

SECTION 4

TERMS OF REFERENCE-CONSULTANCY SERVICES

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Project Name: Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Legal and Regulatory Framework Analysis Consultancy

Background information

The recent escalation of hostilities in Lebanon since 2 March 2026 has resulted in large-scale displacement, extensive damage to housing and infrastructure, and increased Housing, Land and Property (HLP) vulnerabilities among affected populations. While many displaced households may eventually seek to return to their areas of origin, significant legal, administrative and institutional challenges may affect their ability to access, exercise and restore their HLP rights.

In response, UN-Habitat, in partnership with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), is undertaking a Joint Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Assessment. The assessment seeks to generate evidence to inform humanitarian response, recovery and reconstruction planning by improving understanding of HLP challenges affecting displaced populations in both areas of displacement and areas of origin.

The assessment comprises complementary components examining HLP challenges from different perspectives. Alongside a household-level assessment of HLP challenges affecting displaced populations and a localized HLP profiling component assessing area-specific HLP characteristics and damage patterns, Component 2 focuses on analysing Lebanon's legal and institutional framework governing HLP rights.

This component will examine the laws, regulations, policies, institutional arrangements and administrative procedures influencing the recognition, protection and restoration of HLP rights in the context of conflict-induced displacement and future return, recovery and reconstruction. It will also examine issues related to HLP documentation and proof of rights, barriers to accessing and exercising HLP rights, land governance and administration challenges, and legal and institutional considerations relevant to compensation, restitution and reconstruction.

The analysis will cover both Lebanese and non-Lebanese conflict-affected populations, recognising that the legal and institutional framework governing HLP rights may differ depending on nationality, legal status, tenure arrangements and applicable legal provisions.

Rationale

Housing, Land and Property rights are expected to play a central role in Lebanon's future return, recovery and reconstruction efforts. The ability of conflict-affected populations to access, exercise, protect and restore these rights will depend not only on existing legal provisions but also on the effectiveness of institutional arrangements, administrative procedures and land governance systems.

While comprehensive analyses of Lebanon's HLP legal framework already exist, including the *Legislative and Administrative Land and Property Rights Framework* (UN-Habitat, Arab Land Initiative and GLTN, 2024), they do not reflect the implications of the recent conflict or the legal and institutional challenges that may arise during displacement, return and reconstruction.

The current context presents new challenges related to damaged or inaccessible documentation, verification of HLP rights, land administration, institutional responsibilities, compensation and restitution mechanisms, and future reconstruction processes. Understanding how existing legal and institutional frameworks respond to these challenges is essential to inform humanitarian programming, legal assistance interventions, recovery planning and future policy discussions.

The findings of this consultancy will contribute to the broader Joint HLP Assessment by providing an evidence-based analysis of the legal and institutional environment affecting HLP rights in Lebanon and informing recommendations for humanitarian, development and government stakeholders.

Research Gap

Existing literature provides a comprehensive analysis of Lebanon's legislative and administrative framework governing land and property rights. However, there remains a need for an updated assessment examining how the recent escalation of hostilities and resulting displacement may affect individuals' ability to recognise, exercise, protect and restore their HLP rights.

There is also a need to better understand how existing legal and institutional frameworks address challenges associated with conflict-induced displacement, including documentation and proof of HLP rights, land administration and governance, dispute resolution, institutional responsibilities, compensation, restitution and reconstruction.

This legal and regulatory framework analysis will complement the household-level and area-based components of the Joint HLP Assessment by examining the legal and institutional dimensions of HLP rights and identifying strengths, gaps and opportunities to support future recovery and reconstruction efforts.

Objectives

The overall objective of this consultancy is to lead Component 2 of the Joint HLP Assessment and produce a comprehensive analysis of Lebanon's legal and institutional framework governing Housing, Land and Property rights in the context of conflict-induced displacement, return, recovery and reconstruction.

More specifically, the consultancy aims to:

1. Analyse the legal and institutional framework governing HLP rights in Lebanon.

- Examine the legislative, regulatory and institutional provisions governing ownership, tenancy, occupancy and use rights, including formal and informal tenure arrangements where relevant.
- Assess property registration systems, land administration frameworks and institutional mandates related to the administration and protection of HLP rights.
- Analyse existing legal, administrative and dispute resolution mechanisms supporting the recognition, protection and restoration of HLP rights.
- Review legal and institutional frameworks governing compensation, restitution and reconstruction, including lessons learned from previous reconstruction and compensation experiences in Lebanon.

