project there will be consultation with teachers and parents. The completed project proposal form goes to the LHSP Technical Group, which comprises the four key stakeholders of the programme (MoSA, MoIM, DCR and OoPM) and relevant sector ministries. The Technical Group reviews the project and consults with the relevant sector ministry to ensure that the project does not conflict with their existing sector plans. After requested changes are made, the Technical Group approves the project proposal.

The LHSP Engineering Team then retains designing engineers on “call down” contracts to design the project in full. Several different engineers may be required for a full design. The completed design is then sent to the field to be validated by the local stakeholders. The Engineering Team sends the approved design to UNDP procurement who prepares the tender and advertises it. Bids received are sent to the Engineering Team who recommend a bidder. After a number of additional administrative steps, UNDP procurement will issue a contract to the preferred bidder. Work begins under the supervision of UNDP engineering staff from the regional office. The contractor sends any “shop drawings” (specific technical specifications prepared during the course of work) to the supervising engineer and to the engineering team, who get them validated by the designing engineers, thus ensuring that the work done is the work that was actually specified and procured. The completed project is reviewed by the supervising engineer and designing engineers before completion and handover to the beneficiary. Design and procurement typically takes 3-4 months.

Over the 2014 – 2016 period, LHSP has implemented 382 projects. This includes projects done in 120 municipalities, as well as projects done in Unions, projects done on a regional basis (for example forestry projects) and one project done on a nation-wide basis. The projects are extremely diverse in type, although the most common have been education (e.g. school equipment and rehabilitation), health (clinic rehabilitation), recreational spaces (e.g. public parks) and Solid Waste Management. The total value of projects done in this time is \$38.5m. By value, the largest expenditure has been on wastewater management and recreational spaces. The table below shows the number of projects done by type, and the total value of projects of each type:

Sector	No. projects	Budget (\$)
Municipal services	176	20,327,313
Social services	120	7,248,866
Livelihoods	86	10,953,643
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>38,529,822</b>

Table 1: Number of Projects by Type and Total Value

Some of the positive aspects of the project implementation process that can be noted are:

- **LHSP can deliver.** The fact that LHSP has been able to deliver 382 projects and disperse nearly \$40m is intrinsically important and worthy of note. In international development, not every effort to deliver projects and spend money is successful and it is not uncommon for mechanisms to be created but never disburse.

- **The mode of delivery is important from a programmatic perspective.** The technical and financial aspects of delivery are good, but it is also important that the projects delivered are ones identified by host communities as being those which will address stresses caused by the crisis and that are also somehow linked to government policies and procedures.
- **The process is technically strong.** UNDP has been studying the process, learning from problems and finding ways to make it more effective. It has revised and improved management in order to address quality issues and has found ways to streamline the procurement process. As it now stands, the system produces quality: it engages the right experts and has steps to ensure quality throughout the process. It is scalable and can be expanded to handle more projects as well as more funds provided there is sufficient lead time and funding to increase staffing. It is also reasonably timely- 3-4 months for the entire design and procurement process is not excessively long considering projects require high engineering standards.

The main issues related to delivery are:

- First the local prioritisation is frequently constrained or overridden by donor earmarking. In effect, a project that was ranked as a fairly low priority might be the one funded because donors chose to make funding for that sector available. One stakeholder interviewed for this evaluation noted "The MRR identified the biggest drivers, but within the constraints of time and funding of LHSP available- the most needed projects were not implemented". Another stakeholder expressed the sentiments of one set of MRR participants: "Why are we discussing everything when you have a specific focus and budget?"
- Second, LHSP has struggled with completion of projects within 12-month funding windows. Although a 3-4 month design and procurement period seems to allow a generous amount of time for implementation, the time is easily exceeded. Weather can cause works to stop during winter months. Project scope can change, for example if work shows that more extensive reconstruction or rehabilitation is needed. Disputes and unexpected problems arise, such as local officials closing down works or contractors finding illegal settlements on planned construction areas.

## MSS Process

One key part of the LHSP methodology is that conflict prevention is not only mainstreamed through the core MRR and project process, it is also addressed directly through peace-building activities. Work in this area is referred to as the "Mechanism of Social Stability" or MSS.

The MSS involves a standardised and defined process with four steps: initial engagement, conflict mapping, development of the mechanism, and support for implementation. In the initial engagement, the team first does its own profiling and identifies the area of intervention- a community or group of communities. The team then engages the municipality and other stakeholders and seeks their agreement to participate. In the conflict mapping, the team engages separately with the municipality, Lebanese civil society as well as representatives of the Syrian community. They initially plan a meeting, then a retreat. The team works with the stakeholders to develop a detailed mapping of local conflicts: they identify causes, profile actors, key individuals who can or do influence conflict, and conflict trigger points. This is synthesised into a completed conflict mapping report. In the next phase where the mechanism is developed, the team presents the conflict mapping to the different stakeholders, validate it, and then propose specific activities that would address potential conflicts. The team then helps the stakeholders agree on a specific structure (e.g. a committee) and a work plan. In the final step, a standard training package (Conflict sensitivity, resolution, and crisis management; Human Rights including violation monitoring; Conflict analysis; Mediation skills; Advocacy and lobbying; Media and communication skills) is delivered to all of the participants. Finally, the team facilitates a small number of meetings and events related to the work plans, and provide some additional coaching. At this point, the MSS process is completed.

The MSS process has been launched in 44 areas. These areas collectively covered 75 communities. Each area can comprise between 1-8 communities, although they usually comprise of just 1 or 2. There are few larger areas with a high number of communities. The process was stopped in 9 of 44 areas because of lack of cooperation or resistance from the mayor and municipal authorities. Of the remaining 35 communities, 21 are still in progress and 14 have completed the process. Of the 14 areas that have completed the process, the mechanism put in place is still active in 9, and is inactive in 5. This equates to 65% of areas remaining active after withdrawal of support. In general, the stakeholders elect to form a committee of some type, and the most common activities carried out will be social and recreational activities, although the range of activities also includes youth programmes, formation of an NGO and formation of a union of municipalities.

Some strengths of the MSS process include:

- **Strong overall technical design.** The MSS process is logical, well-structured and well sequenced. No step seems to be missing.
- **Quality of the conflict mapping process.** The conflict mapping process is both highly participatory and technically rigorous. It informs the conflict mappings that UNDP distributes, which are clearly of high quality.

Some issues:

First, although the conflict assessment process is excellent, it does not feed into the MRR process. This seems a major missed opportunity since the MSS conflict mapping could be used both to inform project selection and to ensure that the right participants were involved in the process. In general, LHSP should ensure that key actors identified in the conflict mapping participate in the MSS process. In addition, it should assess projects identified to verify that they will improve the conflict dynamics identified in the mapping.

Second, there is a significant level of stakeholder resistance to engagement in the peace-building process. Many mayors claim that there is no real conflict between Syrians and Lebanese, only issues related to service delivery. For example, one Mayor interviewed stated "We never faced any conflicts between Syrian refugees and Lebanese in our village" while another stated "The village never witnessed any conflict between Syrians and Lebanese". This doubtless accounts for the somewhat high drop-out rate. In addition, some municipalities that did continue into the process remain somewhat negative. For example one set of beneficiaries stated "They took us where they wanted us to go... they build our intellect and then leave us".

Third, LHSP still needs to improve the visibility of the MSS process for donors. This is probably due to a number of factors. One reason is that the wide variety of activities that are finally implemented. Another is the fact the LHSP has not defined exactly what the results of MSS should be and how they should be reported. For example, it is not been agreed whether the result of MSS is conflicts being solved, conflicts being mitigated, tensions being reduced, or something else.

# Programme Governance and Management

---

## Engagement with Municipalities

Engagement with municipalities comprises two main parameters: selecting municipalities for engagement, and deciding funding for municipalities.

