Terms of Reference for Lebanon in-country Network on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Humanitarian Actors

Membership
The Network will function under the auspices of the Resident Coordinator (RC) / Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) and report to him/her. Membership includes identified Focal Point(s) on Protection from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation (PSEA) from each agency, organization, department, mission or government body (hereinafter “entity”).

Responsibilities
The PSEA Network serves as the primary body for coordination and oversight on protection from sexual exploitation and abuse by international and national personnel of the United Nations (UN), NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) and IGOs (Inter-Governmental Organizations). The Network is not responsible for investigation or adjudication of complaints, or for dealing directly with complainants. These functions rest exclusively with individual entities.

Major Tasks
Under the 4 pillars of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, the Network should:

Engagement with and Support of Local Populations
- In cooperation with the local communities, establish common complaints mechanisms in each community where the UN, NGOs and IGOs work. To be effective, such mechanisms should be safe, accessible, and confidential and tailored to the needs of Lebanon and its population (host community, refugees, and returnees).
- Facilitate awareness raising in local communities on their rights, the standards of conduct expected of personnel of the UN, NGOs and IGOs and the various contacts with whom they can lodge complaints/discuss incidents.

Prevention
- Ensure and, as necessary, coordinate the provision of awareness raising on SEA for all personnel in the country, including their responsibility to report all suspicions of sexual exploitation and abuse committed by colleagues (pursuant to ST/SGB/2003/13 section 3.2 (e) for UN staff and related personnel).
- Develop a system of identification of risk factors responding to the country-specific context.
- Share information about potential risk factors and areas of concern and develop strategies to minimize them.
- See to the establishment and implementation of good hiring practices including procedures to prevent hiring of persons who have committed sexual exploitation or abuse, where known.

Response systems
- Develop local mechanisms for what to do when complaints are received by an entity implicating personnel of another entity, personnel of multiple entities or personnel whose entity is uncertain or unknown.
- If possible, harmonize procedures for personnel to report incidents of sexual exploitation and abuse and for such reports to be properly referred for investigation and assistance provided to the victims.
- When any of the Focal Points receives information of ‘in-the-air’ allegations of sexual exploitation or abuse (i.e. where the institutional affiliation of the alleged perpetrator(s) is
uncertain or unknown), and upon the request of the RC/HC, develop and propose to the RC/HC and Force Commander/Head of Mission if UNIFIL peacekeepers are involved a strategy for assessing the veracity of these allegations.

- Never share during meetings nor record in minutes the names or identifying information of alleged perpetrators, victims or witnesses. Instead, cases discussed in meetings of the Network should be referred to by a case number.
- Establish and coordinate the implementation of a victim assistance mechanism.

Management and Coordination

- Regular meetings will be held every two months and ad-hoc meetings may be called on an as needed basis. Main action points agreed during meetings are circulated to all members.
- The coordination of the network responsibilities is shared between three Focal Points, i.e. OCHA, UNHCR, and UNIFIL, to ensure continuation in case of personnel rotation.
- Assess gaps in protection from SEA and develop and implement action plans to fill them.
- Coordinate trainings for all Focal Points and managers on their PSEA roles and responsibilities.
- Share information on achievements, best practices and/or effective mechanisms in addressing SEA and make recommendations to relevant entities for action. Develop plans for monitoring implementation of recommended actions.
- Support entities to adhere to applicable monitoring and compliance mechanisms.
- Report annually, through the RC/HC, to the Headquarters on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse on actions taken to prevent and respond to SEA when requested. These reports will contribute to the annual report of the Secretary-General on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.
- Report annually to the RC/HC on reported incidents of SEA and the subsequent action taken. These reports can contribute to an annual report by the RC/HC on incidents of SEA in the country.