2. Assess the legal and institutional framework governing HLP documentation, evidence and land administration.

- Analyse documentation requirements for establishing and exercising HLP rights.
- Examine procedures governing the issuance, replacement and recovery of HLP documentation.
- Assess legal and procedural considerations relating to lost, destroyed, inaccessible or incomplete documentation.

- Analyse alternative forms of evidence used to substantiate HLP claims and their legal standing.
- Examine challenges associated with surveying, demarcation, registration and digitisation² processes and their implications for the verification and restoration of HLP rights.

3. Identify barriers affecting access to and exercise of HLP rights.

- Analyse legal, institutional and procedural barriers affecting conflict-affected populations during displacement, return, recovery and reconstruction.
- Examine barriers affecting women's ability to claim, inherit, manage and restore HLP rights, including those arising from discriminatory social norms and practices.
- Assess barriers affecting non-Lebanese populations arising from nationality, legal status, documentation requirements and other legal or regulatory restrictions.
- Identify institutional and procedural barriers affecting access to dispute resolution mechanisms, compensation processes and related support services.

4. Generate evidence-based recommendations to strengthen HLP rights protection.

- Identify key legal, institutional and procedural gaps affecting HLP rights.
- Analyse the implications of these gaps for conflict-affected and vulnerable populations.
- Develop actionable recommendations to inform humanitarian programming, legal assistance interventions, recovery planning and future policy discussions relating to compensation, restitution and reconstruction.

Key analytical questions

The legal and regulatory framework analysis seeks to understand how Lebanon's existing legal and institutional framework supports or hinders the recognition, protection and restoration of Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights in the context of conflict-induced displacement, return, recovery and reconstruction.

The analysis will cover both Lebanese and non-Lebanese conflict-affected populations, recognising that HLP rights may be governed by different legal provisions depending on nationality, legal status, tenure arrangements and applicable legislation.

The consultancy will be guided by the following key analytical questions:

Legal and institutional framework

- To what extent do existing legal and institutional frameworks recognise and protect ownership, tenancy, occupancy and use rights, including formal and informal tenure arrangements?
- How effective are land registration, cadastral and land administration systems in supporting the recognition and restoration of HLP rights following conflict-induced displacement?
- What institutional mandates and responsibilities exist for administering and protecting HLP rights, and how effectively are they coordinated?

² Digitization is considered an administrative measure within land administration systems and is not, in itself, a legal prerequisite for the recognition or protection of HLP rights. However, in conflict-affected contexts, the availability of digitized records may facilitate the retrieval, verification and restoration of HLP rights where physical records have been damaged, destroyed or become inaccessible.

- To what extent do existing legal and administrative dispute resolution mechanisms provide accessible and effective remedies for conflict-affected populations?
- What legal and institutional arrangements govern compensation, restitution and reconstruction, and how suitable are they for addressing HLP challenges arising from the recent conflict?
- What lessons can be drawn from previous reconstruction and compensation experiences in Lebanon to inform future recovery and reconstruction efforts?

HLP documentation, evidence and land administration

- What legal and administrative requirements govern the recognition and exercise of HLP rights?
- What procedures exist for obtaining, replacing or recovering HLP-related documentation?
- How do existing legal and procedural frameworks address situations where documentation has been lost, destroyed, become inaccessible or is otherwise incomplete?
- What alternative forms of evidence may be used to substantiate HLP claims, and what legal weight do they carry?
- What challenges within surveying, demarcation, registration and land administration systems affect the verification and restoration of HLP rights?
- To what extent do fragmented, incomplete or overlapping land administration systems create barriers to recognising and restoring HLP rights?
- How may documentation, evidentiary and land administration challenges affect future compensation, restitution and reconstruction processes?

Barriers to accessing and exercising HLP rights

- What legal, institutional and procedural barriers affect conflict-affected populations' ability to access, exercise, protect and restore HLP rights?
- How do documentation requirements, administrative procedures and land governance systems affect individuals' ability to verify and exercise HLP rights?
- What legal and institutional barriers affect women's ability to claim, inherit, manage and restore HLP rights, including those arising from discriminatory social norms and practices?
- What barriers affect conflict-affected non-Lebanese populations as a result of nationality, legal status, documentation requirements or other legal or regulatory restrictions?
- To what extent do existing institutional procedures facilitate or hinder access to dispute resolution mechanisms, compensation schemes and related support services?
- What safeguards currently support equitable access to HLP rights, and where do significant legal or institutional protection gaps remain?

