



**Lebanon Humanitarian INGO
Forum (LHIF)
Governance Framework**

www.LHIF.org

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Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF) Governance Framework

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF) was formed in October 2012 to provide a common platform for advocacy among international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) responding to the Syria Refugee Crisis in Lebanon, and to facilitate representation of INGOs within the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT). The LHIF expanded both its mandate and membership throughout 2013, looking more broadly at the overall humanitarian situation in Lebanon, formally adopting coordination as part of its mandate, and establishing a Secretariat in October 2013. Since then, and particularly after 2019, LHIF has widened its focus to address the needs of all vulnerable populations in Lebanon, including Lebanese, Palestinians, and migrant populations and to take on a nexus approach. The LHIF Governance Framework replaced the initial LHIF by-laws in October 2013, and is reviewed and revised as necessary following LHIF's annual all-member strategic planning workshop.

1.2 MANDATE

LHIF is an independent coordinating body composed of international NGOs operating in Lebanon that facilitates the work of its members to address the needs of the most vulnerable.

1.3 PURPOSE AND VISION

Purpose: LHIF's purpose is to provide a joint platform to facilitate members' work and help members to efficiently address key issues of common interest.

Vision: LHIF aspires to be an inclusive, representative, and independent forum that is out in front on key operational, coordination, localization/partnership and advocacy issues and recognized as a leading actor in the aid community in Lebanon, helping to enable a functional, integrated response architecture that better identifies and serves the most vulnerable.

CHAPTER 2 CORE FUNCTIONS, STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

2.1 CORE FUNCTIONS

LHIF's core function is to facilitate coordination among members by:

- Identifying and analyzing strategic issues and their implications to allow informed decision-making.
- Advocating for common positions with a unified and consistent voice to influence policy and decision-making.
- Sharing information; and
- Engaging and representing the forum with external stakeholders.

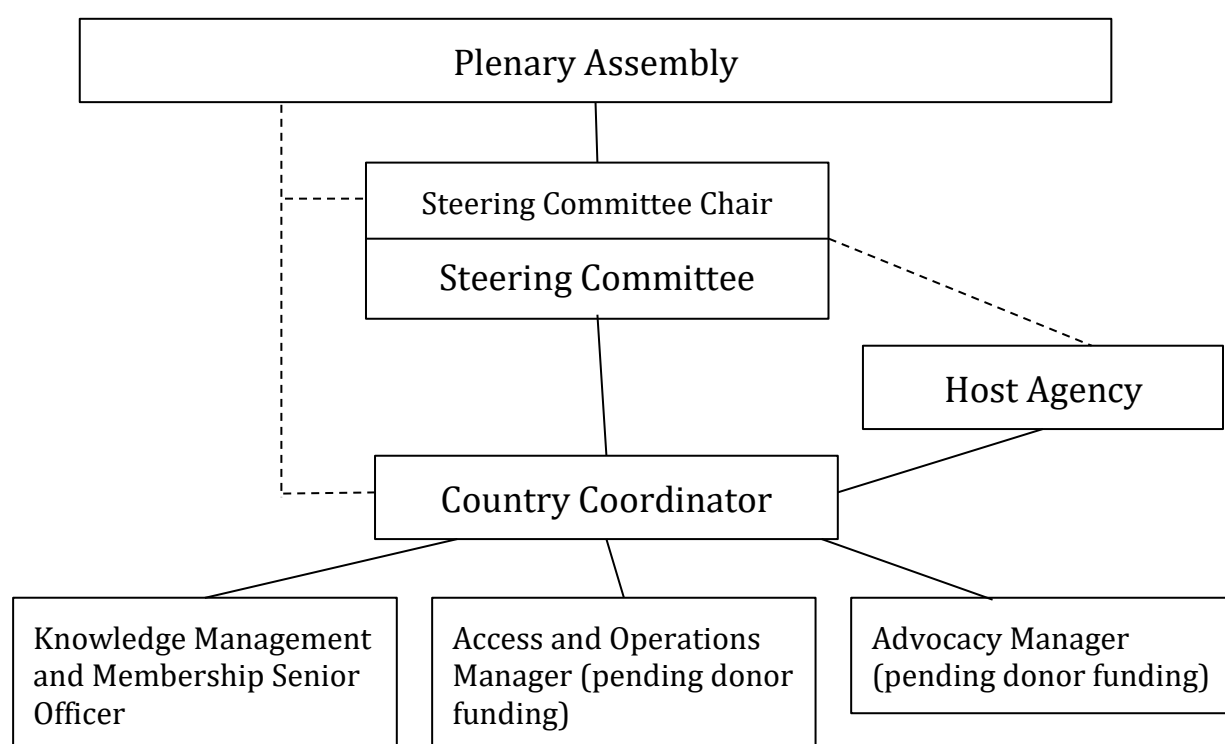
In addition to the above, LHIF facilitates representation of INGOs in response leadership bodies and works to enhance engagement of NGOs in response planning and coordination mechanisms. LHIF also supports members to address common administrative challenges to INGO operations. At the initiative and under the leadership of members, LHIF may also spearhead joint initiatives to better meet response needs.

2.2 STRUCTURE

LHIF includes a Plenary Assembly, a Steering Committee, agreed Working -Groups, and a Secretariat. The Plenary Assembly is an information-sharing and consensus-building forum and is the strategic decision-making authority for LHIF. The Steering Committee (SC) is empowered by the Plenary Assembly with tactical and operational decision-making authority to move forward strategic decisions made by the Plenary Assembly and has primary responsibility for representation. One Steering Committee member is elected as the SC Chair. The Secretariat, under the leadership of the Country Coordinator, supports the fulfillment of LHIF’s purpose, vision, and core functions.