The selection of municipalities is based on an identification of the 251 most vulnerable localities prepared by UNDP. This is based on two criteria: first, the ratio of Syrians to Lebanese people, and second the ratio of Syrians to poor Lebanese. In theory, this identifies the host communities that are under most pressure as a result of the crisis- those subject to the most stress on service delivery and potentially to the greatest level tension and risk of conflict. Within this group of 251 localities, it is possible to prioritise from the highest ratio of Syrians to Lebanese, down to the lowest. In theory, LHSP has tried to use this prioritisation, working first in communities with higher ratios. In practice, geographical and confessional earmarking has made this somewhat challenging. According to UNDP, however, there has usually been enough untied funding to offset tied funding, allowing municipalities to be prioritised as planned.

The funding formula is simple and clear. When funding is made available for a tranche of municipalities, every municipality in that tranche is allocated \$100,000 each. The remaining funding is allocated according to each municipality's share of the total population of the municipalities in the tranche. For example, suppose that donors have allocated \$3m to 10 municipalities with combined population of 100,000 people (including both Syrians and Lebanese). First, each municipality is allocated \$100,000, accounting for \$1m of the \$3m and leaving \$2m to be allocated on the basis of population. Further suppose that one of the municipalities has 15,000 people in it. It therefore has 15% of the population, and so receives 15% of the remaining \$2m, i.e. \$300,000. So the total allocation it receives is \$400,000 divided between \$100,000 of fixed allocation, and \$300,000 on the basis of its population.

Positive aspects of these approaches are:

- **The programme benefits from objective criteria for community selection.** The criteria for selection of municipalities corresponds well with the programme's theory of change, selecting communities that are most pressured by the crisis. Objective criteria also help to de-politicise the selection of municipalities. MoSA receives many requests to implement LHSP in new municipalities and there is great desire on the ground for LHSP to expand. Without the criteria, it might be difficult for the Government to resist requests. The overall conceptual approach was generally well supported by the Government and UNDP during the interviews conducted for this evaluation.
- **The funding formula is transparent and corresponds to basic good practices.** Likewise, having an objective funding formula helps to depoliticise the process and makes it transparent. The main elements of the formula - dividing funds into a fixed share and a population-based share - is also standard practice when designing subnational grants.

While the approaches above are basically sound, there are some practical and technical issues that should be raised:

- First, the data used in the calculation of the most vulnerable localities is out of date, meaning that the list of the most vulnerable communities may not be accurate. Population data was produced by CDR in 2002 and data on Syrian settlement was prepared by the UN in 2013. In such a fluid environment, it is very likely that populations of both Lebanese and Syrians have changed, especially the population of Syrians.
- Second, outdated population data may also be causing the budget ceilings for municipalities to be selected wrongly. If a municipality's population has increased since data was collected less than that of its peers being considered for funding, it will be allocated too much funding; if its population has increased more than that of its peers, it will be allocated too little.
- Third, there are some small technical issues with the formula. One is that the fixed \$100,000 means that communities will get very different and potentially unfair allocations when the total budget allocation is small (depending on differences in the population of the community)<sup>2</sup>. Another is that the formula does not adjust

---

2 If only enough funding is allocated to provide \$100,000 per community, then nothing is allocated on a per capita basis. If two communities are in a tranche and one is twice the size of the other, one will receive twice as much as the other per capita. Every dollar above what is needed to provide \$100,000 per community is allocated on a per capita basis. And so as the funding level grows, the degree to which funding is allocated on a per capita basis increases.

according to the ratio between Syrians and Lebanese, even though this is a fundamental part of the programme logic.

## Government Roles and Responsibilities

Government ownership has a number of aspects. MoSA is the signatory to the programme document and is recognised as the overall leader of the programme. CDR also has some leadership as it is the signatory to the entire UNDP country programme. The programme has a Steering Committee which includes representatives of the Government, donors, and UNDP. Finally, there is a Technical Group which approves projects and supports the programme in several other ways. As mentioned above, the Technical Group includes MoSA, MoIM, the Office of the Prime Minister, CDR, as well as additional ministries, invited as needed for approval of projects (e.g. the Ministry of Energy & Water for sanitation projects).

The role of the Technical Group includes a number of duties such as operationalising decisions made by the Steering Committee, providing technical advice to the programme, producing criteria and basic tools to inform the programme process, and reviewing the mapping of vulnerable communities. Members of the Technical Group interviewed for this evaluation and other observers seem to agree that in practice the Technical Group does not engage heavily in these areas and focuses mainly on the core duty of reviewing and approving projects, and coordinating with ministries to ensure that project proposals align with ministry plans and strategies. The Technical Group discharges this duty in a timely fashion, although the workload can be quite high. At times, members of the group have been sent 30-40 proposals to review in a single batch. The Technical Group meets in person periodically, but does much of the business of reviewing projects through email exchange.

The arrangements for national ownership have a number of very strong features:

- **The Technical Group creates a link between local planning and national-level systems and policies.** Although at the moment this primarily serves the purpose of preventing projects implemented by the LHSP from conflicting with national plans and strategies, it has the potential to go a step further and act as a mechanism to enable bottom-up planning to contribute to national planning.
- **The existence and composition of the Technical Group brings agencies with the right mandates to LHSP.** In any government programme there is always an issue of mandate, whether or not the partners involved have the right to intervene in the sector. The members of the Technical Group are essentially the correct ones to provide a mandate. MoSA is the government-appointed leader of the response to crisis, has a social stability mandate and is the owner of SDCs, which are natural implementers and coordinators for many local activities. CDR has the mandate to implement multi-sectoral projects, e.g. education and health, and hand over to the appropriate ministry when completed. MoIM is responsible for municipalities which are probably the most important actors at the local level and which are mandated to deliver many of the basic services that are the cause of tension. The Office of the Prime Minister links to the centre of government, adding political weight and potentially linking the programme to other government policy and planning processes.
- **MoSA has a strong and effective leadership role.** It is very clear that MoSA fully embraces the programme and sees it as national programme of which it is the leader. Other ministries also seem to accept MoSA leadership.

Two issues can be raised with respect to Government roles and responsibilities:

- First, it is not clear that Government agencies in the Technical Group feel the same degree of ownership as MoSA does. Lack of equal ownership may create issues with perceived lack of mandate. For the Technical Group and indeed the programme to be effective, the core members of the Technical Group must somehow vest their organisational mandates in the programme in the way that MoSA clearly does. However, if the other ministries are seen as merely participating in a MoSA-owned programme, it is not clear that this happens. Certainly, it does not happen to the same extent as if they are seen as being joint owners of a programme that happens to be under the leadership of MoSA.
- Second, the group includes actors who have some mandate to engage on the issue of planning institutions (in particular CDR but also OoPM). There is therefore an opportunity for the Technical Group to begin to engage with interested ministries to help them consider how to introduce some bottom-up or participatory elements into their planning processes. In general, the programme would probably benefit both from more TG engagement in management of performance, and in resolution of technical and strategic issues.
- Third, it seems that projects are seen as being delivered primarily by UNDP. The role of Government partners during implementation and handover could be strengthened.

## M&E and Reporting

The programme's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) comprises four components: project M&E, result-level M&E, performance management and reporting. These are described in the following sections.

Project level M&E is very well-developed. The programme has three sets of reporting formats for projects: monthly progress reports, project completion reports, and project follow-up reports (done 3, 6 and 12 months after handover). Progress reports include information such as project description (from the proposal), status of implementation (including percentage of completion), financial information, completion date, and narrative (developments, obstacles, remedial measures taken and so on). Project completion reports include project description, assessment of delivery of outputs and beneficiary targets planned in the project proposal, lessons learned as well as information about employment creation. Finally, follow-up reports address issues such as whether the project is still operational, who is responsible for maintenance, whether beneficiaries are being reached and information on additional problems that have occurred and what is being done to deal with them. All of these reports are produced by LHSP regional offices staff and entered into a project database. The system is used by UNDP management for identifying project implementation issues and ensuring overall delivery.

