



# Syria Early Recovery Mainstreaming Workshop

## Concept Note



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## 1. Background

Since the beginning of the crisis in 2011, Syria has witnessed significant challenges in the humanitarian and security situation across the country, an increase in the targeting of civilian infrastructure, and a marked increase in internal displacement. The conflict has significantly damaged the country's public and private assets including health, education, energy, water and sanitation, agriculture, transportation, housing and other infrastructure leading to a massive deterioration of Syria's socio-economic infrastructure. Investments, services, production and manufacturing are among the most affected sectors due, *inter alia*, to a drastic decrease of electricity supply. Basic infrastructure and public services are being systematically destroyed. Families are struggling to survive in increasingly desperate conditions.

In 2012, a designated Regional Humanitarian Coordinator (RHC) was deployed to Syria following an inter-agency humanitarian needs assessment mission that took place in March 2012. The RC and HC functions were held by two different UN officials until August 2013 when an HC/RC/DO/UNDP RR was appointed in Syria. Given the spillover of the Syria crisis on the region, a RHC for Syria is deployed to Amman while the deputy RHC is deployed in Gaziantep in Turkey. The HCT in Syria has been smoothly operating since 2013 with the participation of INGOs, Syrian Arab Red Crescent and sector coordinators. The Early Recovery and Livelihoods (ERL) sector was established in June 2012 and continues to operate under the 'Whole of Syria' coordination architecture. It consists of a double hatted Damascus based coordinator and a coordinator in Gaziantep with the support of an Information Management Officer. Four sub-regional ER coordination structures exist in Syria where UN hubs are operational in Aleppo, Qamishly (Hassakeh), Tartous and Homs. The ERL sector in Syria aims at coordinating various partners operating in the ER field inside Syria, developing the ER sector response plan in the humanitarian response plan and monitoring the implementation of the sector strategy as per the humanitarian programme cycle. It consists of a wide array of ER programmatic thematic areas such as: basic and social infrastructure rehabilitation including solid waste and debris management, socio-economic recovery including SMEs revival and livelihoods support, social cohesion and youth engagement/participation, social protection and vulnerable groups and capacity development of the local partners. In September 2016, the ERL Coordinator in Gaziantep embarked on launching the process of establishing the ERL cluster/sector for the cross-border operations under the 'Whole of Syria' coordination architecture. No formal sector coordination is in place in Amman, partners are thus supported by the WoS ERL coordinator for the time being.

Against this background, the ERL sector aims to contribute to the resilience building of affected local communities, households and individuals by protecting and restoring livelihoods and enabling access to essential services and rehabilitation of socio-economic infrastructures. To this end, the 2016 sector response focuses on: (1) sustained and enhanced service delivery and basic community infrastructure; (2) creation and stabilization of basic livelihoods and social protection for socio-economic recovery; (3) promotion of social cohesion and communities' engagement to strengthen the resilience of affected people and mitigate the effects of the protracted crisis.

## 2. Objectives of the workshop

The overall objective of the workshop is to build capacity and knowledge among relevant ERL sector partners/members on the early recovery approach by providing hands-on skills and tools to effectively integrate and mainstream early recovery across the work of the sectors in Syria.

The primary target group of this workshop will be the ERL sector partners/members operating from inside Syria since 2012. Once the ERL sector/cluster will be established in Gaziantep, an introductory workshop to ER will be planned catering for the needs and priorities of the partners operating through cross-borders mechanisms.

## Expected results

- Ensure complementarity and synergies across varying sectors through an enhanced common understanding of early recovery and livelihoods issues in Syria, including its guiding principles, mainstreaming elements and coordination mechanisms for contextualizing early recovery in the Syrian crisis
- Showcase international, regional and national early recovery initiatives that will help inform and contribute strategically to the role of the ERL sector in the 2017 Syria humanitarian planning cycle.
- In line with the Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) principles, identify joint areas of support among relevant sector partners to foster conflict sensitive programming on issues related to social cohesion, community engagement and rehabilitation as well as social protection for socio-economic recovery.
- Sensitize sector partners to their responsibilities within the global process of implementing and mainstreaming early recovery approach.
- Formulate and agree on a common follow-up action plan to ensure recommendations and decisions made by sector coordinators and partners during the workshop will be pursued and achieved in support of the integration of the early recovery approach into the Syria humanitarian response.

## 3. Methodology and Approach

A 2-day workshop is proposed using a range of learning modalities such as presentations, group exercises, table top exercise, and open plenary. Development of the materials has been informed by a range of primary and secondary sources, including feedback from relevant technical experts, programme reviews, studies, lessons learned reports, case studies, peer presentations, evaluations and formal policy and technical guidance notes.

