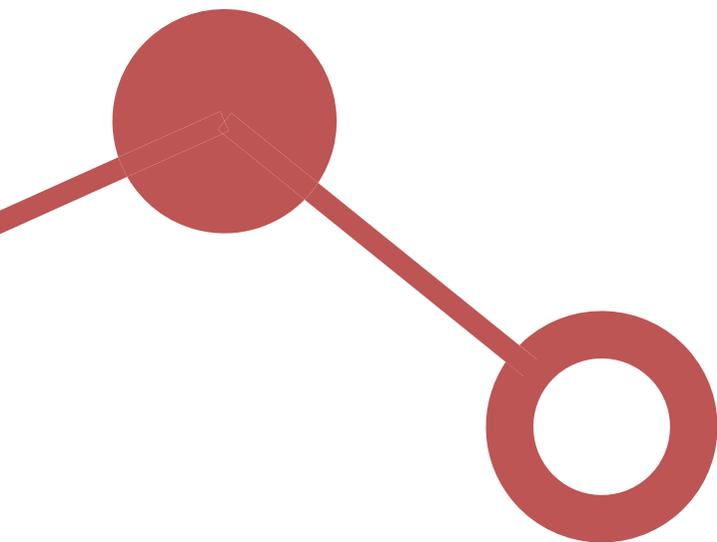


RESILIENT MUNICIPALITIES: A RESOURCE FOR COUNTRIES AFFECTED BY THE SYRIA CRISIS





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INTRODUCTION

CONTEXT

Extensive impact of the Syria crisis in the region

The protracted Syrian crisis has led to the loss of human life, massive population displacement within and outside Syria and severe damage to the social, economic and political fabric in Syria and the surrounding countries. Since the onset of the Syrian crisis in 2011, more than 3 million people, one-eighth of the total Syrian population, have fled the country. A further 6.5 million are displaced within Syria, and over half of those uprooted are children. Most of the refugees remain in countries neighboring Syria, with the highest registered concentrations in Lebanon (1.14 million), Jordan (608,000), and Turkey (815,000). (See map 1.)

Turkey has been a key destination for Syrian refugees, and the country has followed an open-door policy to refugees. About one-third of the Syrian refugees in Turkey live in camps in the south of Turkey, while the rest are living in urban locations around the country (AFAD, 2014). The refugee influx has overwhelmed national structures and resources, and facilities of host communities are increasingly becoming stressed (UNHCR, 2014b).

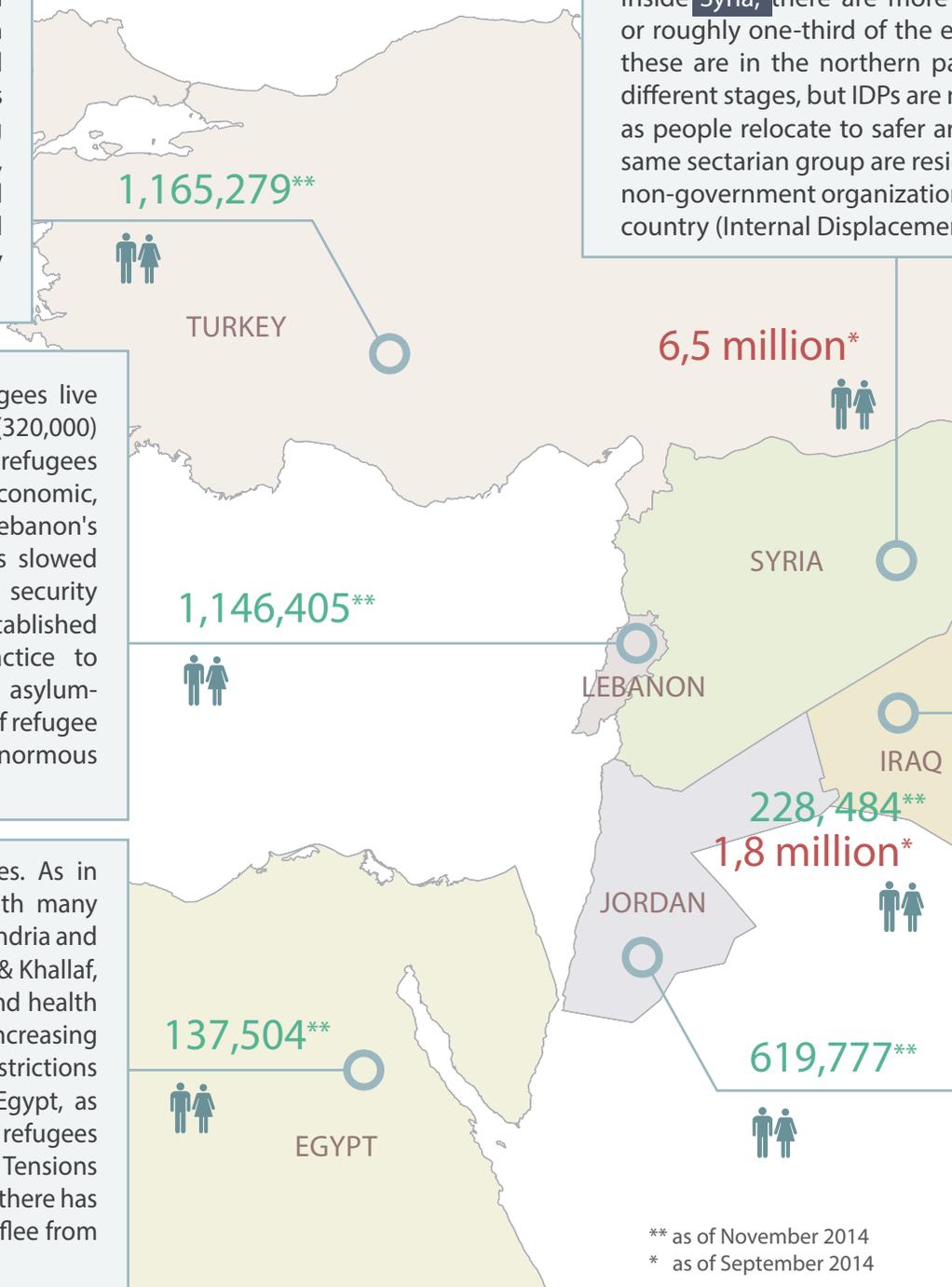
In **Lebanon**, the majority of the Syrian refugees live in the Bekaa region (430,000) and Beirut (320,000) (UNHCR, 2014a). The large number of Syrian refugees and the effect of their presence on political, economic, and social stability are of major concern: Lebanon's previously strong economic growth rate has slowed down; the political situation is unstable; and security levels are deteriorating. Lebanon has not established domestic legislation or administrative practice to address the specific needs of refugees and asylum-seekers, and it has refused the establishment of refugee camps within its borders. The refugees put enormous strains on already weak municipalities.