NRC's role and responsibilities

NRC will lead the implementation of Component 2 of the Joint HLP Assessment in close coordination with UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM.

Throughout the consultancy, NRC and partner agencies will provide technical guidance and feedback on the inception report, methodology, draft deliverables and final outputs. The consultant/team will work under NRC's supervision and coordinate regularly with the assessment partners to ensure consistency across all assessment components.

NRC, together with UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM, will facilitate coordination with the broader Joint HLP Assessment and support the consultant/team in identifying relevant documentation, stakeholders and institutions where required. Findings from this

consultancy will be integrated with the household-level assessment and localized HLP profiling components to inform the final Joint HLP Assessment report.

The consultant/team will be responsible for independently conducting the analysis, preparing all agreed deliverables, undertaking Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and incorporating comments received from NRC and partner agencies throughout the assignment.

Methodology

The consultancy will adopt a qualitative analytical methodology combining desk-based legal and policy analysis with primary data collection through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

The methodology will include, at minimum:

- Comprehensive desk review of relevant legislation, regulations, policies, institutional mandates, administrative procedures and existing literature relating to Housing, Land and Property rights in Lebanon.
- Review of existing legal analyses and background documentation relevant to the current conflict context.
- Development of an analytical framework, methodology and workplan for Component 2.
- Stakeholder mapping and preparation of Key Informant Interview (KII) tools.
- Approximately (10) ten Key Informant Interviews with legal experts, lawyers, representatives of relevant government institutions, judicial actors, professional bodies, humanitarian and development partners, and other stakeholders identified during the inception phase. KIIs with relevant stakeholders should be conducted in-person.
- Validation and triangulation of findings through stakeholder consultations and, where appropriate, integration of findings from KIIs conducted under other components of the Joint HLP Assessment.

The desk review and stakeholder consultations will be used to assess Lebanon's legal and institutional framework governing HLP rights, identify implementation challenges and protection gaps, and develop evidence-based recommendations for humanitarian, development and government stakeholders.

Ethical considerations

The consultancy shall be implemented in accordance with internationally recognised research and ethical principles applicable to legal and policy analysis involving human participants.

The consultant/team will ensure that all Key Informant Interviews are conducted with informed consent and that information collected during the assignment is handled confidentially and used solely for the purposes of the Joint HLP Assessment.

Throughout the consultancy, the consultant/team will maintain impartiality, professional integrity and confidentiality when engaging with government institutions, legal professionals, humanitarian actors and other stakeholders. Particular care should be taken when discussing issues relating to HLP rights, conflict-induced displacement and future recovery and reconstruction.

The consultant/team will also ensure that all findings, analysis and recommendations are evidence-based and accurately reflect information obtained through the desk review and stakeholder consultations.

Scope of work

Under the supervision of NRC and in close coordination with UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM, the consultant/team will lead Component 2 of the Joint HLP Assessment, examining Lebanon's legal and institutional framework governing Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights and its implications for conflict-induced displacement, return, recovery and reconstruction.

The consultant/team will undertake the following activities:

1. Inception phase

The consultant/team will review relevant assessment documentation and background materials and prepare the inception package for Component 2.

The inception phase will include:

- Review of relevant legal analyses, assessment documentation and background materials.
- Development of the analytical framework, methodology and detailed workplan.
- Identification of relevant legal, regulatory, institutional and procedural sources for review.
- Stakeholder mapping.
- Development of Key Informant Interview (KII) guides.
- Preparation of an inception report outlining the proposed methodology, analytical framework, workplan and data collection approach.

2. Legal and institutional framework analysis

The consultant/team will undertake a comprehensive review of Lebanon's legal, regulatory, institutional and procedural framework governing Housing, Land and Property rights and assess its implications for displacement, return, recovery and reconstruction.