2.3. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The LHIF Management Team is comprised of the Steering Committee members and the LHIF Country Coordinator, under the leadership of the SC Chair. The Management Team meets regularly according to a schedule agreed by its members, and at a minimum of once per month off-set with the Plenary Assembly meeting.

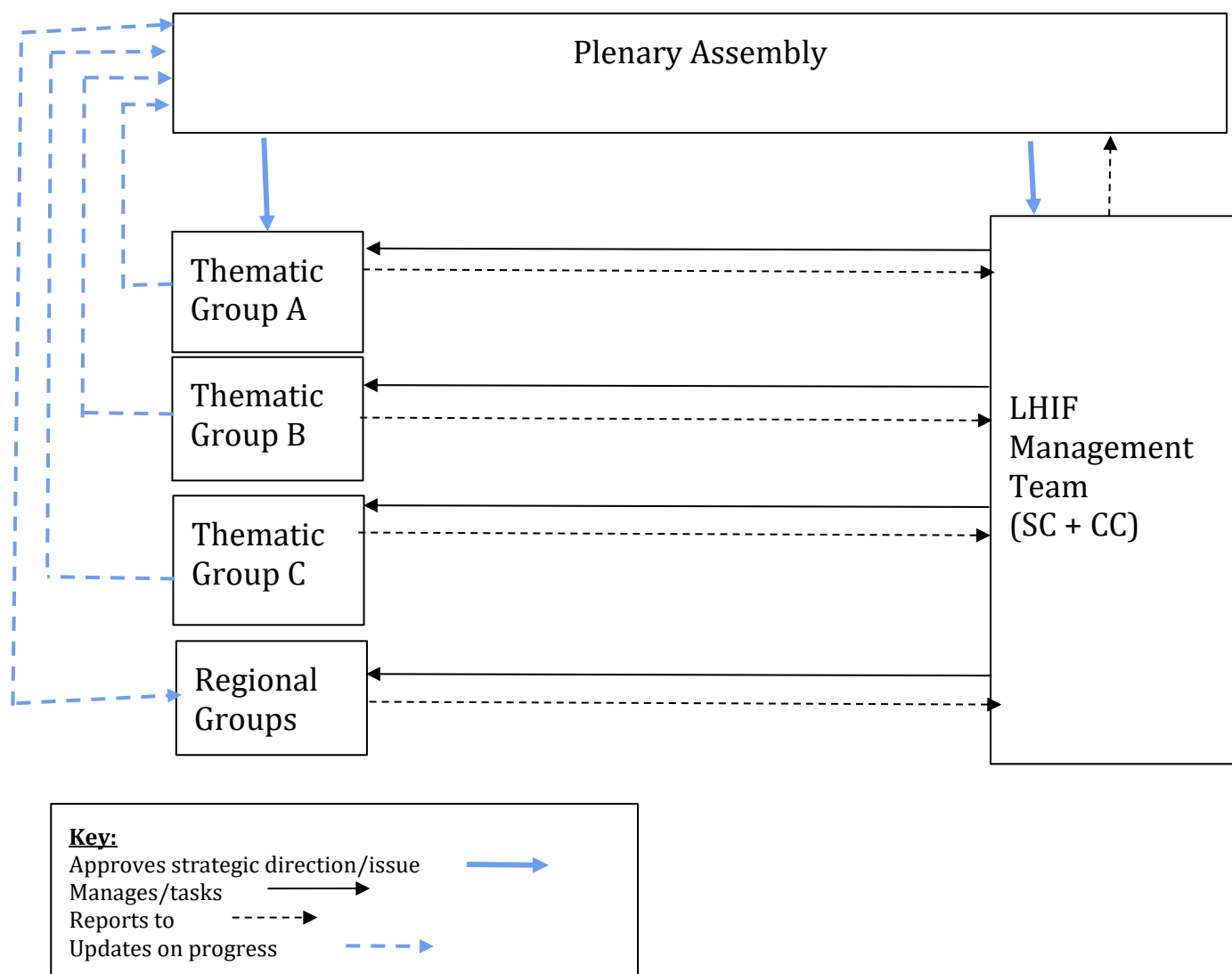


2.4. Working Groups

Thematic working groups of LHIF can be established by any group of members, with the approval of the Plenary, and shall be open to all members.

- Formed based on thematic issues in the LHIF strategy or emerging issues as tasked from Plenary; disbanded with agreement of Plenary when the issue is resolved, handed-over to another mechanism, or are no longer a LHIF priority.
- Members should be comprised of technical experts to provide analysis and recommendations on the issue and/or agency-appointed focal points to carry forward action on the issue. Group members must be appointed by the organization’s Plenary representative or alternate.
- Working groups should be co-chaired by at least one LHIF Steering Committee member or LHIF Secretariat, who is responsible to provide updates to the Plenary, and at least one member of the working group.
- Working Groups are supported by the Secretariat, to coordinate the planning of the meetings, send invitations, and to take minutes of the meetings. The Secretariat supports the Co-Chairs to follow up on action points.
- Working groups meet on a schedule as agreed by the group members. Non-Members may attend working group meetings by invitation only, pre-approved by one of the co-chairs.

LHIF also supports regional working groups in Bekaa, North, Beirut-Mount Lebanon and South governorates. These groups meet on a schedule as agreed by the group members. They are facilitated by the elected Regional Focal Points and Deputy Regional Focal Points.