For results-level M&E, the programme relies on the SenseMaker methodology. This is a process in which participants are invited to tell stories on particular topics, e.g. about service delivery in a particular sector. The implementer classifies stories by topic and by particular categories, e.g. whether they are positive or negative about Syrians, whether they can be framed in terms of cooperating or competing with different groups. The methodology allows tracking of attitudes and the way people attribute their problems. It can be a measure of general levels of tension and can record the presence of attitudes that can lead to tension, such as a tendency to blame Syrians for problems. It can also assess the effectiveness of particular types of interventions for reducing tensions. It is for example possible to see whether projects in different sectors or of different sizes had more or less impact on peoples' attitudes. The SenseMaker process is being applied on a semi-annual basis. It was started in 3 municipalities and 4 rounds of data collection have been done. It is now being expanded to cover 12 municipalities.

In terms of performance management, LHSP has a set of output targets in its Programme Document and also sets targets during its Annual Work Planning Process (AWP). The programme conducts an annual exercise of comparing results to targets set in the ProDoc and AWP, but it is difficult to interpret the results because funding is unpredictable: if funding is less than expected a target might be missed by far, but if funding is more than expected the target might be easily exceeded. Therefore, hitting or missing the target does not reflect programme performance. LHSP has worked with DFID to develop a draft LogFrame which includes indicators and targets not only at the output level but at the results level, although this has not yet been implemented. The LHSP annual report mainly focuses on activities and outputs according to four objectives of the project and it does not report on achievement of objectives in a quantifiable way. Reporting to donors is done according to an agreed timeframe and format.

Some of the strengths of the M&E system include:

- **The project M&E system is comprehensive.** The system provides a high level of tracking of every project, with monthly reports under implementation, a completion report and multiple post-completion reports. The system captures most of the data that users would intuitively want - for example on project progress, challenges, financial status and also attempts to capture higher-level information about whether the project is still being used and who is benefiting from it.
- **The SenseMaker methodology does provide meaningful result-level data.** One of LHSP's intended results is to reduce tension caused by the crisis, and another is to reduce stress and competition over service delivery. The SenseMaker methodology is capable of measuring these types of things, and it does it in a way that is more robust than standard questionnaires or focus groups.

Some issues include:

- First, although a lot of elements are in place, LHSP does not have a complete M&E framework. A full M&E framework should include a theory of change and, based on that, all the results expected along with indicators for all or most of the results. It should then define how data for indicators is collected and how often. LHSP has not written down its theory of change, although there is a strong informal understanding of it and it has not yet stated all of its intended results precisely - although again there is a strong sense of what most of the results should be. So indicators for results, and means of collecting data for the indicators, are not yet in place. Some of this information is provided in the draft LogFrame, but much more work needs to be done to make a full framework, including developing a theory of change and defining how data for indicators should be collected.
- Second, some of the data that the project M&E system collects might not be reliable, or even feasible to collect. Beneficiary data is notoriously hard to verify and interpret. Aside from being very rough estimates, this sort of data



tends to provide non-unique beneficiary numbers (i.e. if one person in the municipality benefits from the solid waste management and the street lighting, the person is counted as a beneficiary twice). Data on employment is equally difficult to get. Unless the project specifically hires short-term labour, it may be very difficult for the contractor to say whether or not someone was hired or not fired because of winning the contract. In both cases, it will also be very difficult for LHSP to provide ex post verification of the data provided by the project developers and the contractor, because of resource constraints.

- Third, the number of areas covered by SenseMaker is too small for robust results-level M&E. While SenseMaker provides the right sort of information, three or twelve municipalities is not enough to show whether or not LHSP is reducing tension in 150-250 municipalities. At the present sample size, it is more of a 'proof of concept' and source of information about particular interventions than an actual source of results-level assessment.

## Coordination

Coordination related to LHSP happens at three levels: at the level of national UN agencies, at the level of national government, and at the level of local and regional UN agencies:

- **National level UN agencies.** LHSP is actually shared by two or three UNDP county-level portfolios - Energy & Water, Social and Local Development and Crisis Prevention and Recovery (CP&R - Peace Building). This ensures that there is a high level of coordination across UNDP portfolios. UNDP is also co-chair of the LCRP on the UN side and most staff who work on LCRP are also closely involved with LHSP. UNDP is heavily involved in coordination of UN and non-UN agencies implementing LCRP. This means that LHSP activities can be coordinated with activities of other agencies implementing the plan. LHSP is also actively discussing opportunities for joint programming, e.g. joint programmes with UN-Habitat.
- **National government.** The main coordination mechanism is the Technical Group, discussed above.
- **Regional and local level UN.** At regional level, the LHSP Area Managers are co-chairs of LCRP inter-agency working groups, and there are full-time coordination staff in each regional office. The Area Managers and their staff are working to coordinate and align efforts of agencies working under LCRP and also actively promote the MRR as a tool for coordination.

Overall LHSP has a significant architecture for coordination. It is probably the case, however, that coordination activities and results are probably under-reported. Few donors have visibility of the amount of coordination work being done and its outcomes.

# Summary of Results and Achievements

## Livelihoods and Economic Opportunities

LHSP has delivered 86 livelihoods projects with combined budgets of \$11.0m. These cover a range of topics including many "livelihoods infrastructure" projects like construction or rehabilitation of public markets or the business district, some assistance to farmers and cooperatives, some projects providing economic opportunities to women and a number of business development projects like start-up projects and vocational training. The table below shows the number and value of livelihoods projects by sub-sector.;

Sub-sector	No. projects	Budget
Support to agricultural infrastructure	36	\$4,277,189.54
Support to community infrastructure	9	\$1,660,818.75
Environmental protection	10	\$920,228.00
Establishment of startups	2	\$197,500.00
Internships and capacity building for jobseekers	7	\$1,858,895.94
Support to SME's, cooperatives and entrepreneurs	16	\$1,745,699.99
Rapid employment	6	\$293,311.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>\$10,953,643.22</b>

Table 2: Number of Livelihoods Projects by Type and Total Value

Job creation data was generally not available at the time of writing. The effort to collect the data is fairly new and at the time of writing some of the new economic projects had not yet advanced to the stage where assessment of economic impact was possible. (Job creation data was, however, collected for some infrastructure projects- these projects created between 6 and 136 days of employment for Lebanese people, and 5 to 50 days for Syrian people.)

A full assessment of livelihoods projects and results was not in the scope of the evaluation, but it seems very likely that achievements in this area have been somewhat limited. This view is shared by many of the interviewees for this evaluation, who felt that this has been one of the less successful parts of the programme. Livelihoods interventions are best done on an area basis or 'whole of value chain' basis but this has generally not been done under LHSP. In part because of restrictions on funding, most interventions targeted a single area or point of the value chain, such as rehabilitating a market or providing a single piece of equipment to a farmers' cooperative. Unfortunately, some donors were reluctant to find 'whole of value chain' approaches and the short timeline of funding would have made it difficult to implement the approach anyway.

It is difficult to assess LHSP's performance in employment creation. It is arguable that LHSP is not really intended to create short-term employment. Rather, it is intended to fund projects that local people select based on having identified the projects as having potential to reduce conflict. Many or most such projects do not require large amounts of short-term labour. However, it is certainly the case that livelihoods projects ought to create employment opportunities - not by people being hired to work on projects, but by increasing economic activity and ensuring that people from host communities can participate in it. It seems to be the case that a few of LHSP's efforts in this area, such as vocational training, youth placement and start-up programmes have not been very successful. But the effort has been under-resourced both in terms of funding and staffing, and not done with sufficient size and scope.

