

Lebanon Crisis Response Plan - Social Stability Working Group

Rapid Tension Assessment Tool

Background and Rationale

The Lebanon Crisis Response Plan puts an increase emphasis on Monitoring and Evaluation and impact measurement. As such, every sector is developing a detailed results framework including indicators at outcomes, outputs, and activities level. The social stability sector will notably be measuring its impact at outcome level by monitoring and evaluating changes in the level of tension (related to negative perceptions, competitions over livelihoods opportunities, pressure on access to public services and natural resources, and perception of unbalance assistance) between communities targeted by partners.

Moreover, the sector has already been reviewing at the way partners are evaluating at the impact of their respective programs, and assessing social stability in general. The sector held a working group on 24th June 2014 which focused on impact measurement, using the example of Save the Children evaluation report of their Casual Labour Initiatives by AUB¹. The conclusion of the meeting is that few partners were conducting systematic assessment of the social stability impact of their different projects² (this is even more the case in other sectors) and that social stability assessment tend to focus on different aspects, from the number of security incidents in one location to perception of threats posed by other communities, or frequency of contact. As a result, different assessments can reach very different conclusion regarding the level of tensions. While the general discourse tend to continuously emphasize that tensions 'are increasing', other assessments and findings point out that relations between communities are not necessarily tense.³

In order to do bridge this gap and ensure adequate measurement of the results of the overall work of the sector, the social stability core group is proposing to adopt 18 standard indicators measuring tensions, for each partner to use in their respective projects for baseline and annual evaluation purposes. The indicators will cover seven main social categories to give an overview of the situation in each location targeted by partners. They will allow to monitor the evolution of social stability for both the specific issues targeted by partners (for example mitigating tensions related to access to basic services) and issues not targeted by their program but relevant to social stability in general.

The objective of the tool is to provide a ready and useful resource to partners and to improve comparability of data and findings between partners – however partners should feel free to adjust the tool to the specificities of their programmes or their M&E needs. For example, a partner could choose to use only four or five of the seven categories listed here. Questions can also be adjusted/replaced/removed in order to remain sensitive to the local context.

The 18 indicators are designed to be easily measurable by partners though Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) to be triangulated and probed through Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) and to be generic enough

¹ Harb & Saab (2014) Social Cohesion and CLI assessment – Save the Children Report

² Results of the questionnaire distributed to working group members on 24 June and to the Bekaa Social Cohesion working group on 8 July.

³ A registration update presented during a recent Protection Working Group noted that most people interviewed estimated relation between Host Community and displaced Community were good and 61.5% estimate relations did not deteriorate over the past 2 months.

to be integrated in any pre-existing methodologies and questionnaire already used by partners. Key Informants are generally characterized as individuals with good knowledge and influence (i.e. their opinion matters to others) in their communities, such as local leaders, municipal officials, mukhtars, active people representing different sectors such as educational (social worker, teachers, schools directors), economic, possible representative of the refugee community (shawish or others, particularly refugees involved in community mobilization mechanisms such as CSMC). Partners should aim at gathering different perspectives and therefore interview different type of key informants, from different communities (host/displaced), economic, social and political background. To facilitate productive discussions, FGDs should gather between 5-10 people and be more homogeneous in their composition, so that participants are comfortable sharing their opinions publicly. This would require having different FGD by community (host/displaced) and preferably by gender and age to ensure that they are culturally sensitive. Partners are also encouraged to use existing structures or committees for their assessments, using the coordination structure to know who is already active in the area, particularly in the social stability or protection sector. Refugee Outreach Volunteers would also be particularly useful to outreach to the Syrian communities.

In any case partners should be mindful of the sensitivities of social stabilities issues in general. In addition to being clear and transparent about the purpose of the exercise, and adhering to do-no-harm principles, partners should only implement this questionnaire in communities in which they are already known to avoid fuelling suspicion and defiance. Partners should abstain to ask questions if they feel they could be misinterpreted or even contribute to raising tensions between communities. As a general practice partners should not 'distribute' the questionnaire to interviewees but go through it with them through an interview process. Finally, experience from organizations having used some draft version of the tool, the questionnaire requires a good level of educations from interviewees/participants for them to understand questions and issued that are referred to.

Each partner should hold at least 5 KII and 2 FGDs per municipality/community targeted. The FGD should primarily help control the answers provided by key informant interviews. The annex 1 includes some more general recommendations on how to conduct such assessments.