2.3 MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

Any International NGO that fulfills the following criteria may request admission to LHIF:

- Registered as an international NGO in Lebanon or in process of registration. Note that on a case-by-case basis, NGOs with legal presence/status in Lebanon, including under a third registered entity with non-governmental status, will be considered.
- Registered as an NGO in a foreign country.
- Signatory to the Code of Conduct of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief.
- Currently implementing or planning to implement projects in Lebanon.
- Signatory of the Lebanon PSEA SOP.
- Provides two recommendations letters from current LHIF members validating the prospective members scope of work in Lebanon.

Applications for admission to LHIF shall be submitted to the LHIF Country Coordinator for review of requirements and presentation to the Plenary Assembly. Membership shall be approved by securing a two-thirds (2/3) vote as outlined in the decision-making section below. The membership application form is included as Annex 1 to this Framework.

CHAPTER 3 THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

3.1 MEMBERSHIP AND AUTHORITY OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

The Plenary Assembly is comprised of all LHIF members and is the strategic decision-making body of LHIF. Each member organization will nominate two staff members to represent in the Plenary Assembly, a Representative, and an Alternate. These staff members must be vested by the organization with decision-making and voting authority. Representation is generally expected to be at the Country Director level.

3.2 MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF ALL LHIF MEMBERS

- Pay membership dues in full, on time. Members who do not pay their dues within 3 months of the invoice date will be suspended until their dues are fully paid.
- Continue to fulfill all membership criteria as outlined in section 2.3.

3.3 MEMBERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

- Ensure attendance of the Representative or Alternate at regularly scheduled Plenary meetings.
- Assign technical-level staff to participate in LHIF working groups as relevant and feasible.
- Respect Confidentiality as per Chapter 8 below.
- Respond to LHIF “Action” and “Sign-off” requests within the given deadline.
- Respond to LHIF “Feedback” requests on a regular basis.
- Provide timely inputs to LHIF member mapping and contact list updates.
- Contribute to the development, approval, and implementation of the LHIF strategy, and agreed initiatives.
- Raise LHIF talking points in bilateral meetings with relevant stakeholders, and encourage their use by the organization at the regional and HQ level.

3.4 MEMBER FEES

LHIF members pay their tiered membership to cover a period of membership from 1st of January until 31st of December of each year. Fees based on their annual projected budgets for the same year as per the below scale:

1. Organizations with budgets less than \$5 million pay \$500.
2. Organizations with budgets between \$5 million and \$10 million pay \$1000.
3. Organizations with budgets between \$10 million and \$20 million pay \$2000.
4. Organizations with budgets over \$20 million pay \$3000.

Membership fees shall be paid to the LHIF Host Agency (inclusive of all banking-related fees), within one month upon receipt of invoice. Fees shall be utilized by the LHIF Secretariat to run the Secretariat and/or specific activities in accordance with the LHIF strategy or agreed priorities, with approval from the Steering Committee. When new members join, they will pay prorated membership fees based on the number of months they will be a member prior to the next annual membership fees collection.

3.5 MEETINGS OF THE PLENARY ASSEMBLY

- Meetings of the Plenary Assembly are open to all INGOs who are members or observers of the LHIF.
- Each member organization may have one representative present at meetings of the Plenary Assembly (either their Representative or Alternate).
- Meetings shall be held at least once per month.
- Attendance will be tracked in each meeting.
- Any member can ask for Secretariat support for a 'CD huddle' to address urgent or emerging issues that impact a subset of LHIF members.
- Meetings of the Plenary Assembly are held in English. Minutes of the Plenary Assembly are circulated in English.
- Meetings of the Plenary Assembly will be chaired by the LHIF Country Coordinator, SC Chair, or another SC member in his/her absence.

3.6 DECISION-MAKING

LHIF members vote on several types of issues including:

- Selecting SC members, working group co-chairs, and other elected LHIF representative positions.
- Approving new membership applications.
- Approving LHIF participation in or activation of additional initiatives/workstreams.
- Agreeing new common positions - note this is separate from document sign-off procedures.
- Approving LHIF governance and other organizational documents and/or policy changes, including the annual LHIF strategy and annual budget or significant changes to budget allocation of more than 20% deviation from agreed budget areas.

Any member can request an item be added to the agenda for discussion, followed by a relevant vote, if needed. Any new issues raised during the plenary that require a vote will be added to the next plenary unless there is an urgent reason to vote before the next plenary.

Voting processes for specific types of issues are outlined below:

1) *Selecting SC members, working group co-chairs, and other elected LHIF representative positions:*

- SC member elections are detailed in Section 4.2.
- Working group co-chair elections:
 - Working Sub-groups should be co-chaired by one LHIF Steering Committee member or LHIF Secretariat and at least one member of the working group.
 - The LHIF Steering Committee member co-chair will be elected by a majority vote of the Steering Committee, or through consensus.
 - Non-Steering Committee co-chairs will be elected by the working group membership.
 - A Call for Nominations will be launched at least two weeks prior to the vote detailing the information required from candidates.
 - A full list of candidates will be shared with the working group membership for an online voting process, open for a designated amount of time that is clearly stated. The candidate(s) with the most votes will be the elected co-chair(s).
- Other elected LHIF representative positions:
 - As outlined in Chapter Seven (Representation), the election process for these seats shall be proposed by the SC and agreed by $\frac{2}{3}$ approval from the members who participated in the voting process.
 - Once the process has been approved, a Call for Nominations will be launched at least two weeks prior to the vote detailing the information required from candidates.
 - A full list of candidates will be shared with the Plenary or appropriate working group membership for an online voting process, open for a designated amount of time that is clearly stated. The candidate(s) with the most votes will be the elected representative(s).