## Capacity of Local Actors to Deliver Services

LHSP has delivered 296 projects related to local services, with a combined value of \$27.6m. As mentioned above, the projects cover a wide range of sub-sectors including waste water management, solid waste management, recreational spaces and social services. The table below gives the number and value of projects by sector:

Sector	No. of projects	Budget (\$)
Municipal infrastructure	21	1,835,437
Water management	35	4,239,601
Recreational spaces	34	4,768,260
Waste water management	42	6,004,316
Solid waste management	29	2,234,854
Energy	15	1,244,844
Primary health care centers	15	1,550,420
Social Development Centers	21	2,100,698
Public Schools	84	3,597,748
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>27,576,179</b>

Table 3: Number and Value of Basic Services Projects by Sector

In addition to the provision of projects to improve service delivery, the LHSP process seems to have had a positive impact on the culture and attitudes of many mayors and municipal officials. Many municipalities have embraced participatory planning in general and the MRR methodology in particular. One mayor interviewed for the evaluation stated "I would repeat the process on my own as a municipality, people will definitely come and they will come up with projects knowing that we have implemented projects previously. We learned that on my own as a mayor I wouldn't have probably thought of certain projects or would have been able to implement projects. Working with people brought in new expertise and the community closer to us to think together. Their participation allowed us to see clearly their needs. I believe in a new meeting I would even increase the scope and maybe make it more of a public. "

A number of mayors who have been through the process report that they now have the confidence to engage donor-funded projects and NGOs, and some also report that they are more confident about the process of developing project proposals. For example, a member of a municipal council in another town stated "We are now capable of dealing and reaching out with donors. We are capable of designing a project and push for it. We developed a booklet on Wadi Khaled and brought representatives of several ministries to discuss our needs." Local MoSA and UNDP staff report that many municipal officials and mayors are initially resistant to the MRR process, seeing it as a challenge to their authority and often trying to subvert it, but ultimately become enthusiastic converts to it. As mentioned above, a number of mayors use the MRR to engage with donor-funded projects and NGOs, and some have even been able to raise funding to implement most or all the projects in their MRR. As one MoSA official put it: "Now municipalities tell donors what they want and not vice-versa".

The impact of LHSP on municipalities has therefore been to give them more positive attitudes towards participation and bottom-up planning, increase their confidence with respect to planning and project development, and give them a more structured and rational way to engage with donor funded projects. All of these things can be considered a form of capacity development. However, 'capacity development' in the context of public agencies usually connotes the process of helping them to improve organisational structures and management, and strengthen system and procedures - usually the ones mandated by law and regulation. In this sense, capacity development has not happened for the simple reason that it is not a formal component of LHSP. UNDP staff do provide some training and coaching on aspects of project cycle management, but it is fairly ad hoc and it is mainly delivered to support the core LHSP process and not as part of a process of organisational development and administrative strengthening. A related issue is that, because capacity development in this sense is not a component of LHSP, it does not have M&E that covers capacity and so cannot systematically report or quantify the capacity improvements that it has delivered.

This component effectively comprises the MRR process and the more successful parts of the project process, and so on balance should be considered successful. However, two important issues can be raised with respect to results in this area.

First, the sustainability of many of the projects is not guaranteed. At the national level, approval ought to be linked to some steps to ensure that the final owner of the project has resources for operations and maintenance. At the local level, sustainability would be more likely if there was assistance to the municipality to plan and implement revenue collection of some sort, and to properly manage and use the funds collected for that purpose. We know that in many cases ministries are providing resources and municipalities are levying charges, but more can be done to ensure it.

Second, the overall impact of these projects must be limited by the fact that their total value is fairly small compared to the total need. For example, we know that the country's infrastructure was in need of investment before the crisis, and that in some of the communities most under stress the demand on the infrastructure has doubled or tripled. Over the past three years, LHSP has spent \$2.8m nationwide on Solid Waste Management and \$6.1m nationwide on Waste Water Management. It is probably safe to say that had the spending been ten times as much, the problems in these sectors would not be solved. This is not necessarily a serious problem for the programme - it partly depends on its objective and methodology - but it should be borne in mind.

## **Local Level Dispute Resolution and Community Security**

Achievements with respect to local dispute resolution and reduction of tension are difficult to summarise or quantify.

It is important to note that the fact that Syrian refugees receive so much aid is a source of much resentment amongst Lebanese people, especially amongst the host communities. As one deputy mayor interviewed put it "The Lebanese felt that they need help as much as the refugees, and are furious because the economic situation is getting worse, and their everyday life is getting more and more difficult. "A number of stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation pointed out that LHSP, just by being a programme for host communities, reduces this resentment and therefore reduces tensions. As one Mayor put it "The main achievement of the LHSP is that it responded to an important need by doing tangible projects regarding water, sewage, waste, playgrounds, etc. And we appreciate that. Especially that at this point we can feel the animosity and hatred between Lebanese and Syrians which will lead only to conflicts. Anything that can decrease the perception of Lebanese that the Syrians are getting more support than they are would surely help." In a sense, LHSP contributes to this objective just by existing.

As mentioned above, the MSS process has produced peace-building initiatives in 35 locations based on a rigorous participatory planning process. The structured put in place still remains active in more than 70% of the areas in which support has terminated, which is arguably an excellent survival rate. Spending on this activity was a relatively modest \$4.58m. However the results and impact of these peace-building initiatives cannot be reported or quantified.

The SenseMaker research shows that the MRR and project interventions can improve conflict dynamics, and probably have improved them in some of the areas studied. SenseMaker research has shown that LHSP projects have increased the positivity of citizens with respect to sectors supported by LHSP, reduced the sense of conflict and competition between Lebanese and Syrians, increased the sense of cooperation between them and enhanced peoples' perceptions of the municipality's capability and trustworthiness. The research has shown that reducing the pressure on service delivery through programme interventions can reduce the tendency to blame refugees for problems experienced in daily life. However it should be pointed out that these effects are not found in every location and some effects are less positive. Some research for instance has found that people stop talking about services that have improved, and instead shift to services that have not improved (at which point they may start to blame Syrians again).

Achievements in this area can be summarised by saying that LHSP:

- Has developed an effective model for delivering peace-building activities at scale
- Has developed a model for planning and implementing projects at scale that has proven capable of improving conflict dynamics
- Has been proven to have improved conflict dynamics in a small number of municipalities that it works in, and therefore has probably improved conflict dynamics in some of the other municipalities

The significance of having a delivery model with "proof of concept" should not be understated. However, more investment in M&E related to conflict and social stability would be needed to move to the next level and be able to report results in a large number of areas of intervention.

## **Strengthen Capacity of the Lebanese Government to Respond to the Crisis**

For many stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation, this is the area of results that has been most successful.

The most visible impact has likely been on MoSA. As mentioned above, MoSA has assumed national leadership of the programme both at the political and technical level. There is a sense that MoSA fully understands and embraces its role as lead agency for the crisis response, and sees the programme as one of the main tools for implementing the response. While there was initially some internal perception of the programme as a UNDP initiative, that perception seems to have passed. MoSA endorses and feels ownership over the programme methodology, and, as mentioned above, is driving

MRR implementation, has made some improvements to the MRR process, and has gone as far publishing all of the MRRs on its website. The SDCs, which are under MoSA, use MRRs to plan their annual activities and the Ministry is going through the process of discussing within its own departments to determine how the documents can guide other aspects of their work. Capacity development activities for MoSA incurred spending of \$1.23m.

The programme has also had significant impact on the SDCs. In practice, the MRR process is coordinated by a MoSA Regional Coordinator who is usually senior staff or head of the SDC. LHSP has implemented 13 projects to rehabilitate and equip SDCs, with average value of around \$100,000 each. There is also an ongoing programme of training, coaching and mentoring to support delivery of the LHSP process.

In addition to supporting organisations, there has been some impact at the level of institutions. The creation of the Technical Group and its approval process has created a link between bottom-up planning and national level planning processes. The basic fact is that ministries have been mobilised to support priorities identified at the local level. While this is being done through temporary structures of the Government and using donor funding, it is still a notable achievement. There are emerging changes in how ministries structure their planning. CDR considers the presence of LHSP and the content of MRRs when it is planning its own projects, and as mentioned, MoSA uses MRRs for internal planning purposes. These are small and nascent changes in a small number of ministries, but they need to be noted.