Egypt is host to 140,000 registered refugees. As in Lebanon, refugees live outside of camps, with many living outside of the major urban areas in Alexandria and the Greater Cairo area (UNHCR, 2014e) (Ayoub & Khallaf, 2014). They have access to public education and health care (UNHCR, 2014e) but have come under increasing pressure. Since July 2013, visa and security restrictions have been imposed on all Syrians entering Egypt, as the Egyptian regime is concerned that Syrian refugees may support the banned Muslim Brotherhood. Tensions with host communities are also increasing, and there has been a noticeable increase in Syrians trying to flee from Egypt to Europe by sea (UNHCR, 2014b).

Inside **Syria**, there are more than 6,4 million Internally Displaced Persons, or roughly one-third of the entire Syrian population, and about 3 million of these are in the northern part of the country. Displacement has followed different stages, but IDPs are now increasingly clustered along sectarian lines, as people relocate to safer areas where family members or members of the same sectarian group are residing. Moreover, international organizations and non-government organizations (NGOs) have very limited access to IDPs in the country (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2014).

Iraq, a country struggling with internal turmoil, is hosting around 200,000 Syrian refugees. Almost the entire refugee population lives in the Kurdistan region and 56% are in host communities (UNHCR, 2014c). The influx of refugees, combined with the exponential growth of internally displaced persons (IDPs) (more than 1.8 million), has increased security concerns in the Kurdistan region and is straining public services, leading to tensions with host communities (UNHCR, 2014b). The insecure environment in Iraq furthermore affects the ability of international actors to support host communities and refugees. For example, direct access to Al Obaidy camp and Syrian refugees in urban areas in Al-Qa'im, Anbar Governorate of Iraq, has been restricted since mid-June 2014 (UNHCR, 2014d).

In **Jordan**, the number of Syrian refugees is projected to have reached 800,000 by the end of 2014. Most— about a half-million — of the refugees in Jordan are residing in urban areas, particularly in Amman, Mafraq, and Irbid. The influx of Syrian refugees increasingly affects Jordanian host communities, which are battling many of the same challenges as the refugees— rising costs of living and over-stretched public services. This exacerbates tensions between refugees and host communities.



** as of November 2014
* as of September 2014

STRESS AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

Refugees from Syria are living mainly outside of camps, often in informal settlements, and they put enormous stress on municipalities. Even in Turkey, which has built and manages 17 refugee camps adjacent to eight cities, many refugees are interspersed with the local population, as they see this as preferable to camp life (UNHCR, 2014f). In Lebanon, refugees attempt to blend in with the local population and are reluctant to register themselves, due to fear of persecution from both authorities and host communities (ALEF-Act for Human Rights, 2013).

Officially, national governments may attempt to restrict refugee inflows or contain refugees' presence geographically. The Lebanese government has repeatedly stated that Syrian refugees should not consider Lebanon as a destination for settlement (ALEF-Act for Human Rights, 2013). Municipal governments, however, are painfully aware of the reality that refugee movement across borders and within countries (including refugees exiting from camps) cannot be fully monitored or controlled. They face a fluid situation, in which they are responsible for delivering services to a population much larger than official counts. While UNHCR and other international organizations assist in all sectors of service provision, the municipalities are the service provider of last resort. In Iraq, the Kurdish government provides services in over half of the sectors outlined by the UNHCR (UNHCR, 2014g).

Therefore, there is a huge **stress on public services**. Even those municipalities with smaller refugee populations feel the impact through the loss of trade, accelerated inflation, and increased instability that the crisis has caused. The double impact on services and the economy has understandably heightened social tensions, even when the receiving municipalities are, in principle, welcoming the new population.

ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT

Access to employment is also a major problem for Syrian refugees and host communities. The job skills that Syrian refugees bring is a potential positive contribution to the host communities. However, workers in the host communities have seen their own employment and wages threatened as supply of skilled labor has outstripped demand. The influx of refugees has put downward pressure on wages by increasing competition, especially for low- or unskilled workers.