The indicators will be the basis to come with a score for each key category, based on detailed 1-5 scale, to facilitate comparison. The score on the scale is be given by participants based on the answers of all KIIs and FDGs for this specific category. Partners will only be asked to share the overall score for each category, per village/community they have targeted, not the detailed answers/data for all questions. In addition to providing useful contextual information to partners, the data will be aggregated between partners (through an online database, most probably in activity info) to be able to refine the targeting of the response and to identify the communities where tensions are most prevalent.

The seven categories are:

- Quality and frequency of inter-community contact;
- relation and trust with local institutions;
- perception related to assistance provided by various organizations since beginning of the Syrian Crisis;
- causes of tensions;
- support for restrictions on displaced persons;
- existence of conflict management mechanisms;

- and presence of connectors between groups.

Social interaction: Quality and frequency of contact between groups.

Social interaction has been found both globally and in the context of the displaced Syrians to have the strongest correlation to increased perception and trust of ‘the other’ community. In the case of the Syrian presence in Lebanon, Mercy Corps found out that “a higher level of social interaction between the two groups is also associated with a decrease in the likelihood of propensity towards violence.”⁴ **Social interaction** is defined here as non-essential/non-economic engagements, ranging from informal discussions of community problems and sharing childcare or attending religious/social gatherings. Therefore, programming should seek to increase the levels of social interaction between divided communities, and thereby overcome the misperceptions and misinformation that leads to the dehumanisation of other groups, and ultimately the justification of the use of violence against them.

Category – overall scale – to be rated by the Partner based on the results from the below questions.	
Scale	Description for each level
1	Social interaction between members of both communities occurs daily
2	Social interaction between members of both communities occurs every week
3	Social interaction between members of both communities occurs every month
4	Social interaction between members of both communities occurs less than once a month
5	There is no social interaction between members of both communities

- **Key Question 1:** Has the **frequency of social interaction** increased/decreased?

<p>Question for KII - How do you perceive the level of social (non-economic) interaction between the Lebanese and Syrian communities? How frequently do Lebanese and Syrian interact? Is that an increase or decrease from the previous 3 months period?</p>
<p>Equivalent question for FGD: What are the changes observed in your own social (non-economic) interaction with Lebanese/Syrians? To what extent are you interacting socially with Lebanese/Syrians more/less regularly? Why?</p>

- **Key Question 2:** Has the **type of social interaction** increased/decreased?

<p>Question for KII What are the types of social (non-economic) interaction between the Lebanese and Syrian communities? Are Lebanese and Syrian interacting in various different ways ?</p>
<p>Equivalent question for FGD: What changes are you perceiving in your own social (non-economic) interaction with Lebanese/Syrians? Do you think that you are interacting socially with Lebanese/Syrians through an increased/decreased number of channels? Why?</p>

Trust and confidence in public institutions.

⁴ Mercy Corps, Things Fall Apart, June 2013, p.3. The report further states that “This finding was of medium confidence, and resonates with Gordon Allport’s “intergroup contact theory” which posits that under appropriate conditions, interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members.”

The relation with the public institutions – in particular municipalities and other local institutions like Social Development Centres, but also with government representatives at the national and local level – is a key issue in terms of social stability. Tensions will be naturally mitigated if the community members trust public institutions ability to understand, address and respond to key concerns – particularly related to tensions in the current context. Recent reports on the topic all underlined that a strong local government performance significantly reduces the risk of community violence.⁵ The following questions aim at measuring the level of trust and satisfaction toward the key public institutions in the host communities.

Questions under this category are more suited for Lebanese community members. The local authorities might refuse to give his/her opinion on the public institutions where he / she is representative for this institution, while the refugees were afraid to give their opinions particularly on police, local political parties and Lebanese armed forces and this applied also by some Lebanese (especially the one related to political parties)

Category – overall scale – to be rated by the Partner based on the results from the below questions.		
Scale	Aggregate score (total score of each questions below)	Description for each level
1	4-6	Residents are at the centre of local governance - they trust public institutions and are regularly consulted and participate in the identification of priorities, their needs are addressed.
2	7-10	Residents trust most public institutions, and are generally consulted in the local planning, and their priority needs are addressed.
3	11-14	Residents trust only some public institutions and are mixed on their ability to address social tensions and resource strain, and are consulted only on some priority needs that are generally addressed.
4	15-17	Residents lack confidence in most public institutions and on their ability to address key issues – they are rarely involved or consulted on local decision making, and local institutions are rarely able to respond to their needs.
5	18-20	Residents have negative perception of nearly all public institutions, are never involved or consulted in local decision making, and local institutions are generally unable to respond to their needs.