It is very difficult to say how many of these changes are abiding; it seems that the attitudinal impact on MoSA could be lasting, additional phases of programming *make this more likely*. Changes to planning institutions are in very early stages and are probably fragile. In truth, they seem unlikely to lead to permanent changes without significantly more time and effort.

# Recommendations

---

## Criteria for Municipal Selection and Funding

The first set of recommendations are in respect of the system for prioritising municipalities and setting the funding formula.

Ideally, the programme would have up to date and accurate information about Syrian and Lebanese populations, as well as Lebanese poverty data since it feeds into the selection of municipalities and the funding formula. However, this is costly to produce and especially because it needs to be collected regularly. Therefore, it is recommended that LHSP, perhaps working with UNDP, assess the situation in detail and study the available options. Such an assessment should first attempt to estimate the magnitude of error in existing data and understand what difference that might make to selection of municipalities and budget allocations - if the impact is not too large, it may be worth persisting with old data. It should then map out the main options for addressing the issue, such as using simple sampling to update data, conducting a comprehensive assessment, funding a full government census, or relying on administrative data provided by service delivery facilities. The cost and benefits of these approaches should be reviewed and compared to the assessment of the harm done by having old data. Again, if all options are expensive and have unclear benefits, it might be that the best course is to use the old data. This work could be done by an expert in public statistics and census processes.

It is also recommended that LHSP make a small addition to the funding formula, by introducing a normal range for per capita funding. If a donor provides too little money for a given number of municipalities, or too much then the per capita amount would fall outside the norm and LHSP would then request the donor to change the funding parameters.

It is not recommended that LHSP adjust the formula to reflect the ratio of Syrians to Lebanese at this point, due to concerns over data quality. If data quality can be improved this should be considered.

## Empowering Government Actors

The next set of recommendations relates to how to further empower government actors to lead the programme.

SDCs are highly active at the local level given that they are MoSA's local offices and the work place of regional coordinators. Municipalities are active in the MRR and MSS processes. Neither the municipalities nor SDCs can do much more while project implementation is done by UNDP. Therefore, the logical approach to increasing the role of local authorities is to enable more of them to conduct procurement and project management. LHSP already has a grant agreement/cash transfer modality, which can be assessed with a view to understanding how it can be applied more broadly. SDCs are often larger and better resourced than municipalities so this work might proceed more quickly with SDCs. It may need to be deferred as far as municipalities go until capacity development activities (discussed below) start to yield results

At the national level, there is no doubt that MoSA is highly engaged and is the right initiative leader. However, the roles of other core members of the Technical Group need to be strengthened. CDR should have a stronger and more prominent role in project implementation, especially when the projects are not related to basic municipal services. MoIM needs to have a stronger and more prominent role in implementation of municipal services, and the lead role in any activities related to building municipal capacity. It might be desirable to introduce a distinction between leadership and ownership, in particular regarding the principle that MoSA leads the programme but all the members of the Technical Group own it. Whether this can be done just through communication or needs more substantial changes, such as adding signatories to the Programme Document, will have to be discussed. It might also be desirable to introduce the concept and practice of sub-component leadership, such that while MoSA retains overall leadership, leadership of specific activities can be assigned to other ministries - MoIM would for instance be the leader of a municipal capacity development component while CRD might be in charge of large infrastructure projects.

Finally, the Technical Group's function should be streamlined and refined. The Technical Group should be presented with more performance information about the progress of the project so that it can engage in the strategic direction of the project (although this will depend on improvements to M&E - discussed below). The Technical Group might also be supported to engage with ministries on the topic of reviewing and possibly upgrading their planning processes. Another possibility is to engage the Technical Group in an effort to upgrade the MRR process, by adding for instance the validation of projects, additional measures to increase inclusiveness and representativeness, as well as measures to develop MRRs into full strategic plans. At the same time, it should be recognised that if members of the Technical Group

are senior enough to do this work, it is probably not appropriate or feasible for them to read and review batches of 20 projects at a time. Therefore, investment in a secretariat function to support project review is probably needed.

## Scaling Up

The next set of recommendations relate to the size of the programme and the approach to scaling up.

The basic recommendation is that LHSP needs to be larger. As shown above, the current scale of intervention is in the order of just millions of dollars in major sectors such as solid waste management and waste water management, while the need in these sectors is likely to be tens of millions if not hundreds of millions. The scale of job creation is also relatively limited, although that is partly a matter of design and methodology. Part of the LHSP methodology or theory of change is also that bringing people together to plan and implement projects builds trust and social capital; it is therefore desirable to make this a repeated process and not a one-off. (As mentioned above, if the programme objective is to deal with perceptions and perceived stresses on service delivery, the imperative to grow is less - but it is likely that stakeholders will agree that the mandate of the programme is not just perceived problems but actual ones.)

Engaging in larger-scale infrastructure and livelihoods projects through clusters of municipalities is the natural and logical way to approach scaling up. Interviews with stakeholders both at national level and local level generally found a high level of support for this type of approach, and UNDP is already piloting the approach anyway. Therefore, the recommendation is to let the approach take its course, study it and use the learning to fine-tune the approach. This being said, there are some important considerations for the cluster approach:

- It is important that CDR play a prominent role, if not the leading role, in delivering large infrastructure projects at cluster level since CDR has a mandate to take on multi-sectoral projects and then hand them over to the relevant ministry.
- Cluster-level implementation must be linked to, and not undermine, planning done at the local level through the MRR process. For example, Cluster level planning might be started when MRRs in several contiguous areas identify similar problems. Cluster-level stakeholders would then meet and consider how to address the problems, and identify whether projects proposed at the local level could be taken on at the cluster level. This would then lead to stakeholders seeing cluster-level projects as arising out of the local-level prioritisation in a natural and logical way. LHSP should articulate how planning works at cluster level and how links to its core process.
- A number of municipal officials stated that in principle they are willing to cooperate with other municipalities but in practice such efforts have been tried but have failed because of lack of trust. LHSP should carefully manage relationships and publicise successes in order to build confidence in the mode.

As mentioned in section 2.2, UNDP's project delivery mechanism is scalable - the engineering and design teams can be expanded to handle more volume. The teams also have several economies of scale: firstly, smaller projects involve most of the same steps as larger projects, so if the portfolio is shifted to the same number of projects but larger values, the process will not slow down and few additional resources will be needed. In addition, when the engineering team takes on a large project, it can retain a larger engineering company for design, which has all of the necessary technical expertise in house. This is easier and quicker for the team, who otherwise have to contract out different elements of the design to separate consultants. So again, moving to larger projects creates efficiency benefits. These facts have a converse, moving to smaller projects creates inefficiencies. Therefore, moving procurement and implementation of projects to local partners, as discussed in the section above, will aid growth by allowing the UNDP project delivery mechanism to focus on efficient, high-value activities.

Another issue related to size and scale is sectoral focus. Presently the focus of LHSP is very diverse, covering various social services, environment, municipal services and livelihoods. This actually represents a sort of barrier to growth. Perhaps the most fundamental point is that funding is spread very thin by virtue of covering so many sectors. As shown in table 1, the programme spent only \$2.3m on Solid Waste Management over three years. This is partly because of fairly low total funding, but also because of the sheer number of project options - solid waste management projects accounted for only 6% of total spending. As mentioned above, if donors increased funding by a factor of 10, then at this level spending would still be only \$23m, still probably quite far short of what is truly needed. However if there was much more focus on basic services and spending on solid waste management was 20% of the total, then this funding increase would yield spending on the sector of \$76.9m. This starts to look like a level of spending that could actually have impact on the sector as a whole, at least in the targeted host communities. Sectoral focus does not aid growth as such, but it makes it easier to reach scales of activity and spending where significant results can be achieved. More sector focus would also facilitate growth by reducing the number of technical and sector experts needed for design and management, and making the programme overall easier to understand and manage. It is therefore recommended that stakeholders review the

scope and number of sectors covered and seriously consider focusing on fewer sectors. The logical approach is to focus more on sectors where the core partners have a stronger mandate to deliver.