SOCIAL TENSIONS

Social tensions have risen and social cohesion deteriorated as host communities report their discontent with the effects of refugee influxes. Inflation is felt in increased prices for rent, food, and medicines; supplies of basic goods are often not sufficient; the quality of basic and social services has suffered; and infrastructure is strained due to increased demand. Another source of tension is the changing balance of power among local residents. This is particularly evident in Lebanon, where the influx has shifted the sectarian balance and become a cause of concern in a country having lived through a protracted civil war due to sectarian conflict. It is also important in Jordan, Iraq, and Turkey, as refugees intersect with tribal, ethnic, and other local divisions. Finally, Syrian women suffer sexual exploitation or are taken as second and third wives, often at a very young age, which heightens tensions in both refugee and host communities. (Harb and Saab 2014). Mitigating these tensions and preventing local conflict has become crucial.



SECURITY PROBLEMS

The tensions foster security problems. The socioeconomic problems in refugee-affected areas appear to encourage theft, assault and other criminal activity (Üstüntag, 2014). Crime rates may be lower than many believe they are, but they nevertheless contribute to tensions (Search for Common Ground, 2014). Concerns about rising radical fundamentalism compound the day-to-day security issues. In some cases, these concerns have led communities and national security forces to impose curfews on refugees or to detain Syrians arbitrarily (Search for Common Ground, 2014). These measures, in turn, further foster social tensions.



MUNICIPAL SERVICES



Waste management is highly compromised in all the countries. The increase in population in the affected municipalities has put pressure on waste collection and management, and fees have, in some cases, doubled, leading many municipalities to highlight this as a primary concern. Overwhelmed waste management systems have an impact on health and environmental issues. In Lebanon alone, for example, people live in flood-prone areas with poor solid-waste management, thus putting them at risk of enteric diseases (UNHCR, 2014b).



The crisis has also posed problems concerning **access to water**. In water-scarce countries such as Jordan and Lebanon, per capita water supplies decreased from a standard of 100 liters per day to 30 liters per day (Reach, 2014a). Egypt, Iraq, and Turkey do not see the same degree of stress, but even there, refugees may ultimately put stress on systems providing safe drinking water. These problems, combined with poor waste management, put Syrians and hosts at risk of diarrhea, skin disease, and hepatitis (ILO, 2013, Oxfam, 2013, Croix Rouges Francaise, 2013).

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES



Access to health services is another primary concern for both host communities and refugee communities. In the affected countries, pressures put on health systems and infrastructure by refugee influxes strains health-service provision and access to resources, medical staff, equipment, and supplies (UNHCR & Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, 2013). In many cases, refugees report lack of money as an obstacle to receiving the health care they need (as many as 94% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon agree with this statement). The gap may not be large at the primary-care level, but

treatment for noncommunicable diseases is often prohibitive (Medecins Sant Frontieres, 2012, CARE, 2014, Amara & Aljunid, 2014).

ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Formal and informal access to education is a common challenge in the affected countries. For refugees living outside camps, school enrollment is low. In some countries, language is a severe limitation, because the refugee children do not speak the same language as the language of their host communities. In Iraq and Turkey, for instance, 77% and 86% of all refugee children are not enrolled in schools (AFAD, 2013; UNHCR, 2014b). School enrollment is higher in countries such as Egypt, Jordan, and Lebanon, and the higher number of pupils in school has put strains on the quality of the education and facilities.

ACCESS TO HOUSING

The influx of refugees has had significant impact on the access to housing in the affected countries. Host community-residing refugees face concerns over rent and standards of living, and in some areas rent has soared 200% (UNHCR & REACH, 2014; World Vision, 2013). Most refugees live either in unsafe, dilapidated, or unfinished houses, apartments, garages, or farms, or in old schools. In Egypt, some families spend between 60% and 100% of their monthly financial resources on rent (World Food Programme, UNICEF, & UNHCR, 2012). Refugees therefore consider shelter and housing a major challenge, with up to 90% of Syrian refugees in Iraq citing shelter and housing as their main concern (UNHCR, 2014b).

The crisis presents **unique challenges to local governance and development because refugees are noncitizens**. There is uncertainty regarding how long they will stay, and at times their numbers overwhelm the number of residents. These concerns bring into question the extent to which the refugees can be involved in municipal planning and project implementation. At a minimum, their presence must be calculated into planning decisions, and social cohesion must be maintained. A more positive scenario would involve listening to their perspective, engaging them in prioritization exercises, and taking advantage of their presence to build a response based on local assets.

REGIONAL TRENDS IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Governance systems and structures constrain the performance of municipalities in the region. A distinct feature of local government in the Arab world is the **limited administrative support structure**. Local public administrations have few staff thus hindering their ability to address challenges and ensure the quality of public service delivery. For example, of the 1,108 municipalities in Lebanon, 400 are only made up of 1 employee, 87% employ fewer than six people, whilst 68% report they need new employees (The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 2014). The limited paid staff is generally hired through personal connections and often without the necessary educational or vocational qualifications (EuropeAid, 2011).

Municipalities face **financial difficulties and budgetary constraints**, as they are often unable to tax and thus lack the ability to self-finance. Income taxation is not collected at the municipal levels in any of the affected countries. Rather, income tax collection is the central governments' prerogative, and funds are re-distributed to municipalities in an unpredictable and unreliable manner (UCLG, 2014a). The largest source of income for municipalities is thus through transfers, aid, and credit from the central government, as well as donations from international development aid (UCLG, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c, UNDP, 2014, World Bank, 2014). However, these income sources are seldom enough to ensure that municipalities have adequate financial resources at their disposal.