The present methodology is tailored to a 2-day workshop and the lengths of the sessions are purely indicative. The lengths of the sessions and of the workshop itself is to be adapted to the needs of the Syria context. The proposed methodology to achieve the above objectives of the workshop is constituted of four parts.

Further, prior to the workshop, participants will be asked to complete a self-assessment questionnaire in order to gauge their perception of the knowledge, understanding and awareness of the early recovery approach at global, regional and national levels. Based on the participants' needs, the agenda of the workshop will be re-adjusted and fine-tuned. Participants will be also asked to familiarize themselves with the Guidance Note on Inter-Cluster Early Recovery that will be shared ahead of time.

## Part 1: WELCOMING, OPENING, AND INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP.

**Objective:** This session aims to break the ice and get the participants involved in the workshop by raising the importance of early recovery in Syria and sharing the content and outputs of the workshop.

### Approach:

- **Opening speeches by UNDP Country Director, Mr. Samuel Rizk**
- **Introduction of facilitators and participants:** Facilitators will present themselves to the participants. Depending on the number of participants a tour de table could be possible, or not. A rapid way to present the varying stakeholders in the room will be necessary. For example, saying one by one the different types of stakeholders that they represent and asking participants to raise their hands when they hear their stakeholder of reference. Participants will be asked to say their name and the organization they represent when they are given the floor to speak.
- **Presentation of the workshop's objectives, expected results, agenda and facilitation method.** The agenda and content (sessions, objectives, outputs, etc.) of the workshop will be presented in detail to the participants. If required, the agenda can be tweaked to adapt it to the needs of the audience as they unfold. The proposed facilitation approach is based on using technics such as presentations, interactions with the participants, group works, plenary discussions etc. to ensure a continued exchange of experiences and views among participants.

## PART 2: CONCEPT KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE SHARING

**Objective:** This module is intended to set a common understanding of early recovery and its interlinked programming areas (resilience, risk informed programming, DRR, climate change adaptation, etc.), and show existing efforts and initiatives towards the integration of early recovery in the Syrian crisis.

### Approach:

- **Definitions:** It is proposed to recall the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definition of early recovery in a plenary discussion. It is recommended to clarify other concepts related to early recovery and show their linkages with early recovery. It is critical to clarify these concepts at the beginning of the workshop to avoid subsequent discussions on the same subject.
- **Sharing experiences on early recovery:** The early recovery concept is rarely really new in many contexts especially in the Syria context. This module is thus meant to show the work done in Syria so far and build on the experiences shared by the participants in the course of the workshop. It is proposed to select and present four/five early recovery initiatives at the operational and/or strategic levels. In preparation for the workshop, the early recovery team in Syria together with the facilitators will select a range of ongoing early recovery experiences/initiatives. The range of selected experiences/initiatives will include examples from varying geographical areas, different topics i.e. integration of relevant early recovery activities in humanitarian programs, in sector strategies and in-country coordination mechanisms with different stakeholders etc. Presentations shall be structured along those lines to help the audience extract rapidly the main information. By way of example, each presentation could be structured on: a) a brief description of the Syria context; b) stakeholders' engagement; 3) main activities, outputs, challenges, opportunities/enablers and lessons learned; and

4) recommendations. Participating sector members will have sufficient time to present their own experiences. The facilitators will work ahead of time with selected presenters to ensure consistency and relevance of content in the proposed presentations. After each presentation, it is proposed to give the opportunity to participants to comment on and/or complement the presentation with similar experiences.

- **Early recovery in the global humanitarian system.** This session provides an overview of the early recovery concept, including its references to the Transformative Agenda, People Centered Humanitarian Action (PCHA), Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), challenges and expected roles of key stakeholders (national bodies, sector partners/members, ER advisors, ER sector coordinators, etc.).
- **Early recovery performance measurement:** The objective of this session is to provide participants with concrete tools, instruments and experiences to measure early recovery at country level. By way of example, presentations will focus on the latest version of the ER indicator registry, the use of new ER indicators to track progress against the recovery phase and hands-on country examples from the Arab states. In this session, participants will get acquainted with existing monitoring tools and instruments to measure early recovery contributions in humanitarian settings.

### **PART 3: STRENGTHENING EARLY RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY WITHIN SYRIA**

**Objective:** The objective of this module is to kick start the formulation of national early recovery guiding principles and of a plan of action for each sector to fulfil the early recovery principles.