• **Key Question 3: Perception of public institutions**

Question for KII	very positive = score 1	positive = score 2	neutral = score 3	negative = score 4	very negative = score 5
How would you rate your community's perception of the following institutions:					
• National Lebanese Government					
• Local government (municipality/Mukhtar)					
• Local Political Parties					
• Local religious groups/authorities.					

⁵ Mercy Corps, *ibid*, p.4, Search for Common Ground, Dialogue and Local Response Mechanisms to Conflict between Host Communities and Syrian Displaced persons in Lebanon, 2014, p.10

Based on the score for each, calculate an average score for this question: Total score for each answer/4	
Question for FGD	
How would you rate your perception of the following institutions:	
National Lebanese Government	
Local government (municipality/Mukhtar)	
Local Political Parties	
Local religious groups/authorities.	

- **Key question 4: confidence in ability of local institutions to face the current crisis.**

Question for KII To what extent are you confident in the ability of government and local institutions to respond to social tensions and resource strain?	very confident = score 1	confident = score 2	neither confident nor not confident = score 3	not confident = score 4	not confident at all= score 5
Score for this question					
Equivalent question for FGD: To what extent are you confident in the ability of government and local institutions to address social tensions and resource strain, and provide basic services or maintain infrastructure?					

- **Key Question 5: the level of consultation by local government**

Question for KII How often are community members are consulted by the municipality on their needs and on the village's / municipality's priorities	Always= score 1	Most of the time= score 2	Sometimes = score 3	Rarely= score 4	Never = score 5
Score for this question					
Equivalent question for FGD: How often are you consulted by the municipality on your needs and on priorities and plans of the municipality?					

- **Key Question 6: Satisfaction with responsiveness of local institutions.**

Question for KII How satisfied are you with the ability of local institutions to respond effectively to the needs of your community? How satisfied are community members?	Very satisfied = score 1	satisfied = score 2	neutral= score 3	dissatisfied= score 4	very dissatisfied= score 5
Score for this question					
Equivalent question for FGD: How satisfied are you with the ability of local institutions to respond effectively to your needs?					

Perception related to assistance by international and local organizations (UN, International NGOs, Local NGOs, other religious and non-religious charities and foundations).

The assistance provided by various organizations since beginning of the Syrian Crisis has been mostly humanitarian and focused on the needs of displaced Syrians. Recent assessments all underlined tensions related to the perception that humanitarian aid disproportionately benefits Syrian displaced persons.⁶

Category – overall scale – to be rated by the Partner based on the results from the below questions.		
Scale	Aggregate score (total score of each questions below)	Description for each level
1	4-7	The assistance is perceived as addressing the needs of all communities
2	8-11	The assistance is perceived as addressing most urgent needs of the different communities
3	12-14	The assistance is perceived as benefitting primarily one community but still able to address some of the most urgent needs of others communities
4	15-17	The assistance is perceived as benefitting almost exclusively one community, with little provided to others
5	18-20	The assistance is perceived as benefitting only one community

- **Key Question 7:** Satisfaction with assistance provided by various organizations since beginning of the Syrian Crisis

Question for KII How satisfied are you and your community with assistance provided by various local international and local organizations since beginning of the Syrian Crisis in Lebanon? (select one)	Very satisfied = score 1	satisfied= score 2	neutral= score 3	dissatisfied= score 4	very dissatisfied= score 5
Score for this question					
If unsatisfied or very unsatisfied, why? (check all that apply, do not prompt answers)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aid agencies are corrupt • Not meeting priority needs • Aid delivery is slow and delayed • One group is prioritized over others • Have not addressed needs of local community/development of Lebanon • Prioritization of certain political affiliation/religious affiliation • Prioritization of certain areas • Response does not use local knowledge/capacity • Encouraging settlement/extended stay of displaced populations • Other (specify) 					
Equivalent question for FGD:					
A. How satisfied are you with the assistance provided by local and international organizations in Lebanon?					
B. If unsatisfied or very unsatisfied, why? (check all that apply, do not prompt answers)					