The analysis will include:

- Recognition and protection of ownership, tenancy, occupancy and use rights, including formal and informal tenure arrangements where relevant.
- Property registration and land administration systems.
- Institutional mandates and responsibilities relating to the administration and protection of HLP rights.
- Existing legal, administrative and dispute resolution mechanisms supporting HLP rights.
- Legal and institutional frameworks governing compensation, restitution and reconstruction, including the mandates of relevant institutions.
- Lessons learned from previous reconstruction and compensation experiences in Lebanon and their relevance for future recovery efforts.

3. Analysis of HLP documentation, evidence and land administration

The consultant/team will analyse the legal and institutional framework governing the documentation, verification and administration of HLP rights.

The analysis will examine:

- Documentation requirements for establishing and exercising HLP rights.
- Procedures for obtaining, replacing and recovering HLP-related documentation.
- Legal and procedural implications of lost, destroyed, inaccessible or incomplete documentation.
- Alternative forms of evidence used to substantiate HLP claims and their legal standing.
- Challenges related to surveying, demarcation, registration and digitisation.
- The implications of fragmented, incomplete or overlapping land administration systems on the recognition, verification and restoration of HLP rights.
- Documentation and evidentiary considerations relevant to future compensation, restitution and reconstruction processes.

4. Analysis of barriers to accessing and exercising HLP rights

The consultant/team will identify and analyse the legal, institutional and procedural barriers affecting conflict-affected populations' ability to access, exercise, protect and restore HLP rights.

The analysis will examine:

- Barriers affecting women's ability to claim, inherit, manage and restore HLP rights, including those arising from discriminatory social norms and practices.
- Barriers affecting conflict-affected non-Lebanese populations resulting from nationality, legal status, documentation requirements and other legal or regulatory restrictions.
- Barriers arising from documentation requirements, land administration systems and institutional procedures affecting the recognition, verification and restoration of HLP rights.
- Institutional and procedural barriers affecting access to dispute resolution mechanisms, compensation schemes and related support services.

The consultant/team will also identify existing safeguards, protection gaps and opportunities to strengthen equitable access to HLP rights for conflict-affected and vulnerable populations.

5. Stakeholder consultations

The consultant/team will conduct approximately ten (10) Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and, where relevant, contribute to and draw upon consultations undertaken under the other components of the Joint HLP Assessment.

Stakeholders may include legal experts, lawyers, representatives of relevant government institutions, judicial actors, professional bodies, humanitarian and development partners, and other institutions identified during the inception phase, including, where relevant, representatives of the Directorate General of Land Registry and Cadastre (DGLRC), relevant ministries, municipalities, mukhtars, notaries, the judiciary, and the Beirut and Tripoli Bar Associations.

The consultations will seek to:

- Validate and complement findings from the desk review.
- Identify legal, regulatory, institutional and procedural challenges affecting HLP rights.
- Gather perspectives on anticipated HLP-related challenges in the context of return, recovery and reconstruction.

6. Reporting and recommendations

Based on the desk review and stakeholder consultations, the consultant/team will prepare an evidence-based analysis of Lebanon's legal and institutional framework governing HLP rights.

The consultant/team will:

- Identify key legal, institutional and procedural gaps.
- Analyse their implications for conflict-affected and vulnerable populations.
- Develop practical, actionable recommendations for government institutions, humanitarian actors, and recovery and development partners.
- Produce all agreed deliverables in accordance with the agreed timeline.
- Present findings and recommendations, where required, as part of the Joint HLP Assessment process.

Deliverables

The consultancy will be implemented as a collaborative process between NRC, UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM. Throughout the assignment, the consultant/team will present progress, incorporate feedback and refine the analysis based on comments received from the assessment partners.

The deliverables of the consultancy include:

1. Inception report

The inception report will include:

- Desk review of relevant legal and institutional documentation.
- Proposed analytical framework and methodology.
- Detailed workplan.
- Stakeholder mapping.
- Key Informant Interview tools.
- Overall approach for implementing Component 2 of the Joint HLP Assessment.

2. Presentation of preliminary findings

The presentation will include:

- Overview of the legal, regulatory, institutional and procedural framework governing HLP rights.
- Emerging findings from the desk review and stakeholder consultations.
- Preliminary legal and institutional gaps.
- Initial recommendations for validation by assessment partners.

The presentation will provide an opportunity for NRC, UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM to validate findings, identify remaining information gaps and provide feedback before preparation of the draft report.