- 2) Approving new membership applications:
 - Details of new membership applications will be announced in the monthly plenary and followed by an online voting process (accompanied by the prospective member's application information, for member review), open for one week. All members will have the opportunity to vote. Members will be given the option to approve, reject, or abstain from approving the new member.
 - A new member is approved if they receive $\frac{2}{3}$ approval from the members who participated in the voting process.
- 3) Approving LHIF participation in or activation of additional initiatives/workstreams:
 - Any new initiatives, workstreams, working groups etc. that fall outside of the current LHIF strategy will be presented in the Plenary meeting and followed by an online voting process, open for a designated amount of time that is clearly stated. All members will have the opportunity to vote.
 - For a new initiative, workstream, working group etc. to be agreed by LHIF, it must receive $\frac{2}{3}$ approval from the members who participated in the voting process.
 - If LHIF approval of a new initiative/workstream is urgently required, an email will be sent articulating the new initiative/workstream and initiating an online voting process (following the process outlined above).
- 4) Agreeing new common positions:
 - Any new common LHIF positions related to operational, or coordination issues will be discussed in the Plenary meeting and in previous working groups, as relevant. Members should raise any concerns, comments, and red lines through both the working groups and the Plenary. Red lines comments should be presented and debated during the Plenary meeting. This will be followed by an online voting process, open for a designated amount of time that is clearly stated (no less than one week). All members will have the opportunity to vote. A vote is carried if $\frac{2}{3}$ of the Members who participated in the vote approve.
 - For a common position to be agreed by LHIF, it must receive $\frac{2}{3}$ approval (or simple majority if multiple options are provided) from the members who participated in the voting process.
 - If a member (or multiple members) has red-line objections that are not resolved and the common position is approved by $\frac{2}{3}$ vote, the position will stand; however, LHIF will caveat the position, when shared with donors, UN agencies etc., referencing the fact that a certain number of members objected to the position and sharing the rationale, if appropriate.
 - If LHIF approval of a common position is urgently required (related to an unforeseen external deadline or fast-moving contextual development), an email will be sent articulating the issue, outlining the possible position/options, and initiating an online voting process for three business days (following the process outlined above).
- 5) Approving LHIF governance and other organizational documents and/or policy changes, including the annual LHIF strategy and annual budget or significant changes to budget allocation of more than 20% deviation from agreed budget areas:
 - The approval of LHIF governance and other organizational documents and/or policy changes is separate from the sign-off policy outlined below.
 - Any changes to LHIF governance and other organizational documents and/or policy changes will be presented by the LHIF Country Coordinator and/or SC members in a Plenary meeting to explain the changes. This will be followed by an online voting process, open for one week. All members will have the opportunity to vote. Members will be given the option to approve or reject the revised or new governance or other organizational document and/or policy.
 - A governance or other organizational document or policy is approved if it receives $\frac{2}{3}$ approval from the members who participated in the voting process.

Any issues falling outside of the above-described situations will be voted on a case-by-case basis, following the below guidance:

- The issue must be presented and discussed in a Plenary meeting. It will be followed by an

online voting process, open for a designated amount of time that is clearly stated. All members will have the opportunity to vote.

- If the issue requires a yes/no vote, $\frac{2}{3}$ approval is required. If the issue requires a vote with multiple options, a simple majority is required.
- If a vote is urgently required, an email will be sent articulating the issue, outlining the possible position/options, and initiating an online voting process (following the process outlined above).

6) Sign-off procedures for LHIF documents:

- The approval process for LHIF governance and other organizational documents and/or policy changes, including the annual LHIF strategy, is outlined above. Once that is followed, the documents will be considered signed-off by LHIF.
- Formal branded documents, including public and private policy briefs, planned public statements, and red-line documents, follow the below sign-off procedure for the LHIF logo to be used:
 - The draft document is shared with the appropriate LHIF working groups/email lists with Representatives and Alternates in copy for review and edits for a minimum of 5 business days.
 - The final draft is shared with the Representatives and Alternates for final review and edits for a minimum of 3 business days. Red-line edits and objections should be raised at this stage to allow drafters to make every effort to address red-line edits before the sign-off process begins.
 - If there is an urgent need to shorten the review period, Representatives and Alternates should provide their review during the initial review stage. This will be made clear in the initial review email to the appropriate LHIF working groups/email lists.
 - The final document is shared with Representatives and Alternates for LHIF logo sign-off for a minimum of 3 business days on a no-objection basis. No proactive endorsement of the document from members is required.
 - If a member does object to the LHIF logo being used, they must share their objection in writing to all members. These should be red-line objections only.
 - If the objection persists, the LHIF Secretariat and SC (and document drafters) will make every effort to address the red-line objection and reflect comments back to the full membership on if/how these were addressed. This version will be put to a Plenary member vote for 48 hours. If it receives $\frac{2}{3}$ approval from the members who participated in the voting process, it will be signed off with the LHIF logo. If it is not approved by $\frac{2}{3}$ vote, like-minded members can sign on to the document and use it as a joint agency product.
 - If no objections are shared during the 3-business day period, the document will be considered signed off by LHIF.
- If there is a need for rapid LHIF sign-off for a private statement (to be shared privately with donors, UN etc.), due to a sudden emergency or development, the above process will be amended to allow for a 24-hour review process and 24 hour no-objection.
- If there is a need for a rapid public statement, LHIF can facilitate an individual member sign-on process, instead of a LHIF sign-off.