⁶ REACH, *Akkar Host Communities Assessment*, June 2014, AUB/Save the Children, SFCG

- Aid agencies are corrupt
- Not meeting priority needs
- Aid delivery is slow and delayed
- One group is prioritized over others
- Have not addressed needs of local community/development of Lebanon
- Prioritization of certain political affiliation/religious affiliation
- Prioritization of certain areas
- Response does not use local knowledge/capacity
- Encouraging settlement/extended stay of displaced populations
- Other (specify)

- **Key Question 8:** Impact of assistance on inter-group relations – does the assistance contribute to improve relationship between groups?

Question for KII What is the impact of assistance provided by local and international organizations on relationships between groups in your community?	Very Positive – score 1	Positive – score 2	Neutrally /no impact – score 3	Negative –score 4	Very negative –score 5
Score for this question					
Equivalent question for FGD: What is the impact of assistance provided by local and international organizations on your relationships with other groups in your community? Why?					

- **Key Question 9:** Effectiveness of the assistance in addressing needs of different communities.

Question for KII Is the assistance provided by local and international organizations addressing the needs of these groups?	0: do not know	1 : needs fully met	2: needs nearly fully met	3: needs partially met	4: needs barely met	5 : needs not met at all/not aware of assistance to that group
Host communities						
Displaced and displaced persons.						
Average score for the question						
Equivalent question for FGD: Is the assistance provided by local and international organizations addressing the needs of the different groups of the community (host communities, displaced and displaced persons)?						

Social fragmentation: Causes and severity of tensions and divisions and potential for conflict

While most assessment concluded that the primary sources of tensions are related to competition for livelihoods opportunities, strain on natural resources, pressure on public service delivery, negative perceptions, and perceptions of unbalanced assistance, the cause and level of tensions can differ widely from community to community. In addition to the key reasons already mentioned, tensions can also be related to the legacy of the civil war, to local political divisions, or to pre-existing grievances that have not been resolved. While most of the current tensions occur between host and displaced communities, there are also many older divisions that pre-exists the crisis and have been revived. Finally, not all causes of tensions or divisions mean that these will result in violence if they reach a high level. This category therefore aims at assessing the degree of social fragmentation by looking at the different causes of divisions, their potential to lead to conflict or collective action, as well the number of groups divided by the tensions.

Category – overall scale – to be rated by the Partner based on the results from the below questions.		
Scale	Aggregate score (total score of each questions below)	Description for each level
1	4-7	There are limited divisions, causes of tensions and potential for violence in the community
2	8-11	Some issues are causing division with limited potential for violence
3	12-14	Multiple causes of divisions between groups and some potential for violence
4	15-17	Many issues are causing divisions between different group and violence is likely
5	18-20	Community is highly fragmented, with many causes of divisions and high risk of violence

- **Key question 10** - Cause of tensions/divisions

Question for KII - What issues are causing division between in your community? (***Do not read the options, allow up to 5 options***)

1. There are no division
2. Housing shortages/rent increase
3. Job shortages
4. Overstretched resources (water, food, electricity, land, etc.)
5. Overstretched/lower quality of public services (garbage collection, public health)
6. Overstretched/ lower quality of education resources
7. Targeted aid and foreign assistance
8. Youth unemployment
9. Violence/crime (theft, vandalism, beatings, sexual assault, verbal/physical harassment)
10. Political affiliations
11. Historical problems between Syrian and Lebanese
12. Historical problems related to Palestine refugees
13. Religious/ideological differences
14. Cultural differences (such as traditional gender roles)
15. General poverty

16. Other specify: _____					
Score for this question	score 1 for 0/1 reason	Score 2 for 2 reasons	score 3 for 3 reasons	score 4 for 4 reasons	score 5 for 5 reasons or more
Equivalent question for FGD: What issues are <u>causing division</u> between you and other members of the community? Follow up question: can you give examples of such issues in your communities					

