Project on:
“Addressing the challenges of the forcibly displaced and their host communities in the ESCWA region”

1. Context and Objectives

Context

ESCWA’s subprogramme 7, Division for Emerging and Conflict Related Issues (ECRI), aims to address development and institutional challenges associated with ongoing conflict and transformations in the Arab region. Within this mandate, ECRI is undertaking a Development Account (DA) project aimed at supporting Member States to address the long-term development challenges of protracted forced displacement resulting from the Syrian crisis.

The right to development is defined as “an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized”.

The numerous ramifications of conflict on development have seriously undermined the rights of conflict affected populations, including the forcibly displaced in the Arab world in general and from Syria specifically.

Conflicts in the Arab region vary from full-fledged civil wars with massive foreign military intervention to localized conflicts. In the past five years, half of Arab countries experienced at least one internal conflict. As a matter of fact, more than 135 million people are living in countries beset by violent conflict of various intensity or face occupation. One of the direct consequences of the numerous conflicts is a high number of forcibly internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees. As of 2016, there are 13 million refugees from Arab countries, in addition to 16 million internally displaced persons, adding up to an estimated total of 29 million forcibly displaced people.

Among all the current countries in conflict, Syria has witnessed the highest number of conflict-driven displaced persons, with over 11 million forcibly displaced people as of June 2017.

The forcibly displaced face enormous socio-economic hardships. The need to attain a dignified livelihood is more profound and more challenging given limited economic opportunities. In addition to the deteriorating socioeconomic situation that the forcibly displaced experience in general, their arrival has imposed significant economic, social and environmental challenges to host countries (and communities). Lebanon and Jordan, for example, carry the brunt of the Syrian refugee crisis in the Arab region.

The risk of decreased donor assistance, combined with the likelihood of a protracted crisis as well as the sheer magnitude of the forced displacement crisis in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan, have rendered the

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2 ESCWA calculations based on data from UCDP/PRIIO Armed Conflict Database.
3 ESCWA calculations based on data from UNHCR.
displaced as well as their host communities particularly vulnerable to further shocks such as adverse weather or various price shocks.

Concerned national decision makers, development practitioners and civil servants of Arab countries facing the development fall out resulting from conflict, including the forcibly displacement crisis, will need to consider development interventions that serve to arrest the deterioration of human capital, sustain livelihoods and provide opportunities for the affected populations.
Objective

The overarching objective of this project is to strengthen the capacities of concerned public institutions to develop and deploy long-term development policies targeting the forcibly displaced and their host communities. To that effect, the project will aim to provide a menu of policy options for the public sector in addressing the forced displacement crisis.

The set of options will be geared towards:

1. Addressing human capital deterioration (of forcibly displaced and host populations);
2. Addressing the gaps in development interventions that targeted the forcibly displaced and host populations since 2011; and
3. Analysing the risks, should the current status quo prevail.5

The set of policy options will be presented and discussed in track II type of interactive workshops with national decision makers and senior civil servants.

2. Proposed Activities

ESCWA and the Cooperating Agency will co-develop the content and guidance for two regional meetings and provide a technical training.

Each background paper will be based on existing studies and papers, synthesizing their findings while also deriving relevant possible policy options. This process may be iterative and will involve the stakeholders at the various meetings, which may jointly develop possible future scenarios for considerations in the background papers. The three papers will be developed in parallel, also informing each other as they proceed.

What follows are the details of the TORs assigned to both:

3.1 A review of human capital interventions for the forcibly displaced and their hosts

The Cooperating Agency will be responsible to develop and produce a policy-oriented study of the strengths, constraints and gaps of humanitarian and development interventions, projects and programmes deployed since 2011 that are geared to address the human capital deterioration of the forcibly displaced and their hosts (resulting from the Syrian crisis). The study will draw on relevant programme documents, programme reviews, a synthesis of available independent evaluations, academic publications in the public domain or made available to Cooperating Agency by ESCWA, and key informant interviews. Cooperating Agency will also derive from the study policy options for consideration by policy makers in their discussion of the project. The background paper will be accompanied by a facilitator’s discussion guide and visuals (PowerPoint presentation). The focus of the study centres on the Syrian crisis, with the geographic scope of the study thus addressing Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq.

The study thus identifies the public sector’s actual sustainable long-term engagement opportunities that have addressed humanitarian and development challenges facing the forced

5 By current status quo is meant protracted conflict, IDPs and refugees do not return, declining humanitarian assistance and increased tensions as well as socio-economic challenges of host and forcibly displaced communities.
displaced and their hosts while at the same time facilitating the sustainable repatriation of the former. The study is to take into particular consideration the given circumstances of the forcibly displaced and their hosts, including the protracted nature and massive scale of the crisis in Syria.

The study is to include but is not limited to tackling the following issues:

a. Interventions, projects and programmes will be analysed across a set of defined dimensions to allow for comparability. These dimensions could include: impact (if evidence is available), sustainability, cost and complexity, ability to address inequality and equity, targeting performance, and political sensitivity. The exact criteria along which strengths and gaps are to be assessed will be developed in the inception phase of the study.

b. An analysis of development strategies deployed that address socio-economic challenges associated with the displacement crisis.

c. An examination of whether a given intervention offers any sustainable solution, safe return being one of them.

d. A review of regional and national lessons learned in and policy options for addressing national development programmes targeting the forced displaced and their hosts.