Formal sign-off is not required for routine/ongoing update and coordination issues, but members will be consulted in advance on any new issues or content.

The LHIF Country Coordinator shall be responsible for managing voting and sign-on processes, with the support of the Secretariat staff.

3.7 DISCONTINUITY OF MEMBERSHIP

Members may have their membership in LHIF revoked under the following circumstances:

- If their membership fees remain unpaid 3 months after the invoice date.
- When a decision is taken by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the members who participated in the voting process that the actions of a given member are not in line with this Framework or are detrimental to the overall efforts of the LHIF.
- When the member voluntarily withdraws.

CHAPTER 4 THE STEERING COMMITTEE

4.1 COMPOSITION OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee is an elected body comprised of seven (7) LHIF members that is empowered with tactical and operational decision-making authority and has primary responsibility for representation. Individuals elected to the Steering Committee are represented in the SC in their individual, not organizational capacity; SC responsibilities shall not be delegated to the Alternate of the individual's organization. In the case that a Steering Committee member leaves or withdraws prior to the end of their term, an ad hoc election will be held for a new SC member to complete the term.

One member of the Steering Committee is selected by the Steering Committee to serve as the Chair. The SC Chair presides over and ensures the smooth functioning of the Steering Committee, maintains continuity of LHIF leadership and representation, and serves as a sounding board and guide for the LHIF Country Coordinator.

4.2 ELECTION OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Members of the Steering Committee are elected by the Plenary Assembly for one (1) year terms. Three (3) to four (4) Steering Committee seats will be up for election on a rotational basis every six (6) months to ensure continuity. A SC member may serve two consecutive one (1) year terms. The SC member is then required to take a minimum six (6) month break before re-applying to be a SC member. After the six (6) month break, the SC member can serve two more consecutive one (1) year terms. Exceptions to term limits can be made if there are not enough candidates to fill all the SC seats. Election of the Steering Committee shall endeavor to ensure that the elected members are representative of the overall LHIF membership, in particular with respect to coverage of the core sectors as relevant to Lebanon and reflect the diversity of the membership.

4.3. ELECTION PROCESS FOR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

A. Call for nominations

- Any LHIF member may self-nominate or be nominated by another member.
- At least two (2) weeks prior to the election, members are invited to submit nominations. All nominations should include the following information:
 - (1) Name of the Organization
 - (2) Name and title of the individual, and the number of years s/he has been with the Organization and/or working in Lebanon
 - (3) Organization's top 3 sectors of intervention in Lebanon and areas of focus (AAP, localization, partnership, etc)
 - (4) How their organization's mission and areas of focus align with the primary objectives and areas of focus of LHIF, as articulated in the LHIF strategy.
 - (5) Organization's geographic areas of work in Lebanon; and
 - (6) Year the organization's Lebanon program began.
- If an individual is nominated by another individual, the LHIF Country Coordinator will confirm with the nominated individual's their willingness to serve on the Steering Committee (if elected) prior to finalizing the nomination.

B. Communication of list of candidates: The complete list of nominees and the information outlined in point A above will be circulated to all LHIF members prior to the election.

C. Plenary assembly members vote:

- All candidates will briefly present their candidacy (either verbally or through a video submission) during the plenary immediately prior to the Steering Committee voting process.
- Elections will follow through an online voting format, open for one week. All members will have the opportunity to vote.
- The LHIF Country Coordinator will tabulate the votes. The top three (3) to four (4) candidates (depending on the election cycle) will be elected to the Steering Committee.

D. Communication of results:

- Results of vote will be communicated by the LHIF Country Coordinator to all LHIF members within two working days from the closure of voting.

4.4. SELECTION PROCESS FOR STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR

The SC Chair is selected by the Steering Committee for the SC term of one (1) year.

The Country Coordinator will confirm candidates' willingness to serve as Chair in advance of the election, to be held in the Steering Committee meeting. The candidate with the majority of votes becomes the Chair.

4.5 DISCONTINUITY OF STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

When a decision is taken by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote of the members who participated in the voting process that a Steering Committee member is not actively engaged or has violated this framework, the individual will be asked to stand down from the Steering Committee.

4.6 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

STEERING COMMITTEE

- Accountable to the membership for oversight of the forum.
- Expected to pro-actively participate in the Steering Committee and in wider LHIF meetings and activities, take the lead on LHIF initiatives, and maintain broad consultation with the LHIF membership to ensure relevant knowledge of common/different positions.
- Primary responsibility for representing LHIF with external stakeholders, and ensuring impartial, effective and consistent representation. Represent LHIF on the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) and other leadership bodies as outlined in Chapter Seven, attending and advocating on behalf of the LHIF rather than as individual organizations. Recognizing that the individual organizational perspective of Steering Committee members may at times be relevant and important to convey, SC members must clearly preface any such comments that are made in a representational meeting as being only on behalf of their own organization.
- Provide leadership on the direction and strategy of LHIF, respecting the need for continuity on direction and strategy across subsequent Steering Committees and ensuring that the work of the Secretariat is within the strategy and priorities approved by the Plenary; ensure the LHIF agenda represents and is driven by the members, not any single member or the Secretariat; promote accountability of LHIF to its members and affected populations; hold and attend regular LHIF Management Team meetings; follow up with the Country Coordinator on implementation of action points.