- **Key question 11:** – Support for collective action

Question for KII Do you think that any of the issues of the last question is likely to lead to peaceful collective action (protest, demonstration) in your community? (Do not read the options, allow up to 5 options score 1 for 0/1 reason, 2 for 2 reasons, 3 for 3 reasons, 4 for 4 reasons, 5 for 5 reasons or more)					
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no division 2. Housing shortages/rent increase 3. Job shortages 4. Overstretched resources (water, food, electricity, land, etc.) 5. Overstretched/lower quality of public services (garbage collection, public health) 6. Overstretched/ lower quality of education resources 7. Targeted aid and foreign assistance 8. Youth unemployment 9. Violence/crime (theft, vandalism, beatings, sexual assault, verbal/physical harassment) 10. Political affiliations 11. Historical problems between Syrian and Lebanese 12. Historical problems related to Palestine refugees 13. Religious/ideological differences 14. Cultural differences (such as traditional gender roles) 15. General poverty 16. Other specify: _____ 					
Score for this question	score 1 for 0/1 reason	Score 2 for 2 reasons	score 3 for 3 reasons	score 4 for 4 reasons	score 5 for 5 reasons or more
Equivalent question for FGD: Would you support collective action on these causes of conflict? If no, why? If yes, why? Follow up question: would you personally support collective action on these questions personally? Have peaceful actions already occurred in your community? Why?					

- **Key question 12** - Potential for tensions and divisions to result in violence

<p>Question for KII Do you think that any of the issues of the last question is likely to lead to violence right now? (<i>Do not read the options, allow up to 5 options</i> score 1 for 0/1 reason, 2 for 2 reasons, 3 for 3 reasons, 4 for 4 reasons, 5 for 5 reasons or more)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There are no division 2. Housing shortages/rent increase 3. Job shortages 4. Overstretched resources (water, food, electricity, land, etc.) 5. Overstretched/lower quality of public services (garbage collection, public health) 6. Overstretched/ lower quality of education resources 7. Targeted aid and foreign assistance 8. Youth unemployment 9. Violence/crime (theft, vandalism, beatings, sexual assault, verbal/physical harassment) 10. Political affiliations 11. Historical problems between Syrian and Lebanese 12. Historical problems related to Palestine refugees 13. Religious/ideological differences 14. Cultural differences (such as traditional gender roles) 15. General poverty 16. Other specify: _____ 					
Score for this question	score 1 for 0/1 reason	Score 2 for 2 reasons	score 3 for 3 reasons	score 4 for 4 reasons	score 5 for 5 reasons or more
<p>Equivalent question for FGD: Which of these issues from the last question do you think is most likely to lead to violence right now? Have violent incidents already occurred in your community? Why?</p>					

- **Key Question 13**- Communities affected by the tensions

<p>Question for KII Between who are tensions and divisions occurring in the community (<i>Do not read the options, allow up to 5 options</i>)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1-Lebanese vs Syrians 2-Lebanese vs Lebanese 3- Syrians vs Syrians 4- Lebanese vs Palestinians 5- Syrians vs Palestinians 6- Palestinians vs Palestinians 7 -Security agencies vs. Syrians 8 – Local authorities vs Syrians 9- etc... 					
Score for this question	score 1 for 0/1 divisions	Score 2 for 2 divisions	score 3 for 3 divisions	score 4 for 4 divisions	score 5 for 5 divisions or more

Equivalent question for FGD:

Between who are tensions and divisions occurring in the community?

Support for restrictions on displaced community.

Some of the restrictions faced by Syrians in Lebanon include issues around **protection, insecure living conditions, and livelihood opportunities**. While a lack of access to facilities can be largely, but not wholly, attributed to scarcity in resources, the recent imposition of curfews and to a lesser extent a lack of secure living conditions is a sign of increasing community tensions.

- **Protection:** curfews and other restrictions in movement of displaced persons, or municipalities that do not accept any new displaced persons.
- **Insecure living conditions:** Displaced population have been facing renting and eviction issues,
- **Livelihood opportunities:** High cost of living in Lebanon and the prolonged nature of the crisis has left significant economic impact on displaced Syrian families. Several reports have noted that in order for Syrian displaced persons to survive, they have been taking on livelihood opportunities at lower wages than the normal market. To minimize competition and hence tensions with host communities, more restrictions on livelihoods has been imposed for income generation.

Category – overall scale – to be rated by the Partner based on the results from the below questions.	
Scale	Description for each level
1	No restrictions
2	No restrictions on displaced community but no new displaced persons allowed
3	Restrictions/ support for restriction on the freedom of movement (night curfews, scooters)
4	High restriction / support for restriction on freedom of movement and insecurity of tenure (evictions)
5	Restriction on freedom of movement, shelter and livelihoods.