Moreover, although there are important national and sub-national variations in legal frameworks and the capacities of municipalities to cope with the crisis, in many cases, municipalities are neither legally empowered nor well-equipped to address the critical issues facing their communities. These differences are outlined in Table 1. Municipalities in Turkey seem to be better equipped to respond to the crisis than those in Lebanon. Turkish municipalities have better collaboration with NGOs and IOs, than, for example, Lebanon or Jordan; they enjoy more prerogatives in tax collection than other countries (UCLG, 2014c), and they have a more developed private sector that provides a source of revenue (UCLG, 2014a, 2014b, 2014c; UNDP, 2014; World Bank, 2014). This increases their financial management performance. Most Lebanese municipalities are particularly unprepared for the burden placed upon them. There are over 1100 municipalities, 70% of which have a registered population below 4000 and nearly one-third of which have only one employee. Of course, there is also significant variation within countries, including in Lebanon, where

large municipalities have much larger populations and hundreds of employees (The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 2014). Nevertheless, despite lack of municipal council responsibilities and resources, local governments are often left to address deficiencies in government run services through their own initiatives, such as in water and sanitation (Institute for War and Peace Reporting, n.d.; Federal Government of Iraq & UNICEF, 2011; Osman, 2014; UCLG, 2013, 2014a; UNDP, 2014; USAID, 2007).

Table 1: Local Governance Review Framework

Governance element	Sub-elements	JORDAN (Sources: UCLG, 2014b, CIA World Factbook, 2014a, World Bank, 2014, UNDP, 2014)	LEBANON (Sources: The Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, 2014, UCLG, 2014a, World Bank, 2014)	TURKEY (Sources: UCLG, 2014c, World Bank, 2014)	EGYPT (Sources: CAPMAS, n.d., CIA World Factbook, 2014b, Osman, 2014)	IRAQ (Sources: (Federal Government of Iraq & UNICEF, 2011, CIA World Factbook, 2014c, USAID, 2007, UCLG, 2013, UN-HABITAT, 2011)
Administrative division	Municipalities	93	1,108	3,225	350	425
	Population	7,930,491 (July 2014)	4,341,000	70,586,256 (2007)	86,895,099 (2014)	32,585,692 (July 2014)
	Average pop. per municipality	85,274	3,917	21,887	248,271	76,672
Financial resources	Taxation	Do not have the ability to tax (prerogative of central government)	Collect taxes relating to rental rates, building permits, pipe maintenance, the use of municipal public land, etc. Income taxes collected by the state are not transferred to the municipalities.	Collect local taxes (own resources): landed property, entertainment, communications, electricity and gas consumption, fire insurance, environmental protection and street cleaning.	No power to determine how local revenue is raise. Revenue raised mostly from motor vehicle registrations and store and building licenses.	Local councils are responsible for collecting and retaining local revenues, taxes and fees.
	Other income sources	Transfers from central government, international dev. aid, rents from land and other fees.	Receive aid and credit from the central government.	Use companies and municipal foundations to escape the control of Central government.	Main income is government transfers Other include transferring assets and income into capital as well as loans and credit facilities	Use of surplus income sharing system.
	GDP per capita USD (2013)	5,214	9,928	10,946	3,314	6,670
Administrative responsibilities	According to legislation	Cleaning, spraying insecticides, street lighting, construction and maintenance of roads, slaughterhouses, markets, public parks, libraries and town planning. General local development mandate.	Public works, establish or manage public schools, manage water resources, manage waste, public lighting and roads, construction of hospitals and health facilities, organise local transportation, assist poor and disabled people.	Health, education, and natural and cultural heritage. Distribution of responsibilities and powers among different levels of local authorities.	Centralized planning and state-led development at the expense of local governing bodies. (Local Administration Law 43/1979,)	Kurdistan regional government (KRG): share policy-making authority with Baghdad on water, education and health KRG: Decentralized decision making with respect to all other public services.
Functional local responsibilities	Shared with national or regional authorities	In general planning through vertical lines with top-down control and centralized budgets But increased local development planning through horizontal lines is gaining.	Central authority exercises most powers and responsibilities: planning, transport, education, social services, public hygiene services, water resource management and distribution, energy and economic development. Town planning decisions taken by High Urban Planning Council. Administrative reform bill is not set to change anything about this.	Despite decentralisation in 1985, after 20 years of experience, the record is rather negative and municipalities' practices provoke much debate due to deviances that compromise the public interest.	Budget: elected members of local councils can only discuss, central government controls and supervises spending. Highly centralized system whereby areas legally under municipalities' oversight are directed by central government.	Decentralisation is very weak in Iraq as local councils work alongside local departments of the central government e.g. subject matters such as health and education will usually fall under the jurisdiction of the local central government department, and not the local or provincial council.