3. Draft HLP legal and regulatory framework analysis report

The draft report will present findings from the desk review and Key Informant Interviews and include:

- Analysis of Lebanon's legal, regulatory, institutional and procedural framework governing HLP rights.
- Analysis of HLP documentation, evidence and land administration.
- Analysis of barriers affecting access to and exercise of HLP rights.
- Analysis of land governance and administration challenges.
- Considerations relating to return, recovery, restitution, compensation and reconstruction.
- Preliminary conclusions and recommendations.

4. Final HLP legal and regulatory framework analysis report

The final report will incorporate comments received from NRC, UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM and include:

- Final legal and institutional analysis.
- Findings from the desk review and stakeholder consultations.
- Conclusions.
- Actionable recommendations for humanitarian, recovery and government stakeholders.

Where required, the consultant/team will support the presentation of Component 2 findings and recommendations as part of the overall Joint HLP Assessment.

Payment

Payment	Deliverables	Percentage
1st Payment	Deliverable 1: Inception Report	20%
2nd Payment	Deliverables 2 and 3: Presentation of Preliminary Findings and Draft HLP Legal and Regulatory Framework Analysis Report	40%
3rd Payment	Deliverable 4: Final HLP Legal and Regulatory Framework Analysis Report	40%

Timeline

The consultancy is expected to be conducted over **35–40 working days** between **September and October 2026**.

The indicative Level of Effort is as follows:

- **Inception phase** (desk review, methodology, stakeholder mapping and KII tools) – approximately 7–10 working days
- **Legal and institutional framework analysis and stakeholder consultations** (desk review, KIIs, legal analysis and preliminary findings) – approximately 18–22 working days
- **Draft report** – approximately 5 working days
- **Final report and incorporation of feedback** – approximately 5 working days

The timeline may be adjusted during the contracting phase based on the agreed workplan and operational requirements of the Joint HLP Assessment.

Throughout the consultancy, the consultant/team will be expected to incorporate comments and feedback provided by NRC, UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM, including feedback on the inception report, preliminary findings and draft report.

The final HLP Legal and Regulatory Framework Analysis Report is expected to be submitted by **mid/end October 2026**.

Minimum qualifications and professional experience

Consultant profile

The consultancy may be undertaken by an individual consultant or a team of consultants.

Where a team is proposed, one member shall be designated as the Team Leader and serve as the primary point of contact with NRC. The Team Leader shall be responsible for the overall coordination, quality assurance and timely delivery of all consultancy outputs.

The proposed consultant or team shall collectively demonstrate the qualifications, expertise and experience required to successfully implement the consultancy. In the case of a team submission, the required expertise may be demonstrated collectively across team members, except where otherwise specified.

The proposed consultant or team is expected to demonstrate the following minimum qualifications:

- Advanced university degree in Law or a closely related discipline.
- Minimum seven (7) years of relevant professional experience in Housing, Land and Property rights, property law, land governance or related legal fields. For team submissions, the Team Leader shall meet this requirement.
- Demonstrated expertise in analysing legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks governing HLP rights.
- **Strong knowledge of recent Lebanese legal and institutional frameworks relevant to Housing, Land and Property (past 5 years)**
- Demonstrated experience conducting legal and policy analysis relating to Lebanon and producing high-quality analytical reports.
- Experience undertaking legal research, institutional analysis and stakeholder consultations.
- Previous experience working with humanitarian, recovery or development actors is considered an asset.
- Excellent analytical, drafting and report writing skills.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Excellent written and spoken English and Arabic.

Required competencies

The consultant/team should demonstrate the ability to:

- Conduct comprehensive legal, regulatory and institutional analysis.
- Translate complex legal and institutional issues into practical findings and recommendations.
- Engage effectively with government institutions, legal professionals, humanitarian agencies and development partners.
- Produce high-quality analytical reports within agreed timelines.
- Work independently while coordinating closely with NRC, UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM throughout the consultancy.

Reporting and supervision

The consultant/team will work under the supervision of NRC and in close coordination with UN-Habitat, UNHCR and IOM.

Regular coordination meetings may be held throughout the consultancy to review progress, discuss emerging findings, validate analytical approaches and ensure consistency with the broader Joint HLP Assessment.

The consultant/team will be responsible for ensuring that all deliverables are submitted according to the agreed timeline and for incorporating comments received from NRC and partner agencies throughout the assignment.

End of ToR