- Empowered to make tactical and operational decisions to move forward the LHF strategy and other strategic decisions made by the Plenary Assembly, Decisions via consensus and if not then via majority vote.
- Oversee the work of LHIF working groups and the LHIF Secretariat, in accordance with Plenary-approved strategy and priorities and Host Agency financial and administrative policies; provide strategic guidance to the LHIF Country Coordinator; approve LHIF proposal and budget submissions; review of Budget vs. Actuals.
- Supervise LHIF Country Coordinator; hiring and termination of the Country Coordinator is on approval of the Steering Committee, in line with Host Agency policies, as outlined in the LHIF Host Agency Agreement.
- Steering Committee members shall endeavor to maintain constructive relationships with external stakeholders, including, but not limited to, UN agencies, donors, national NGOs, and relevant government departments.
- Steering Committee members commit to not receiving organizational benefit from information shared or received as a Steering Committee member without ensuring that the same information benefits all LHIF members. Steering Committee members are also required to declare any potential conflicts of interest and recuse themselves from discussions or decisions on external oversight bodies in which their own organization has a financial or reputational stake.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE CHAIR

- Serve as the team leader of the SC and ensure that SC members understand and fulfill their individual and collective responsibilities, are accountable to the membership, and work in accordance with the strategic decisions of the Plenary Assembly.
- Chair, or delegate to the LHIF Coordinator, Plenary Assembly and LHIF Management Team meetings and ensure that required decisions are legitimately made; call special or extraordinary meetings of the Plenary or Management Team as/if required.
- Help ensure that the SC is meeting its representational responsibilities and support the Country Coordinator to maintain the team approach for representation.
- Serve as secondary contact for urgent and/or emergency issues and co-focal point – together with Country Coordinator – for managing LHIF relationships and communications with donors, diplomats, the UN, and other key stakeholders.
- Act as a sounding board and guide for the Country Coordinator in management of LHIF communications, activities, and the operations of the Secretariat. Serve as the focal point for supervision and performance management for the Country Coordinator, lead recruitment process for new Country Coordinator when necessary.
- Provide confirmation to the Secretariat for major budget changes and for new/unforeseen financial expenditures in excess of \$1000; approval of bid analysis and vendor selection as necessary; co-sign any binding LHIF documents together with the Country Coordinator.
- Exempted from the obligation of serving in working groups or leading LHIF initiatives.

CHAPTER 5 OBSERVER STATUS

The purpose of Observer Status is to provide a mechanism for LHIF to formally engage with the full range of INGOs in Lebanon who are interested to coordinate and collaborate, and to ensure that LHIF initiatives and messages benefit from the expertise of INGOs who are not eligible to join. Observer Status will also be extended to a representative from ICRC and IFRC and the designated focal point of the Lebanon Humanitarian & Development NGOs Forum and other local NGO forums, as approved by the membership.

5.1 OBSERVER CRITERIA

Any International NGO that fulfills the following criteria may apply for Observer Status to LHIF:

- Registered in Lebanon or in process of registration as an international NGO or International Agency;
- Registered as an NGO or International Agency in a foreign country;

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- Implementing projects in Lebanon directly or through partners; and
- Interested to coordinate actively with other international NGOs; but cannot join LHIF due to organizational mandate.

Requests for Observer Status shall be submitted to the LHIF Country Coordinator for review of requirements and presentation to the Plenary Assembly. Observer Status shall be approved by securing a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) approval from the members who participated in the voting process. Applicants must submit an application clearly outlining their organizational mission and work in Lebanon. Additional documents may be requested by Plenary, in particular related to the organization's existing codes of conduct.

Observer Status may be extended on a case-by-case basis to other organizations, including – on an exceptional basis – organizations who may otherwise be eligible for LHIF membership, if the Plenary agrees/approves that their inclusion as an Observer has an added value to LHIF.

5.2 BENEFITS OF OBSERVER STATUS

- Invited to attend regular LHIF Plenary Meetings. If specific member-only discussions need to be had, observers will be asked to leave the meeting for that discussion.
- Included in designated LHIF email lists for information circulation, information gathering and consultation on issues as relevant.
- Included in LHIF advocacy initiatives around I/NGO operational space.
- Invited to participate in initiatives around expanding I/NGO engagement in the response.
- Invited to join LHIF Working Groups as/if relevant.

Observers may feed in to, but do not have the right to vote, sign-off on, or object to LHIF initiatives or products. This does not preclude LHIF from inviting Observers to sign-on to formal LHIF products, if agreed by Plenary (in which case the preferred modality will be for the logo of all signing organizations to be included, together with the LHIF logo).

5.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS WITH OBSERVER STATUS

- Appoint a designated Representative at the Country Director or Deputy Director level.
- Ensure attendance of the Representative at regularly scheduled Plenary meetings.
- Respect Confidentiality as per Chapter 8 below.
- Respond to LHIF "Feedback" requests on a regular basis).
- Provide timely inputs to LHIF member/observer mapping and contact list updates.
- Assign technical-level staff to participate in LHIF working groups as/if relevant.

5.4 OBSERVER FEES

With the exception of ICRC, IFRC, and the focal point of the Lebanon Humanitarian & Development NGOs Forum and other local NGO forums, Observers are required to pay an annual fee of \$500 USD. Fees shall be paid to the LHIF Host Agency, upon receipt of invoice. Fees shall be utilized by the LHIF Secretariat to run the Secretariat and/or specific activities in accordance with the LHIF strategy or agreed priorities, with approval from the Steering Committee.