#### **Approach:**

- **Presentation of the overall process from the formulation of early recovery guiding principles to sectorial action plans.** Before starting the collective discussion aimed to agree upon and set up national principles and sectorial action plans, it is important to reflect with the participants on the overall process, expected results and methodology that will be used to achieve these results. The process to strengthen the early recovery implementation capacity within Syria and within a sector is based on three pillars:
  - Formulation of **early recovery guiding principles at the country level** by adapting the global early recovery principles to the Syria context taking into account the outcomes of the resilience building consultations that were held in Amman/Gaziantep and Damascus in 2015 and the Resilience Framework. This will be followed by plenary discussions on the priorities related to early recovery/resilience and on how to address them in Syria.
  - Definition of **multi-sectorial objectives** linked to the national early recovery/resilience guiding principles. Once the national early recovery guiding principles are elaborated, multi-sectorial objectives can be formulated along with a timeline to track achievements in an agreed period of time (one year, for instance).
  - An action plan (comprising outcomes and activities to be implemented by the sector partners/members) for each sector can be set up. When an activity involves actors working in different sectors, the activity will have to be included in the action plan of all concerned sectors.

- **Global early recovery principles and experiences from other countries.** This session aims to spark inspiration among participants by sharing experiences on existing early recovery principles in other countries. The facilitators will present the IASC Early Recovery Guiding Principles and the comparative table of guiding principles for early recovery. Other relevant experience in other countries can also be presented. Hands-on country examples from protracted crises will be provided <sup>1</sup>.
- **Formulation of early recovery categories of principles for Syria.** In this session, participants will define early recovery/resilience guiding principles for Syria taking into account the outcomes of the resilience building consultations that were held in Amman/Gaziantep and Damascus in 2015 and the Resilience Framework. It is proposed that the facilitators present predefined categories of principles to the participants. Through group works (Work group 1) participants will re-formulate or re-shuffle the principles according to the Syria context (nature of the crisis, existing capacities, priorities, etc.). The facilitators shall group participants up by taking into consideration the following elements:
  - The groups should be comprised of no more than ten people;
  - The groups will be formed with the aim to gather different types of actors working in different sectors.
  - The group work should last between 30mins to 45mins.
  - At the end of the group work, each group will present its own findings to the others. Different options can be used to present the work of each group. To save time and allow every participant to react on others' group works the "silence discussion" method is proposed. The latter consists of displaying the work of each group on a table or on a wall in a way that participants can read and take notes. Participants will be asked to circulate freely in the room and read other groups' findings. Each participant will vote for the formulation of those principles that she/he agrees on. The principles that will receive majority of votes will be considered as priority. By the end of the exercise, the priority principles identified will be discussed in a plenary session.
  - Facilitators will synthesize agreed principles in order to draft the early recovery guiding principles that will serve for the next sessions.
- **Inter-sectorial objectives formulation.** On the basis of the draft national early recovery guiding principles, participants will be asked to work in groups (Work group 2) and formulate objectives (at least one priority objective per principle) achievable within a period of time (one year, for instance), including a focus on social protection. The methodology to form work groups is the same as the Work group 1. The methodology of 'silent discussion' as for the Work group 1 can be replicated to present the work of each group to the rest of participants. Participants can again vote for the objectives formulated. In a plenary session, the objectives that received most votes will be discussed and, if necessary, be re-formulated. Facilitators will synthesize the inter-sectorial objectives for each principle.
- **Sectorial action points.** This session is meant to formulate action points/activities implementable by each sector in order to attain the inter-sectorial objectives, in particular on social protection. Facilitators shall group participants up by gathering relevant sector partners/members. Through the work group (Work group 3) participants will propose action points/activities for each inter-sectorial objective.

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<sup>1</sup> *Early recovery Guiding Principles, Bangladesh*, UNDP and Government of Bangladesh (GoB).

- **Debriefing, discussion & synthesis.** In the course of this session, the work of each sectorial group will be presented in a plenary fashion. Discussion and reformulation of action points and/or activities proposed by the sectorial groups can take place. Facilitators will help define feasible actions points/activities.
- **Consolidation of a common follow-up plan of action for early recovery and clarification of responsibilities.** The common follow-up plan of action for early recovery will include early recovery guiding principles, inter-sectorial objectives related to the principles and action points related to the inter-sectorial objectives. In this session facilitators will guide the audience to assign entities/organizations to each agreed action point/activity and to the next steps required to strengthen the early recovery process. To this end, it is also recommended to identify a monitoring mechanism to follow-up on the decisions and recommendations made at the workshop as well as to clarify responsibilities and timeline going ahead.

#### **PART 4: SYNTHESIS & CONCLUSION**

**Objective:** Present the results of the workshop to the officials and closure the workshop.

**Approach:** Facilitators will present a summary of the workshop outcomes: early recovery follow-up action plan, including national guiding principles, inter-sectorial objectives, action points and next steps. Closing remarks will follow.