OVERVIEW OF THIS RESOURCE FOR RESILIENT MUNICIPALITIES

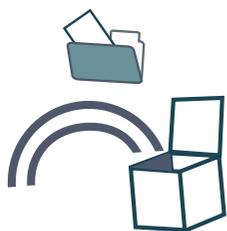
The Resource for Resilient Municipalities has four core modules designed to enhance resilience of municipalities. Municipalities affected by the Syria crisis, which have experienced recent influxes of refugees, can use the core modules to:

- Help them gather information from diverse groups on needs and assets (especially as they might have changed recently), and on perceived inequalities that may be a source of tensions
- Expedite resolution of service problems by identifying priorities and their root causes and by bringing together internal and external resources – physical, human and social capital – to address priority issues
- Strengthen communication between local government, longstanding residents, and newcomers and mobilize the community for collective action
- Ease social tension by supporting ‘connectors’ who can recognize problems early and address issues pro-actively across communities

CORE MODULES OF THE RESOURCE

This resource outlines several steps that municipal leaders can take to plan and implement collective actions that engage local stakeholders and external partners. These steps fall under four core modules:

1 CREATING A MUNICIPALITY NEEDS AND ASSETS DATABASE



Module 1 guides them through various tools for creating a municipality needs-and-assets database that can be used for their own activities and for engaging with donors. This involves conducting a self-assessment survey (for medium-sized or larger municipalities), interviewing well-informed persons, and using volunteers as trained observers. In addition to needs, the municipality seeks information on local assets in the form of physical (built and natural) capital, human capital, and social capital. The resource provides examples of tools used to gather information and methods for recording and updating information.

2 PARTICIPATORY PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION AND PRIORITIZATION

Module 2 explains how to prioritize needs and identify root causes of challenges through a structured participatory process. This begins by agreeing upon criteria for prioritizing the many needs expressed by the community and forming working groups of respected stakeholders to analyze the root causes of the priority issues. The stakeholder working groups (one for each priority issue) will agree on future-oriented positive statements that will serve as strategic goals for the municipality. Each strategic goal has sub-objectives to address the root causes of the problem to be improved, ensuring a holistic but practical approach.



3 COLLECTIVE ACTION PLANNING

Module 3 explains how to create a collective action plan using internal and external resources. This module first looks deeply into the assets in the municipality that can be used to address sub-objectives of the strategic goals. It also leads working groups in analyzing stakeholders’ influence over these assets and their position toward the sub-objectives. Recognizing that local stakeholders may have conflicting interests, especially in the short term, there is guidance on putting together complementary collective actions to minimize opposition and build broad support. The resource also has suggestions for setting performance targets to monitor progress in plan implementation and impact.



4 INCREASING TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION

Module 4 focuses on how they can systematically collect information, ensuring that the views of all residents in the community are taken into account when needs gathering, prioritizing, and planning. The module focuses on efficient approaches that do not require specific expertise to implement, and in fact represent opportunities to encourage youth to volunteer and become more active in municipal affairs.

- These are the core modules of the resource and a foundation for further work. The next steps in developing the resource may include more sectoral-specific tools on issues such as security and service provision, as well as additional resources-building skills in leadership, developing inter-municipal cooperation, and communicating with donors.

ADAPTING THE RESOURCE TO NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

As the Resource was developed with a regional scope, it must be adapted to each country's circumstances. The authors expect that external partners will use the Resource to enhance their current programs and in the process adapt it to national and local contexts. Adaptation is facilitated by the inclusion of many templates and instrument examples that serve as a starting point. Some considerations in adapting the tools to local conditions are the size and capacity of the municipality.

While implementing the Resource in full is most effective in building resilient municipalities, the authors recognize that external partners may choose to select specific tools to be incorporated into existing programs. Even if some steps may overlap with current programs, the authors encourage partners to familiarize themselves with the full process presented in the Resource. In these sections that may seem to overlap, you may find new ideas that can be applied.

This Resource is intended to facilitate donors' work, providing a source of tools that can be modified and adapted to fit your circumstances. However, building a resource kit, just like a resilient municipality, is a long-term process. The authors welcome any feedback that donors have that can help to make it stronger and more useful. Ideas of how to improve it, or have particular success stories from certain elements.

A TIME TO BUILD RESILIENCE

This Resource was designed for a context in which many municipalities are constrained. Even before the Syrian refugee crisis, the region had limited administrative support structures and were subject to low and unpredictable budget revenues. Official mandates of municipalities may be quite limited, and the municipalities must operate within centralized systems. Certainly, reforms are envisaged or under way in some of the affected countries that may strengthen the local government system. However, this resource promotes actions that can be taken now, before the legal and financial frameworks are reformed, because municipalities cannot wait to respond to the demographic shock that is affecting services, the economy, security, and social cohesion. This resource enables local leaders who have resolve and the ability to think strategically and creatively to enhance resilience regardless of the system within which they are operating.

Municipal leaders can take approaches described in this Resource to create a more resilient municipality, which:

- Helps people living in the municipality to adapt to shocks, and in the process build a safer environment, a more connected community and a broader-based local economy;
- Takes the required action in a timely and appropriate manner to pre-empt problems;
- Creates systems for communicating with and engaging citizens, businesses and civil society organizations;
- Deploys its human and financial resources flexibly, to ensure the most critical issues are addressed;
- Creates partnerships that make the most of the talents and resources in the municipality and in neighboring municipalities;
- Builds social cohesion based on inclusive approaches and equitable access to public service;
- Uses information sharing and continuous learning to improve services and adapt to changing circumstances.

Elements of a Resilient Municipality



In the past few years, many municipal leaders have learned to be creative and resourceful. On a daily basis, they have faced demands from people for things they don't directly control—better clinics or education, new roads, and improved electric and water systems that are often the responsibility of the central ministries. These municipal leaders have responded to these demands by employing new approaches. In New Ramtha, Jordan, for instance, the mayor led an initiative to clean the city, engaging residents from across the spectrum (city workers, Jordanians, Syrian refugees, young and old). In Qena, Egypt, a governor took to the streets of municipalities, got to know the people, helped establish parent-teacher organizations and other input committees that resulted in tangible improvements in education scores and satisfaction.