## Peace-building Component

The next set of recommendations concern the management of the peace-building component, or MSS process.

The main recommendation is that the two parts of the process, the conflict mapping and development of the mechanism, should be split in two. The process for mapping local conflicts should be integrated into the MRR process. This would have the benefit of allowing Syrian people to be engaged in the overall process to some degree. Since the MRR has now been done in all of the targeted municipalities, it should be implemented prior to updating the MRR but it should be the first step of the exercise if any new municipality is supported. Once the conflict mapping is completed, the outcome of the mapping should be used to inform selection of MRR process participants and should be presented to participants to inform their analysis and project prioritisation. The mapping should also be used to validate the MRR. The second part of the process, the development and implementation of the mechanism, should be delivered entirely through SDCs. In effect, the SDC should be assisted to plan and deliver social stability activities using the conflict mapping as a planning tool. LHSP's engagement in this point should be considered strictly as capacity development for the SDC.

The next recommendation is that LHSP should clarify what the immediate results of peace-building activities are meant to be. There seems to be a clear understanding that the result is not conflict reduction or resolution. It is recommended that the results are specified as something more immediate and more achievable, for example promoting inter-community dialogue, building social cooperation and carrying out other activities that are likely to form social capital.

Once the immediate results of the peace-building activities have been clarified, LHSP should invest more in giving donors more visibility of this component. This means giving more oversight over the process of work, and also some reporting of results against defined indicators.

## Livelihoods Component

Economic and employment issues are one of the major causes of tension in host communities and a priority for Government, UNDP and donors. LHSP has acquired significant experience delivering livelihoods projects and has a proven delivery mechanism. It is therefore recommended that LHSP expand the scale of its livelihoods interventions and take measures to improve their quality. Specifically, it is recommended that UNDP should:

- **Articulate and get agreement for a rigorous methodology.** LHSP should operate according to a clear and agreed methodology for delivering livelihoods projects. LHSP has developed a livelihoods strategy paper, and this could be expanded into a full methodology with assistance from donors. This might include effort to develop a distinctive theory of change that expands on, and complements, the main LHSP theory of change. As part of the process, it is important to agree definitions and criteria. It is recommended that livelihoods interventions should be defined in some way as to refer to integrated, area-based economic development that covers whole value chains and helps them to grow, and prioritising ones that affect sectors or people affected by the crisis. Stakeholders should come to an agreement on whether or not this includes labour generation programmes or money-for-work programmes.
- **Put in place proper planning process and partnerships.** The MRR process can be used to identify priority sectors but a much more rigorous planning process is needed for livelihoods projects, potentially with different actors, and from a wider geographical area. Part of the livelihoods approach should include detailing a planning mechanism for livelihoods that supplements what is done in the MRR process. A key point is that actors from a broader area than the municipality need to be involved. Although the municipality can carry out many useful activities under the heading of Local Economic Development, market development requires area-based, regional and sometimes national level activities. This will involve working with actors all the way along the value chain.
- **Resource the effort properly.** Livelihoods interventions will require more financial resources and also more human resources. One full-time livelihoods expert is unlikely to be sufficient for a scaled up livelihoods approach - LHSP and donors should plan to mobilize more expertise.
- **Develop a parallel brand for livelihoods projects.** It is recommended that livelihoods activities use a 'dual branding' - the LHSP brand and a closely related brand, for example 'Host Community Livelihoods'. This would facilitate spinning off livelihoods into a separate programme at a later date, if needed.



## Capacity Development for Municipalities

The next recommendation is to establish a dedicated component to deliver formal capacity development for municipalities in the targeted host communities. There are three main reasons why this is necessary: first, to make interventions sustainable - both to make projects sustainable and to maintain positive changes in attitudes; second, to enable municipalities to contribute projects and services themselves, using their own systems and resources, and thus contribute to programme objectives; third, to enable them to take over procurement and project management, increasing local ownership and allowing LHSP's project delivery mechanism to focus on higher value and more complex projects. This might not be feasible in the smaller municipalities, but the process can begin in those that do clearly have the absorptive capacity.

The capacity development component should focus on rolling out a set of municipal regulations, guidelines and procedures covering topics related to the project cycle (planning, project development, reporting, monitoring and evaluation) management of public resources (procurement, recruitment, payroll, accounting and financial reporting), municipal revenue generation and administration. MoIM and MoSA are discussing a proposal whereby the Ministry of Finance's institute for training in public administration will develop the necessary material, including curricula and training materials<sup>3</sup>. Implementation should follow good practice for dissemination of government regulations:

- Guidelines are formally communicated by the Ministry to Mayors and relevant staff
- Training and launch workshops take place to train relevant staff
- Technical assistance and backstopping is provided at critical times when staff try to use the procedures - e.g. if there are new procurement procedures, trainers or coaches are on hand when the municipality first tries to use the new procedures
- There is a check-up at some point to determine if the municipality is correctly using the procedures and remedial action is taken if there is not

In terms of institutional arrangements, there should be some facility for other implementers to deliver the training: MoIM should be able to coordinate which implementer is working in which municipality, and should ensure that the same standard package is being used in every location.

The argument for including this activity in LHSP, at least for capacity development within the 251 most vulnerable localities, is that the capacity development needs to be aligned and sequenced with the LHSP approach. For example, planning and procurement procedures and training should be such that they enable the municipalities to take over some parts of LHSP project planning and delivery. This will be easier to achieve, at least initially, if LHSP is delivering both the capacity development and the core project process. Once the methodology is tested and clear, it may be possible to spin this off as a separate programme.

## Resilience Agenda and Strategic Orientation

The next recommendation is how the resilience agenda and a more strategic orientation can be incorporated into the LHSP design.

Resilience is sometimes characterised as maintaining performance in very adverse conditions and then "bouncing back" or "bouncing forward" - going back to how things were, or even to better than how things were. UNDP characterises it in terms of the sequence "Absorb, Adapt and Transform". The definitions are effectively similar - dealing with adverse conditions corresponds to "absorbing and adapting" while "transforming" is similar to "bouncing forward". LHSP has characterised the transformation or "bounce forward" as longer term positive changes such as improvements to governance mechanisms, policies, regulations, infrastructure, community networks, and social protection mechanisms.

LHSP fits quite well into this framework - its service delivery and livelihoods projects help to deal with stress and can be thought of as helping host communities to "absorb and adapt". Changes to the attitudes of mayors, empowering MoSA and starting to improve planning institutions are examples of possible transformation or "bouncing forward". If LHSP further strengthens the role of the Technical Group so that it can engage more on planning systems, municipal capacity

---

<sup>3</sup> After this report was drafted, DFID agreed to provide funding for this initiative.

development is implemented and the larger infrastructure projects are taken on, the “transformation” part of the resilience will be further strengthened. The “strategic orientation” is something similar - it is moving from short-term response to addressing some of the longer-term positive changes that fall under the heading of transformation.

Resilience is therefore a lens through which the programme can be seen. For that reason, it is recommended that the concept be ‘mainstreamed’ in the project design and management. This means that resilience doesn’t necessarily need to be objective, target or component. Rather, it means that resilience-related concepts need to appear frequently in statement of components, objectives, indicators. The word ‘resilience’ does not necessarily need to be used as long as it is clear that the concept is related to it. However, when reporting performance, the reporting should review all of the resilience related activities, outputs, indicators and so on to discuss what they show, collectively, about resilience, to assess progress and make recommendations. This means that resilience is handled in a similar way to gender or conflict in many projects - often projects do not have explicit gender or conflict objectives or components, but gender and conflict related activities and indicators are spread through the project design. When reporting and analysing, time and space is used to draw together an assessment of the performance of the project with respect to gender or conflict. A similar approach can be taken with respect to resilience.