- **Key question 14-** Is there any restrictions already in place (Curfews, renting, scooter, evictions, jobs, shops...)?

<p>Question for KII What types of restrictions do Syrian displaced persons face in your community? Please choose as relevant: (a) curfews; (b) identification papers; (c) employment restrictions; (d) residency restrictions; (e) restrictions on hosting displaced persons; (e) others/specify: _</p> <p>Equivalent question for FGD: Do Syrian displaced persons face certain types of restrictions in your community? Can you please describe what types of restrictions?</p>

- **Key question 15:** is there community support for restrictions?

<p>Question for KII To host community: Do you think there are other alternatives for managing conflict than resorting to restrictions? Yes or No. Please elaborate why - what other alternatives can be used?</p> <p>Equivalent question for FGD: To host communities: What are the best ways to mitigate the tensions between Syrian displaced persons and host communities?? If they name the restrictions mentioned above then probe further with the following question: In your opinion, what other alternatives can be used to ensure more effective results in terms of conflict mitigation?</p>

Existence of conflict mitigation/participatory mechanisms such as formal or informal committee, dialogue forum, village leader group...

This category aims at identifying if any kind of mixed local conflict response mechanisms (formal or informal) is already present that organisations should strengthen through their social stability programming in order to improve context and conflict sensitivity and avoid duplication.

Category – overall scale – to be rated by the Partner based on the results from the below questions.	
Scale	Description for each level
1	Presence of effective formal local conflict response mechanisms
2	Presence of effective informal local -conflict response mechanisms
3	Presence of ineffective formal local conflict response mechanisms
4	Presence of ineffective informal local conflict response mechanisms
5	No local conflict response mechanisms

- **Key questions 16:** Existence of mechanisms to address communal issues or conflict

<p>Question for KII Are you aware of any mechanism, such as formal or informal committee, dialogue forum, village leader group within your community addressing communal issues or conflict? If yes, who is part of this mechanism? Which type of issues it addresses and how does it proceed?</p>
<p>Equivalent question for FGD: Are you aware of any mechanism, such as formal or informal committee, dialogue forum, village leader group within your community addressing communal issues or conflict? If yes, who is part of this mechanism? Which type of issues it addresses and how does it proceed?</p>

- **Key question 17 – Effectiveness of the mechanisms**

<p>Question for KII How effective is this group/mechanism in addressing tensions? Very effective/somewhat effective/somewhat ineffective/very ineffective What would you advise to strengthen it?</p>
<p>Equivalent question for FGD: According to you, what are the strengths and weaknesses of this mechanisms? What would you advise to strengthen it?</p>

Existence of connectors between groups.

This category aims at identifying to which extent respondents can identify connectors between the two groups in order to improve context and conflict sensitivity and avoid duplication.

Category – overall scale – to be rated by the Partner based on the results from the below questions.	
Scale	Description for each level
1	Very strong connectors identified
2	Strong connectors identified
3	Weak connectors identified
4	Very weak connectors identified
5	No connectors identified

- **Key questions 18** - Commonality between people.

Question for KII According to you, are there commonalities between the different groups residing in the community, in terms of identity and living conditions? If yes, can you explain what do you think they have in common and why?
Equivalent question for FGD What do you have in common with the other group that could make you feel connected to them? On what kind of communal issues do you think that people could be more active in addressing?

Annex 1 – methodological guidance

The below tips and advice are extracted from the inter-agency guidance note on rapid assessments. Partners should also feel free to contact the assessment working group (chaired by Remo Fambri – UNCHR: fambri@unhcr.org and Typhain Gendron – OCHA: gendron@un.org) for more guidance.