BOX 1

In one Jordanian municipality the mayor introduced a deposit tax on potato chip bags to encourage people to properly dispose of the bags. If they return the empty bag to the store, they receive their deposit in exchange. The deposit creates value in the empty bags that were becoming a litter problem. If the buyer simply throws the bag on the ground, there is an incentive for others to pick it up and dispose of it properly by returning it to a store. The town is using the funds from the deposit tax for street cleaning efforts.

BOX 2

Another Jordanian municipality created the green voucher program to encourage families to reduce, reuse and recycle. Low-income families can request a green voucher booklet that has tickets that can be used to buy food at the grocery store. In return, the families are required to separate their waste for recycling and to reduce their trash so that they only need pick-up once per week.

Resilience is a strategy not only for municipalities in this region and the unique challenges they face today. Throughout the world, municipalities are developing strategies to build resilience to face increased exposure to natural disasters, financial shocks, economic competition, migration flows and health risks. At the heart of responding to these complex challenges and shocks lies collective action, which utilizes different capacities and responsibilities of local stakeholder groups in a coordinated and effective manner.

By mobilizing and coordinating collective actions, municipal leaders are effectively addressing problems, even in the face of crises and constraints. In utilizing partnerships within the municipality and with neighboring communities, municipalities can help **ease financial problems** by creating economies of scale and budget savings. The municipalities can also leverage external resources with local knowledge and means. Collective action can expand the municipality's capacity by bringing in new resources and expertise, and by opening the door to innovation. And, it can **address social tensions** by helping determine and respond to residents' demands for high-quality services, bring together disparate groups as part of the solution, and increase visibility and transparency of the local government's work.

INPUTS TO THE RESOURCE

The development of this resource has benefited from interviews with partners working with municipalities in the region. The authors have also reviewed numerous reports on programs and projects funded by donors as well as local initiatives and have incorporated some of the approaches and lessons learned in this document. Most importantly, this resource benefited from the input of mayors, who are the people most likely to lead initiatives that will employ the approaches proposed. By having mayors practice these approaches through simulation exercises and engaging them in facilitated discussions related to their obstacles and achievements, the authors received feedback that helped them further tailor this Resource to the countries of the region.

The authors of the resource were inspired and encouraged by the personal interviews and materials reviewed from a broad set of development programs and the implementing partners. The authors interviewed partners working with municipalities across the region, reviewed numerous reports on programs and projects, and looked at methodologies implemented in other regions. In particular, colleagues at Beyond Research and Development, Knowledge Development Cooperation, Lebanese Center for Policy Studies, Mercy Corps Lebanon, MSI Baladi Plus program in Lebanon, UK AID Jordan, UNCDF, USAID Jordan, Lebanon Civic Support Initiative (OTI Lebanon), REACH Initiative, UNDP Jordan and UNDP Lebanon, UNHCR Jordan, UNHCR Lebanon, UN-Habitat, Information and Research Center—King Hussein Foundation, as well as other scholars and development specialists, shared materials and provided useful inputs and feedback.

Advice from those with on-the-ground experience was essential to developing a resource that fit the purpose of being useful to municipal leaders in their current context. Time and again, colleagues brought home the constraints on municipalities across the region, while also emphasizing the positive steps that local leaders can and have taken, despite their limitations. Colleagues also shared their materials and methods, many of which are reflected in the tools included here. For instance, the UNDP Lebanon shared impressive experiences with data gathering and management (see Box 1.) The UNDP Jordan's Baladi Baladiati also included impressive, participatory methods for helping local leaders establish community profiles, identify stakeholders, and engage them in need identification. These instruments, too, provided excellent starting points for tools within the resource. Others, including colleagues in MSI, OTI, and USAID, shared experiences that demonstrated the potential for community planning and implementation in the context of the Syrian refugee crisis.

BOX 3 MAPPING NEEDS AND ASSETS: UNDP-LEBANON'S MAP OF RISKS AND RESOURCES (MRR) INITIATIVE

In Lebanon, the UNDP country office, together with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), recognized the need for an instrument that would bring communities together to determine their needs and assets, as well as help them provide information that can allow government ministries and donors coordinate at the national level. The Maps of Risks and Resources (MRR), implemented as part of the Lebanese Host Communities Support project (LHSP), does just that.

The MRR gathers information at the local level and compiles it into an integrative, multi-layered data set at the national level. Teams of UNDP and MoSA representatives use interviews and small group meetings with key stakeholders to gather information on municipalities' needs and assets. The problems identified are then mapped. The location of problems are located on satellite maps, and then combined with existing data through GIS mapping. The map covers issues such as the number of registered refugees, school and clinic locations, unemployment rates, etc., drawn from UNHCR, the Ministries of Education and Health, and other relevant ministries and organizations. The resultant map of needs and assets helps demonstrate the linkages between the various factors, and gives a visual image of the varied problems facing residents in Lebanese communities today.

The MRR highlights a number of important goals that can be achieved, even with less advanced technology. First, it demonstrates the importance of recognizing the varied challenges (e.g., waste collection, transportation and roads, education, health) and how these may vary in significance, even in the same locality. Second, it reflects the importance of geographic space; even within the same municipality, residents from different areas face different problems. Third, it emphasizes the importance of information sharing. In the case of the MRR, the information sharing occurs at several levels: municipalities, donors and government ministries. Even within a single municipality, it is important to provide residents, donors and the local government with a clear understanding of the needs faced by the community, and of the assets they can contribute. A municipal database, described in Module 1 of the Resilient Municipalities Resource, is a first step in this direction.