5.5 DISCONTINUITY OF STATUS

Observers may have their status revoked under the following circumstances:

- If their observer fees remain unpaid 3 months after the invoice date.
- When a decision is taken by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote of the members who participated in the voting process that the actions of an observer are not in line with this Framework or are detrimental to the overall efforts of the LHIF.
- When the observer voluntarily withdraws.

- When an observer gives out confidential information discussed in Plenary Assembly or any LHIF Working Group meeting to a third party.
- When the observer becomes eligible to be a full LHIF member.

CHAPTER 6 THE LHIF SECRETARIAT

6.1 PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT

The purpose of the LHIF Secretariat is to support the fulfillment of LHIF's purpose, vision, and core functions. The Secretariat provides strategic, technical, and logistical support to LHIF's operational, coordination, and advocacy work and helps to ensure the best use of opportunities, resources, and expertise to further LHIF's influence on policy and practice.

The LHIF Secretariat is comprised of a full-time Country Coordinator and additional full- or part time staff as deemed necessary by the Steering Committee and Plenary Assembly, as funding allows (currently a knowledge management and membership senior officer). The job description of the LHIF Country Coordinator (see Annex 2), and any changes to it, shall be agreed by the Plenary Assembly upon recommendation from the Steering Committee. The activities of other Secretariat staff shall be governed by job descriptions as prepared by the Country Coordinator and approved by the Steering Committee. LHIF shall, to the greatest extent possible, draw on available expertise, resources, and support from LHIF members.

6.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT

The Secretariat functionally reports to the Steering Committee with respect to LHIF activities and initiatives, and staff performance management. The Secretariat reports to the Country Director of the Host Agency with respect to operational management of LHIF grants and HR contractual issues, as outlined in the Host Agency Agreement.

Primary Responsibilities of the Secretariat include:

- Develop and manage LHIF strategies, initiatives and activities as approved by the Plenary Assembly and under the guidance of the Steering Committee.
- Facilitate the development of common positions among members and produce common advocacy and coordination documents.
- Facilitate regular Plenary and working group meetings.
- Facilitate and ensure consistent LHIF engagement in response leadership and planning mechanisms, such as the HCT and Inter-Sector.
- Organize and/or attend meetings with external stakeholders, ensuring that members are consulted in advance, represented during, and receive notes afterwards.
- Ensure on-going information sharing amongst LHIF members and from external stakeholders to LHIF members, maintaining updated contact lists and member mapping.
- Develop proposals/budgets and ensure timely reporting, in coordination with the Host Agency and in accordance with Host Agency procedures (with SC approval/non-objection of submissions).
- Ensure smooth administrative and financial operation of LHIF, in accordance with donor requirements and Host Agency policies, and in consultation with the SC and/or Host Agency as relevant.

The LHIF Country Coordinator provides core support to LHIF in managing LHIF initiatives and activities, developing common positioning on key issues, representing members internally and externally, and furthering advocacy with donors, the diplomatic community, UN agencies and Government Representatives. Key responsibilities of the LHIF Country Coordinator include:

- Managing all operational aspects of the LHIF Secretariat, both internally (budgets, staff, reporting, proposal development, etc.) and in relation with external stakeholders.
- Providing technical expertise on and managing coordination and advocacy activities agreed on by the LHIF Plenary Assembly and Steering Committee.
- Supporting the Steering Committee to impartially represent LHIF externally, in accordance

with LHIF's team approach, and directly representing LHIF with external stakeholders as delegated by the Steering Committee.

- Serving as the primary contact for urgent and/or emergency issues and co-focal point – with the SC Chair – for managing LHIF relationships and communications with donors, diplomats, the UN, and other key stakeholders.
- Serving as the LHIF budget holder, empowered with financial approval authority for all planned/foreseen expenditures and for unforeseen expenditures below \$1000.
- Managing LHIF Secretariat staff, in accordance with host agency personnel policies.
- Serving as the co-signatory with the SC Chair on any binding LHIF documents; and
- Serving as a member of the LHIF Management Team meetings (without voting rights within Steering Committee decisions).

6.3 LEGAL STATUS AND HOSTING OF THE SECRETARIAT

LHIF is an informal group of independent, international organizations and does not have its own organizational registration or independent legal status. The LHIF Secretariat is legally, administratively and financially hosted by a member INGO under a Host Agency Agreement that is signed by the Host Agency, the LHIF Country Coordinator, and the SC Chair. The responsibilities of the Host Agency include:

- Legal responsibility for oversight of grants, budget, personnel and contracts (with right to overhead on LHIF grants).
- Ensure financial, administration and logistics support to the LHIF Secretariat as per support provided to other agency programs in-country.
- Responsible for financial monitoring and oversight; final approval of all budgets and expenditures in accordance with organizational policies and procedures, based on requests from LHIF Country Coordinator and confirmation from the Steering Committee as required (LHIF budget lines to be treated as restricted funds that cannot be re-allocated by the host agency without Steering Committee approval).
- Responsible for administrative/contractual management of LHIF Secretariat personnel in accordance with organizational policies and procedures (visas, benefits, leave, etc.); hiring and termination of LHIF staff may not be undertaken independently by host agency (in cooperation with the decisions of the Steering Committee for the Country Coordinator, and the Country Coordinator for other Secretariat staff).
- Responsible for supporting the LHIF Secretariat with proposal/budget development, submission, monitoring and reporting, and for jointly managing donor relationships on LHIF grants with the LHIF Country Coordinator.
- Does not represent LHIF unless elected to serve on the Steering Committee (no restriction on serving or obligation to serve).
- Responsible for Duty of Care of Secretariat staff.