## **Internal Organisation of LHSP**

The next recommendations related to how LHSP is managed within the UNDP Lebanon country programme.

The first recommendation is that UNDP be clearer about the structure of LHSP and the country programme. Some donors are not clear, for example, about which activities of the peace-building portfolio are done by LHSP and which are not. A starting point for this is to generate more visibility regarding LHSP’s peace-building component. *At the same time, the CPR portfolio should be made more visible, so that donors can see the totality of its activities and can see which fall under LHSP and which do not.*

The second recommendation is to manage the growth of LHSP carefully, and be ready to take steps to manage it if needed. LHSP is already by far the largest programme in the country portfolio and is likely to grow further. The management already seems somewhat cumbersome, with the programme being distributed between two different teams - a team that delivers the MRR and project process, and a team that delivers the MSS process. It may become more cumbersome and more difficult to manage as the programme. At some point UNDP may wish to spin off some activities into separate projects. Livelihoods seem to have the potential because it will ultimately involve a different process and different partners. Capacity development for municipalities may also have potential as UNDP typically operates public sector capacity development programmes as separate entities. At the present, time keeping activities under LHSP makes both coordination and fund-raising easier, but this may change in the future.

## **Programme Design and Theory of Change**

The basic design of LHSP is strong. There is a clear need to support host communities, and so the programme is very well-suited to its context. The Government, donors, UNDP and of course host communities are unanimous in this regard. The concept of targeting causes of stress and tension is excellent, and the methodology for doing it is well designed. Delivering directly through the Government is not feasible at the present *time for several reasons*, but the solution that UNDP has developed enables a good degree of Government participation and ownership, addresses issues of mandate reasonably well, and overall reduces harm done by using non-Government channels. The programme is very well-placed to support the LCRP - specifically strategic priority 2 (“strengthen the capacity of national and local delivery systems to expand access to and quality of basic public services”) and strategic priority 3 (“reinforce Lebanon’s economic, social, environmental, and institutional stability by (i) expanding economic and livelihood opportunities benefiting local economies and the most vulnerable communities: (ii) promoting confidence-building measures within and across institutions and communities to strengthen Lebanon’s capacities”),

However, to inform the future growth and management of the project, more clarity about the design of the programme is needed. The starting point is that UNDP, donors and government should come to an agreement on the programme’s theory of change. This theory of change should clarify what the overall goal of the programme is, in simple and intuitive terms. This can be framed in terms of what success looks like, or what the “dream version” of the three or five years from now would look like. The theory of change should lay out the main areas of activity, but should also identify the causal mechanisms involved - the reason why certain activities lead to particular results.

There are a number of specific issues that Government, donors and UNDP will need to resolve and come to consensus on. The nature of the headline goal or objective is perhaps the most important. There are several intuitively obvious candidates, for example: social stability; host communities that can cope; ‘stabilized’ municipalities where service delivery is not excessively stressed by Syrian settlement. Other objectives present themselves, and could perhaps be considered

as secondary or intermediate, for example: building the capacity of the Government to respond to the crisis; creating trust in local authorities; creating economic opportunities for Lebanese; creating economic opportunities for Syrians; fostering 'resilience'. In discussing objectives, it is strongly recommended that the stakeholders resist the conflict avoidance strategy of saying that everything is an objective of equal importance. Instead, the discussion should focus on the question of which objectives are final objectives and which objectives are instrumental; or, alternatively, which ones are 'means to an end', and which ones are 'ends in themselves'. For example - is social stability a means to an end, or is it an end in itself? This is a question that all stakeholders should have a clear and agreed answer to.

A critical question about the design is whether the programme is meant to address perceived problems, or actual problems as well. In particular, whether it is meant to address perceived stress over service delivery or actual stress over service delivery, as well as perceived problems. This might sound abstract and theoretical, but nothing could be further from the truth. If it is about perceived problems only, then scale and type of project does not really matter. There is evidence from the SenseMaker research that small visible projects like public space projects have as much impact on tension and people's perceptions as larger projects: if the programme is just about perceived problems and resulting stress, then it could therefore perhaps just focus on very cheap and visible projects with high impact on peoples' perceptions. But if it is about fixing actual problems in service delivery, type and scale matters: large projects and a lot more spending will be needed. (The issue of size and scale is discussed further below.)

In formulating the theory of change, there are a number of constraints. Obviously, every stakeholder needs to eventually agree to it. Since the programme is meant to be government-owned and lead, it should not really have objectives that aren't government objectives, yet government should accommodate the fact that the programme needs to be funded and its objectives also need to be priorities for donors. It should probably be a starting point that the programme is primarily for host communities and it is about response to crisis. Finally, a clear 'Value Added' must come from the theory of change - a reason why going through the programme and UNDP leads to an outcome that would not be realized through another channel, or would not be realized as well.

The table below illustrates what a proposed theory of change might look like. It draws on some of the recommendations made above, for example introducing a municipal capacity development project and delivering the mechanism of social stability as capacity development for SDCs. Note that it is not a full theory of change because it does not clearly document what the causal mechanisms are meant to be, the evidence of these causal mechanisms - either working in this programme or other programmes, or the assumptions underlying these mechanisms.

<b>IF</b>	<p><b>There are local-level planning processes which...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are transparent, technically sound and participatory/inclusive</li> <li>• Identify the main causes of tension caused by the crisis</li> <li>• Identify and prioritize projects to address the causes of tension</li> </ul>
<b>AND</b>	<p><b>And there is a mechanism to...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that locally developed projects align with national policies and strategies</li> <li>• Help national authorities to improve their plans and strategies based on information developed at local level</li> <li>• Ensure that overall the right national level actors are fully involved in decision-making and oversight</li> </ul>
<b>AND</b>	<p><b>And there is a project implementation mechanism which</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivers investments in basic services, social services and livelihoods (based on local plans that are fully harmonized with national policies and strategies)</li> <li>• Aligns with Government processes and mandates</li> </ul>
<b>AND</b>	<p><b>And there is a mechanism to support municipalities by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rolling out systems and procedures needed to plan and deliver services</li> <li>• Building skills needed in the planning and delivery cycle</li> </ul>
<b>AND</b>	<p><b>And there is a mechanism to promote dialogue and interaction by</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building the capacity of SDCs to plan and implement social stability activities</li> <li>• Providing assistance to SDCs in implementing social stability activities</li> </ul>
<b>THEN</b>	<p><b>There will be mechanisms for service delivery, livelihoods and social cohesion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service delivery in host communities will be expanded and rehabilitated</li> <li>• There will be more economic activity and better livelihoods opportunities in host communities</li> <li>• Local authorities will be able to plan and deliver projects and service delivery with less external assistance</li> <li>• Host communities will have more social capital and more opportunities for inter-communal interaction and relations</li> </ul>
<b>AND ULTIMATELY</b>	<p><b>Lebanese Host Communities will be stable and able to cope with the Crisis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The actual and perceived stresses placed on service delivery created by the crisis will be reduced</li> <li>• People's trust in local authorities and confidence that they can respond to the Crisis will</li> </ul>

- increase
- Tensions in Host Communities will be reduced

Figure 1: Illustration of Theory of Change

The diagram below presents the example theory of change graphically:

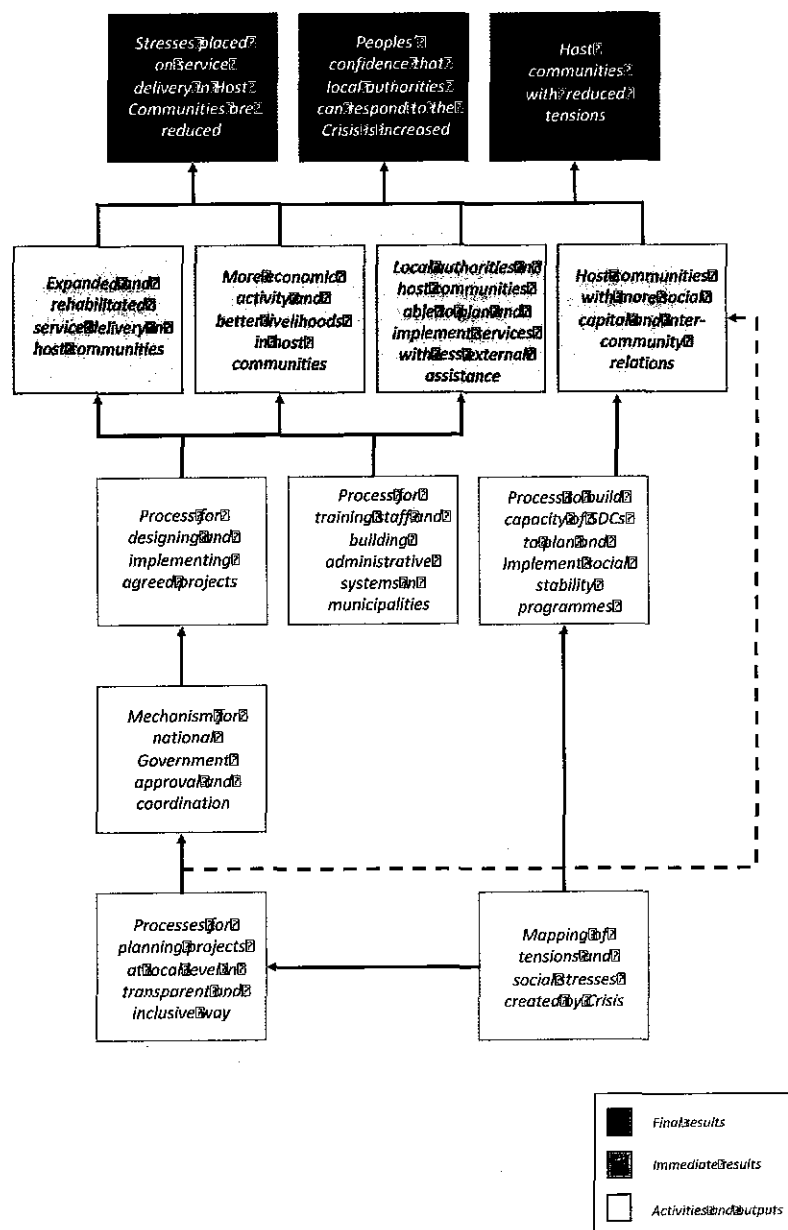


Figure 2: Illustrative Theory of Change

## M&E and Reporting

This recommendation is to significantly upgrade the programme's M&E, based on the agreed theory of change.

One of the most important steps is to define indicators for all of the most important parts of the theory of change and to define how data will be collected for those indicators. If reduced tension is a part of the theory of change, there needs to be an indicator of tension which can be measured and reported. An indicator might for instance be "Number of municipalities where SenseMaker methodology shows significant reduction in negative stories about Syrians". If reducing the stress on service delivery systems is an objective, an indicator needs to be defined for that. An indicator could be defined using SenseMaker data, or it could be for instance "Average focus group evaluation of citizens on quality of

service delivery". If capacity of municipalities is a target, an indicator needs to be defined for that, perhaps relating to the outcome of a scoring of the capacity of the municipalities. A range of different indicators can be created and could help build a picture of results, recognising that no one indicator can summarise the impact of a project. Possible indicators will vary in cost and complexity; a balance should be reached between streamlining data collection within existing processes to reduce cost, while collecting objective or even third-party data to validate results. It is acceptable to be pragmatic in selection of indicators and inevitable that the choice of some indicators will need to reflect available resources. The programme should also consider disaggregating indicators by gender and other relevant metrics, potentially including host Lebanese and hosted Syrian participants.

The next step in upgrading M&E is introducing a useful system of target setting. The main issue here is to link target setting with funding so that LHSP is not punished by accepting targets when it has no resources to deliver them. In practice, what this means is that every time funding is agreed, some targets need to be revised. Generally, it should be targets that are set in absolute terms that are most in need of revision: for example if a target relates to number of municipalities completing the MRR process, this needs to be revised when new funding comes; if the target is something like 'percentage of supported municipalities exhibiting reduced tensions' the target may not need to be revised. LHSP would also need a system to present and analyse its performance against all targets, and where requested by donors, against targets agreed for specific tranches of donor funding.

The final step in terms of design is to overhaul reporting and the review process. Reporting and narrative of activities is important and should remain. However, this should be supplemented with reporting of progress against objectives, both in qualitative terms and using data for the defined indicators. For example, since empowering municipalities to deliver basic services is an objective, the report should include not only narrative and photos of completed municipal basic service projects. It should also include values for the indicators that LHSP has defined for measuring success in municipal service delivery. This should include open discussion of progress in achieving targets: reports should explicitly state whether LHSP is achieving agreed targets or not, and why. In turn, a process that periodically reviews data, identifies lessons learned and recommends adjustments would help validate or test the evidence and assumptions underpinning the theory of change. This could then feed into an annual review process to inform strategic decisions.

This system will require an expansion of the LHSP M&E team, and will incur additional cost in collecting data. The cost is worth paying, since if this is done, LHSP will always be able to answer anyone who asks "What are your objectives? How do you measure progress? What is your progress?"

## **Modality for Donor Support**

The final recommendations relate to how donors support LHSP.

It is recommended that donors make a major effort to provide multi-year funding and to reduce the practice of sectoral and geographic earmarking. Multi-year funding would be strongly preferable even if the current project focus remains the same, given that 12-month timelines are very difficult to work with. This however becomes imperative if the project moves to properly designed livelihoods interventions and larger cluster-level infrastructure, and also integrates the MSS conflict mapping into the MRR process. These changes make the intervention period significantly longer than twelve months. It would also be helpful if donors would increase the visibility and predictability of funding commitments, so that LHSP can, in turn, make funding of the MRRs more visible and predictable.

While the current practices are entirely understandable, in the worst cases they can have quite negative side effects. The MRR process has the potential to empower local actors by taking them through a prioritisation process and then funding their priorities. This ought to help build trust between the local actors as well as between the centre and the periphery by making the local actors see the centre as responding to their needs. What is happening now however is that local actors sometimes list a set of priorities and wait a long and uncertain amount of time until donors decide to fund a particular sector, at which point one of their lower priorities will be funded. Very high levels of earmarking create the risk that the overall process becomes as much about empowering donors to achieve spending targets as it is about empowering local stakeholders.

UNDP also has its part to play. Many donors can provide multi-year and untied funding, but doing so requires particular effort and going through more complex internal processes. Donors need strong reason to do so and need both technical information and a compelling case. UNDP can make this easier for donors. This can partly be done by articulating the theory of change and programme design in a way that makes a very strong case for funding contributions with longer timelines and less earmarking. Improved visibility of programme activity and results, more target setting and more accountability for target delivery will also help local donor offices to make the case to their head offices for mobilising

*funding*. It is hoped that many of the recommendations of this evaluation, if implemented, would enable donors to go through the process needed to mobilize funding with the desired modality.

[www.adamsmithinternational.com](http://www.adamsmithinternational.com)

Headquarters  
240 Blackfriars Road  
London  
SE1 8NW  
United Kingdom  
T: +44 20 7733 6660

Africa  
2nd Floor / 2nd Floor  
Riverside / Riverside  
Nile / Nile  
T: +20 26721 0000  
T: +20 444 0000

South Asia  
Bharamy / Bharamy  
1st / 1st  
New / New  
T: +91 7 2419  
T: 2291/9 2419

W 2510  
T: 2291/9 2419

 Adam Smith International  
 @adamsmithint

Copyright © 2014 Adam Smith International. All rights reserved.

**Adam Smith**  
International

SAF/14/4