The authors also had the opportunity to talk to mayors, local council members and residents in Jordan and Lebanon. One of the more inspiring moments during the creation of the resource was a workshop held with 36 mayors from Mafraq and Irbid, governorates in Jordan that contain the municipalities most affected by the Syria crisis. The mayors had the opportunity to test some exercises from the Resource; the format allowed them to work together in small groups and share results in plenary sessions. The interaction was particularly useful as some mayors had more experience with community-based development than others and could share these experiences with their peers. As this was a simulation, and not an introduction to implementation of the resource, the focus was on the process: Did the exercises encourage critical analysis? Were the mayors probing deeper, looking into root causes and not just problems? Did discussions on prioritization criteria, local assets and stakeholders stimulate new perspectives and ideas for addressing problems and their root causes?

The workshop served as a confirmation for the approach as well as for the content regarding the main issues. The mayors confirmed needs very much along the same lines as those the authors had gleaned through their review of reports and interviews with development partners.

Most commonly identified needs by Jordanian mayors during the workshop were:

- **Health care:** doctors, hospitals/medical facilities, and medication, due to the population increase from Syrian refugees.
- **Schools:** maintenance of existing schools as well as increasing the number of classrooms, in order to serve the Syrian refugee children.
- **Water:** maintenance of the network, increasing water supplies, and the need for a water-purification system in order to supply drinking water.
- **Solid-waste management:** Equipment for waste collection and cleaning and awareness sessions to entice and encourage residents to work in such jobs.
- **Street lighting:** Crane for maintenance of streetlights; installing new streetlights; awareness campaigns to encourage residents to look after streetlights.
- **Roads:** Extending roads to reach remote areas of the municipality, as well as maintenance requirements for existing roads.
- **Public infrastructure:** slaughterhouses, public venues, public parks and playgrounds.
- **Security and public safety:** community policing and crime prevention.

Mayors worked in small groups assigned different topics to analyze root causes of problems. The group working on unemployment/job creation identified the following factors and their causes:

- Few financial incentives to work in the private sector because of low salaries and career instability.
- Lack of vocational and technical expertise among the local population due to a “culture of shame” for doing vocational work.
- Decreased number of young people with a university-level education, as parents cannot afford to send them to university in other parts of the country (partly because of the poor transportation options between the municipality and other parts of the country; vehicles are uncomfortable and distances are far).
- Social norms and traditions that discourage females from working in public- and private-sector jobs.
- Few private investment projects that match local demands and expertise.
- Minimal collaboration from the private sector with municipalities.

1.3 GETTING STARTED – AN INTRODUCTION TO MUNICIPAL LEADERS

To encourage local ownership and facilitate adaptation of the Resource to program implementation, we have written the Resource directly to municipal leaders. You may want to extract this information and circulate it directly to community leaders. The same is true of the modules which follow.

Welcome to the Resource for Resilient Municipalities. The Resource is aimed at helping you and your community to think strategically and creatively in order to address the problems you face, regardless of the system within which you are operating. The crisis facing the Arab world creates significant challenges, but also important opportunities. The Syrian refugee crisis and attendant challenges of inadequate housing, uneven public service provision, a lack of jobs, rising social tensions and security concerns pose problems for residents, and donor communities. To address these challenges, municipal leaders and their partners need to optimize their resources by developing creative solutions, drawing on local assets, and engaging in collective decision-making and implementation.

By responding to the crises you face, you have the opportunity to expand your capacities. Municipalities are at the forefront of the challenges facing residents today. As elected leaders, you have the respect of your community; you are able to connect to the central government and the donor community; and, you can help coordinate actors within the community, helping them to join their skills and resources together, to demonstrate capacity and need to central authorities or donors, and mobilize collective actions in response to crises. You are thus well placed to build a response that will enable individuals and communities to withstand, recover and transform from the impact of shocks and crisis. Donors and development specialists can work with you, helping to provide necessary resources, reinforce service delivery and strengthen capacity. But you are critical to the short-term success and long-term sustainability of efforts to improve your community's well-being.

This resource is designed to help you work with your community on addressing priority concerns such as access to social and basic services, the local economy, and social tensions. By utilizing the techniques from this Resource, you will be able to develop a holistic plan that will be distinguished for its extensive community input and well thought out prioritization process. If you have suggestions for how to improve the Resource or if you would like to share your successes, we welcome your input.

We wish you and your communities all the best in the process of creating a more resilient municipality.

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE

You may want to adapt parts of the Resource according to particular circumstances of your municipality. Adaptation is facilitated by the inclusion of many templates and instrument examples that serve as a starting point. Some considerations in adapting the tools to local conditions are the size and capacity of your municipality.

- Take this as your resource, your set of tools. Adapt and use it according to your local circumstances and on-going programs to be the most use to you.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMEFRAME

The timeframe for implementing the modules and steps will vary depending on the size and capacity of your municipality, and the external support you receive. A small municipality will likely have lower capacity; however, the creation of a Municipality Needs and Assets Database will be simpler as fewer geographic areas and perhaps fewer distinct groups will need to be included.

- **Module 1**, creating a Municipality Needs and Assets Database, will likely take the most time because it involves gathering information from the community. The sample instruments provided in the Resource should expedite this process. Actual conduct of the self-assessment survey may take between 3 days to 2 weeks, depending on the number of volunteers involved.
- **Module 2**, Participatory Problem Identification and Prioritization, involves a series of daylong or half-day workshops, first by the Task Force as a whole and then with the individual working groups.
- **Module 3**, Collective Action Planning, also involves a series of workshops, roughly corresponding to one workshop per step. The individual working groups may decide that they need more than one workshop to fully analyze the assets and stakeholders relevant for achieving specific strategic goals.
- **Module 4**, Increasing Two-Way Communication, describes how the Task Force can use rigorous but simple methods to gather information from diverse parts of the municipality, for creation of the Database in Module 1 and also throughout the whole process. It is not to be considered a separate step in the implementation process.