Why you should care:

- For interviewees:
 - Consent: for the informant to actually consent, they need to know what they're consenting to
 - Safety: **Response is not directly related to the assessment.** It's critical to explain that their answers won't mean more help.
 - Accuracy: explaining the purpose clearly leads to better quality data
- Take pride in your work, the impact it's going to have
- Security – explaining who you are, who you work for, and what kind of work your doing makes you safer in the field

Methodology

- Separate interviews for displaced Lebanese and Syrian
- Key informant interviews per site
 - Site is informal grouping of displaced households
 - Key informant can be an individual or **small** group

Assessment Challenges

- Recently Displaced Persons
 - Difficult to track, might move at any time, groups are temporary, community structures may have broken down
 - May be in a pretty desperate state, in need of immediate help
- Multi-faceted role
 - Assessment data collectors first! Separate from:
 - Regular positions/representatives of your agency and intl. community
 - First contact, referral points, information sources
- Key Informants – Much more difficult to find in this situation, compared with a regular community
 - Accessible and Visible
 - Observant and Informed
 - Willing to participate
 - Gender Balance

How to find a good key informant

- **FIRST**, make sure you are welcome in the community
- Ask the displaced community
- Observe the displaced community
 - Who looks like they're in charge? Who is answering questions for community members?
- If you find one KI, ask if one or two others can join
 - In particular, ask if any women can represent their voice

Assessment Techniques

Types of Communication

- Non-verbal communication
 - Can be as important as the verbal component
 - Eye contact – culturally appropriate, can help express sincerity
 - Facial expressions – try to be as neutral as possible, but not a poker face. Don't use exaggerated facial expressions, don't judge.
 - Posture – lean forward slightly to show interest, try to be at an even height (i.e. don't stand while they sit, or vice-versa)
 - Be cautious about nodding or shaking your head, be calm and careful with any hand gestures
- Verbal communication
 - Content (what is said) vs. Voice (how it is said)
 - Content:
 - Be as brief as possible, while avoiding acronyms, jargons, or other confusing language
 - Repeat without any hint of annoyance or being in a rush
 - Make sure you organize your own thoughts before you speak. Speak in a way and order that makes logical sense to avoid confusion
- Verbal communication
 - Content (what is said) vs. Voice (how it is said)
 - Voice:
 - Tone of voice should be neutral, not judgmental, rushed, or even sad
 - Be mindful of how loud you are talking, make sure it's loud enough for the interviewee to hear, without yelling or making them uncomfortable
 - Speak slowly and clearly, but without seeming unnatural
 - Try to emphasize words that will help convey the meaning, without changing or skewing it

Types of Questions

- Paying attention to the type of question is critical for getting the right answers
- Open-ended vs. closed questions
 - Open ended – What are your most immediate needs?
 - Closed – How many HHs are in the community?
- Reading options vs. note taking vs. fitting open answers into closed options
 - If you ask what they need, and you say "Cash?", 100% of respondents will say cash
- Open questions and confirming questions may require a technique called "probing"
- Elaborate, Exemplify, Explain, Specify, and Restate
 - "Tell me a little more about _____"
 - "Can you give me an example of that?"
 - "I'm not sure I understood everything, can you explain a bit more?"
 - "Can you explain the details/be more specific?"
 - Repeat what they said in whole or part without judgment. Do this in a way that encourages them to clarify and confirm
- For most questions, **you do not read the answers**
- For some, especially very closed questions, reading the answers helps to structure the answer
- We will highlight these types of questions when reviewing the form itself

Bias

- Organizational Bias – mandate, project, specialization, political aims
- Individual Bias – Class, ethnicity, religion, gender, history, language
- Environmental Bias – time of day, location, situation
- Simply by following good assessment techniques and recognizing the potential for bias, it can be reduced

Strategies to reduce bias

- Organizational Bias – who do you work for? What do they want to do?
 - Try to think about this and minimize how it impacts the interview
- Environmental Bias – where, when, and how?
 - Try to sit side by side, or at the corner of a table
 - Avoid noise and distractions, go somewhere quiet and relatively comfortable
 - Control environment where you can, try to **acknowledge (while being respectful!) where you cannot**
- Interviewees may try to say what you want to hear. Try to combat this by asking for examples or specific. You can also repeat answers to confirm
- Make a professional first impression, and try to acknowledge your own impression of the interviewee and minimize its impact
- When things get heated politically, focus on the assessment and task at hand. Do not engage in politics
- Paraphrase and repeat to make sure you both on the same page
- Don't be afraid of silence. Give them time to elaborate and feel at ease, not rushed

Introduction and Conclusion

- Two of the most important parts of the interview are the beginning and the end
- Introduction
 - Consent consent consent!!! Make sure they understand the assessment, agree to participate, and know that it doesn't mean they will receive anything!
 - Take your time, be careful about choosing the right key informants and introducing yourself in a calm and thorough way