ESCWA will organise inputs into the design and review of the study by drawing on its expertise and regional networks.

3.2 A review of intervention options to strengthen resilience for the forcibly displaced and their hosts

The Cooperating Agency will develop a policy-oriented study that will analyse options for interventions by the public sector to facilitate or conduct development interventions that would enable the most vulnerable groups to support themselves as well as the economy of the host country, thus strengthening resilience. The paper will review options for potential development programmes and policies that, if implemented, would contribute towards this goal. The work will consider which sectors may be priority candidates for adopting such approach. At the same time, the policy options should not create or contribute towards an ever-increasing humanitarian aid dependent population.

In doing so, the paper would both review the strengths and gaps of past development interventions, projects and programmes deployed since 2011 targeting the forcibly displaced and their hosts in fragile settings in the context of the Syrian crisis. In addition, the paper will derive, based on a review of the literature, policy options for strengthening resilience. Third, the paper will also draw on and relate to the discussion of the human development challenges facing both displaced and host communities (see 2.1). Within the humanitarian-development nexus, the main bulk of the study is to provide an in-depth examination of the policy and programmatic options for the public sector to strengthen resilience of the most vulnerable groups.

The study is to focus on sustainable long-term engagement opportunities for resilience building, given the particular circumstances of the forcibly displaced and their hosts, including the protracted nature and the massive scale of the crisis. The study is to draw on regional and national best practices.

The study is to include and is not limited to tackle the following:
a. Policy options on viable mitigation strategies, policies and development assistance programmes that would assist the public sector in strengthening resilience of the forced displaced and their hosts (through the identification of specific sectors).

b. Options and programmes that would serve to support and strengthen the institutional effectiveness of the public sector to strengthen resilience of the forcibly displaced and their hosts.

c. Proposal of policy or programmatic options on how to strengthen concerned (national) public institutions working on the forced displacement crisis; in particular analysing what national development strategies and interventions are deployable that address socio-economic challenges for the forcibly displaced and their hosts that are associated with the displacement crisis.

d. Identification of possible priority sectors that could lead the strengthening of resilience.

e. Policy options for public institutions should take national contexts of the Syrian crisis into account (namely Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq). The study is to draw on regional and national best practices.

ESCWA will provide access to relevant policy documents and policy makers for this paper as well as providing comments and feedback at the inception and the draft stages, including by drawing on its expertise and regional networks.

3.3 **An empirical risk assessment on forced displacement in the Syrian crisis**

The Cooperating Agency will conduct an empirical risk assessment on forced displacement resulting from the Syrian crisis, addressing the hazards, vulnerabilities and existing capacities associated with the development challenges facing refugees, IDPs and their hosts, both concerning current outcomes and barriers to returning.

The risk assessment on forced displacement will include but is not limited to tackling the following issues:

a. An examination of the known vulnerabilities, capacities, and resilience of displaced persons and host communities, indicating key trends and outcomes. This part of the work may also draw on ESCWA’s unique access to cleaned micro-data and similar existing sources.

b. An analysis of the key challenges that the forced displaced face at their place of origin/home that prevent their return.

c. An overview over the long-term development challenges associated with Syria’s forced displacement crisis.

d. Drawing on these empirical observations, deriving and identifying mitigating policy options for concerned public institutions. This entails policy options on viable mitigation strategies/policies and development assistance programmes that would assist the public sector in addressing risks and vulnerabilities associated with the forced displacement crisis.

ESCWA will provide a mapping of current risks and likely scenarios designed jointly with its network of stakeholders and national experts across the region. ESCWA will also provide comments and feedback at the inception and the draft stages.
3.4 Additional outputs

Each of the three studies mentioned above will include visuals (PowerPoint slides) and the production of a brief targeting decision makers, assisting them in the track II dialogues to take place. Each study must have a discussion guide to assist the facilitator in conducting the envisaged workshops.

3.5 Expert group meetings

The partners will co-implement and co-facilitate two regional expert group meetings. The venue rental and other practical aspects of the workshops are to be covered separately by ESCWA. The project can fund only up to three delegates from The Cooperating Agency per each trip, with the remainder of the Cooperating Agency delegation being funded by the Cooperating Agency from its own resources if applicable. The first regional expert meeting will take place within three months of the project’s start to review and discuss the results of the inception phase and to co-create, jointly with ESCWA’s stakeholders, possible policy scenarios. The second regional expert meeting will take place in the last quarter of the project to review and discuss draft findings.

3.6 Capacity building workshop

The Cooperating Agency will conduct a capacity building workshop for technical staff of ESCWA member States on the impact of conflict on human development (including the forced displacement crisis) within the framework of the life cycle approach, highlighting challenges and opportunities of data gathering and analysis. The venue, travel, accommodation costs and related practical aspects of external participants to be covered separately by ESCWA. The project can fund only up to three delegates from the Cooperating Agency to teach in the workshop, with the remainder of the Cooperating Agency delegation being funded by the Cooperating Agency from its own resources, if applicable. The Cooperating Agency will cover the development of the training materials from its own resources. ESCWA will cover the travel of three staff from the Cooperating Agency for a total of six days. The workshop would be held towards the middle of the project to facilitate contacts between the research and policy communities within the project.

The detailed activities will includedevelop a workshop program with the ESCWA team.

a. To develop training materials including visuals.

b. To co-facilitate the training workshop.
### 4. Proposed Timeline

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