DON'T BE AFRAID OF TIME

At first glance, the resources here may appear to take too long, particularly given the crises you face. Yet, it is important to keep in mind that you will begin to see a positive impact in your community long before you finish implementing the resource. The public awareness campaign that launches such projects can help people feel that positive change is coming, and unleash their own energies. People who participate in the self-assessment survey will feel that their voice is heard; those people who are collecting information for the Municipal Needs and Assets Database may begin to understand the perspectives of the other people living in the municipality. Although the timeframe can be compressed, the authors recommend a more extended process that also allows opportunities for the local council and general population to review results at key stages (e.g. presentation of the results of the Municipality Needs and Assets Database, presentation of draft strategic goals, presentation of the Collective Action Plan) and perhaps contribute ideas. You can start acting on some ideas as they arise through the process. Positive changes can come quickly!

ESTABLISHING A TEAM

The Resource provides a number of useful methods that can help you and your community achieve better growth and development. Yet, like any tool, it requires hard work and dedication to be used effectively. The key to implementation is to establish a team that is capable and determined to undertake this task. You want to establish two bodies to oversee the process:

SECRETARIAT

You will need to create a secretariat of municipal staff and/or local civic leaders or civil society organizations who will support you in this process. Their tasks include managing a master schedule of activities, organizing data collection efforts, bringing together existing information and information collected from the community, keeping working groups informed of responsibilities and progress made, and facilitating meetings and discussions.



TASK FORCE

In addition, you will want to form a Task Force representing different sectors from your community who, together with you, will oversee implementation of the Resource. These should be trusted leaders who have a big picture of the challenges and potential of the municipality, with strong knowledge or networks in a particular sector or population. Under the Task Force, there may be several working groups that focus on implementing specific tools or on specific topics or services. The format of the working groups can evolve through the process of implementing the Resource. Some individuals may serve as members of both the Task Force and in a working group.



MANAGING EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK:

Teamwork is rewarding, but it can also be hard. It is important to establish teams that can work well together, and to put in place the conditions to help them succeed.

When you compose your Secretariat and Task Force, keep the following questions in mind:

- Are the members of the team determined to work for the project, rather than to seek glory for themselves?
- Are you giving the team members enough time, given their normal work duties – and do they have the time, given their personal lives – to be able to invest in the project? That is, are they not only willing, but also able, to spend the necessary time to make this succeed? For municipal workers, can you relieve them temporarily of some of their regular duties to allow them to spend time on the process?
- Do the team members exhibit leadership and diplomacy? Are you confident that the team members know how to solve disputes or manage conflicts, both among themselves and also as may arise with members in the community?
- Are the team members willing to follow the methodology, not trying to cut corners? Are they also problem solvers, able to address issues that may arise?
- Are they familiar with your municipality and the nuances of society there? Will they be able to predict and avoid social tensions?

■ Of course, the ideal team is not always available, and even the most talented teams run into difficulties. You should be alert for potential problems and put in place mechanisms to address them early. These can include periodic reviews of the committee's work and your own willingness to step in as a third-party mediator when the committee reaches impasses. You can also enlist locally based CSOs or the international community in some of the facilitation and oversight. It is important that the parties enlisted are well respected by all members of the committee and that they act in a fair, impartial manner to resolve potential disputes.

TEAM-BUILDING AND COMMUNITY PREPARATION

Before beginning to implement the municipal resource, you want to prepare both your team and your community.

Teamwork requires a certain level of harmony among the parties, away from negative competition or any self-interest. The interest of the activity should be a priority to insure the success of the work.

It is important to take time before the team begins its work to consider how it will establish communication and working relationships that will help it to avoid frustration. Sometimes, frustrations are the result of different personalities or working styles. One person may be quiet or overbearing; another may shirk work or blame others for any problems that arise.

Often problems can be alleviated if the team is prepared for them and takes steps to set up rules that avoid small problems from becoming larger ones. To do so, you can both model and encourage your teams to identify and focus on team member's strengths, create clear and regular patterns of communication, and address problems early, as they arise. Systematically and regularly updating the above parties about the work in progress enhances their confidence and as well keeps up the clear message that they are key partners in the process.

The Task Force and secretariat should establish strong communication with the local council and municipal workers, as well as with the community. You should establish a schedule and means by which they update you and the local council members. Encourage them to attend the meetings well-prepared and to have presented materials or reports in advance of the meetings, so you can review them ahead of time.

You should also assist them in undertaking public awareness campaigns or connecting with local stakeholders, as necessary. Explain the importance of this work to the community and visibly support the team's efforts. This will help legitimize the efforts of the Task Force and facilitate cooperation between the municipality and the community. It is also a good opportunity to show the community that you are actively engaged in finding new solutions to the increasing challenges you all face.

The work you are undertaking not only helps you address the crises you face, but it can also change your community. You are building a resilient municipality, and this will help your community long after the crisis ends. Communicate these through messages.

- "We want **your** opinion."
- "Who knows our municipality best? You do! Share your input as we build a resilient municipality."
- "Want to improve how our municipality works? Join in the effort to build a resilient municipality."

