**Main topics covered:**

- Where challenges to social cohesion happen: Social cohesion issues concerns the societies in countries that received large number of refugees more than others.
- Large influx of refugees to a city and its impact on its social cohesion. All public services providers under pressure of meeting the needs of a larger population, which can be a challenge especially when the hosting community is already facing challenges meeting those needs to the original population due to the limited resources. The degree to which the local government is able to provide services plays an important role in the community satisfaction and resilience which impact social cohesion. On the other hand, social cohesion can be impacted when foreign communities enter hosting cities and here the impact on social cohesion can differ depending on:
  1. Percentage of refugee to the host population – higher percentage of refugees is expected to have more negative impact to social cohesion
  2. Similarities in cultures – cultural similarities can play an important role in strengthening social cohesion.
  3. Language- when the newcomers to the community (refugees) speak different language from the hosting country, the communication becomes more difficult and challenging for even the host country.
- Impact on social cohesion per sector - REACH social cohesion report 2015.
  1. Housing and water mainly in Jordan.
  2. Education
  3. Employment and livelihood. More competition on income generating activities
  4. Social cohesion is fairly embedded in the 3RP and NRP
5. Transitioning from basic needs to individuals to community needs and longer term needs. After focusing on rescue programming in the beginning of the crisis.

**Best practices:**

1. **WB Jordan Emergency Social Services and Resilience Project (JESSRP)** improving relationship between communities and local authorities through improving access and quality to municipal services.
2. Community level working groups by sector to avoid duplication and insure good targetting in Lebanon.

Activities:
- They started language courses in the community center.
- Turkish employees who don't speak Arabic started Arabic courses in order to understand the refugees.
- Increase the awareness of local people about the Syrian situation by organizing seminars with local people and universities in order to start psychological support to the Syrian community.
- Syrians come to the community centers and engage among each other as well as with Turkish citizens.
- Primary health services.

4. **Danish Refugee Council**: Tarabot model with JUHOD and JHCO:
   - 30 centers in the region and 4 in Jordan but all them have similar activities.
   - They bring all nationalities to those centers, the type of assistance and needs differs by nationality.
   - There are also child friendly spaces and for women.

Activities:
- Psychosocial support to the communities - Iftars in Ramadan
- Protection referral and monitoring support – linking Syrians with other organizations in the communities enabling Syrians to understand their communities and where to go.
- Started to add some productive spaces such as workshops or productive kitchen.
- 10000 visitors 60% of which are females.

**Lessons learnt:**
- When a large refugee crisis takes place, social cohesion support should be one of the first factors to be considered and incorporated in the response to the crisis.
- Engagement with government is critical, most of organizations were not engaging with the government as they should, but we should improve this engagement going forward.

**Recommendations:**
- At the onset of a forced displacement crisis, social cohesion programming will need to be part of the crisis response planning.
• Relationship between social cohesion and services: Limited mandate of municipalities which underscores need coordination. There needs to be more understanding on the municipalities’ mandate and what are their services in the communities in order for NGOs and donors to plan their coordination accordingly.

• Local coordination is key: Municipalities will need to communicate and coordinate better with the NGOs on their mandate and how coordination could be improved.

• Coordination was mentioned many times during the conference in almost all working groups so everyone realizes its importance, now we need to see improvements and better coordination on the ground.

Need for follow up:

• Quality vs quantity – quality can sometimes be forgotten as NGOs focus more on the number of beneficiaries over the quality of the service they provide because at the end the like to report high numbers of beneficiaries to donor regardless of the quality of the service.

• Coordination is not only the responsibility of NGOs, Municipalities should reach out to NGOs operating in their area advising them how can they better work in order improve social cohesion.

Questions and Comments:

Access to targeted group and access to data: Confirms need to involve municipalities in NGO activities. Often Syrians find NGO activities on their own- so communication about activities to targete group as well as municipalities can be improved.

Maan Municipality:

• Syrians need public leisure spaces which is unusual for Maan people because Syrians came from the paradise to the desert and they need more leisure spaces implying that new communities sometimes comes with new needs. Host communities are not used to address differences in cultures and traditions, but the municipality needs to work in order to meet those new needs and they need support to do so.

• Needs an updated data base on the number of syrians.

Lebanese example:

Coordination problem has been solved in Lebanon by creating sectoral working groups at the local level in order to avoid overlaps and duplication and so that every stakeholder is aware of their mandate and responsibilities which helps delivering better outcomes to the refugees and host communities.

Mafraq Mayor:

• they are happy to coordinate with these organizations and initiatives similar to the multi-sector service centers.

• As a general comment on what NGOs working on such service center, the communities need to cover basic municipal services which are seem to be out of most NGOs mandate such as water and SWM.
• Good examples of helping municipalities to reduce tensions and strengthen social cohesion such as Examples CEP by USAID and GC and JESSRP by helping the municipality provide the basic service.
• Mafraq Municipalities: Municipalities also require better understanding on what skills Syrians have and use them as learning experience. But they need to improve services that used to be provided for Jordanians to the level it was before.