CHAPTER 7 REPRESENTATION

- The full Steering Committee holds official responsibility for representing LHIF with external stakeholders, unless otherwise agreed, and ensuring impartial, effective and consistent representation.
- LHIF takes a team approach to representation, with the representative authority and operational depth of SC members bolstered with the organizational neutrality and policy support of the Country Coordinator. The Management Team will thus endeavor to ensure that at least 2 Steering Committee members and the LHIF Country Coordinator attend all official meetings, as far as possible.

- LHIF representation on various external forums and/or bodies in Lebanon can be broken down into two main categories:
 - Decision-making bodies (i.e., Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), Lebanon Crisis Response Plan Steering Committee, Lebanon Humanitarian Fund Advisory Board etc.) are the main external leadership bodies for the response in Lebanon. LHIF is allocated a designated number of seats to represent within these bodies. In general, the Country Coordinator and LHIF SC Chair shall represent the LHIF membership in these bodies with additional seats either being filled by a SC member or LHIF member with the particular profile needed to best represent the LHIF membership. The election process for these seats shall be proposed by the SC and agreed by $\frac{2}{3}$ approval from the members who participated in the voting process.
 - Technical bodies (HCT access working group, HCT advocacy working group, cash task force etc.) provide technical support/expertise to advise the leadership bodies within the response. LHIF is allocated a certain number of seats per body. In general, the Country Coordinator will represent LHIF membership alongside elected technical staff from LHIF members who are best suited to engage. The election process for these seats shall be proposed by the SC and agreed by $\frac{2}{3}$ approval from the members who participated in the voting process.
- The Country Coordinator represents LHIF with local, regional and global NGO fora, and with other bodies and stakeholders as delegated by the Steering Committee.
- Steering Committee members and the Country Coordinator will only make public statements or commitments (written or oral) on behalf of the LHIF based on discussions, positions, and issues pre-agreed in or by the Plenary Assembly.

CHAPTER 8 CONFIDENTIALITY

All information shared by members or observers of LHIF regarding, e.g., funding flows, funding requests, donor relations, personal contacts with stakeholders, confidential policy positioning, etc. is to be maintained confidential by all LHIF members, observers and Secretariat staff. This will be respected even when a member or observer withdraws from LHIF.

Chapter 9 ADOPTION AND EFFECTIVE DATE

- This Framework replaces the By-Laws approved on 4th October 2013 and takes precedence over all previous decisions of the LHIF.
- This Framework will be reviewed at least annually, with changes approved by the Plenary.
- This last update was approved by the Plenary Assembly as of 25th August 2016.
- Current version approved February 2023.

ANNEX 1**Lebanon Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF) Membership Application**

Please submit this form together with a brief covering letter that outlines the organization's programs in Lebanon and motivation for joining LHIF to: Coordinator@LHIF.org

Name of Organization	
Country of foreign/HQ registration	
Registration status in Lebanon <i>(please include the date of registration and registration number or date the application for registration was submitted and MOI receipt number)</i>	
Is the applying organization a Signatory to the Code of Conduct of the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and NGOs in disaster relief? (Yes/No)	
Location of main office in Lebanon	
Geographical coverage of Lebanon programs <i>(tick all that apply)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Beirut <input type="checkbox"/> Mt. Lebanon <input type="checkbox"/> Bekaa <input type="checkbox"/> Baalbek-Hermel <input type="checkbox"/> Akkar <input type="checkbox"/> North Lebanon (Tripoli +5) <input type="checkbox"/> South Lebanon – Sour/Saida <input type="checkbox"/> Nabatieh
Sectors of programming in Lebanon <i>(tick all that apply)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Food <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Purpose Cash <input type="checkbox"/> NFIs

	<input type="checkbox"/> Shelter <input type="checkbox"/> WASH <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Nutrition <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Protection <input type="checkbox"/> SGBV <input type="checkbox"/> Child Protection <input type="checkbox"/> Livelihoods <input type="checkbox"/> Social Stability <input type="checkbox"/> Municipality Support
<p>Does the organization also have development programming in Lebanon that is unrelated to the Syrian Refugee Crisis or the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan? (Yes/No, if yes please provide a brief summary in the covering letter)</p>	
<p>Active projects over the past 6 months and projected for coming year, included estimated number of beneficiaries</p>	<p><i>Please provide a brief summary in the covering letter.</i></p>

Notes:

- Plenary Meetings are held on the 4th Thursday of each month.

ANNEX 2

LHIF COUNTRY COORDINATOR – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Country Director of the Lebanese Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF), hosted by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), is the overall responsible for facilitating, leading and quality managing the work of the INGO Forum ensuring it remains relevant to the needs of its members and is appropriate to the context. The Director provides strategic and technical guidance to the LHIF Steering Committee and Plenary, spearheads joint LHIF advocacy and operational initiatives, and ensures consistent LHIF engagement with response leadership and planning mechanisms. The Country Director leads the work of the Secretariat and represents LHIF internally and externally as necessary to support lobbying with key donors, UN agencies and Government Representatives.

Major Responsibilities: The LHIF Country Director will be required to maintain the following general responsibilities:

Strategic Coordination and Representation

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- Ensure transparent coordination mechanisms and regular information sharing between INGOs and other stakeholders.
- Enable INGOs to coordinate at strategic and operational level in Lebanon by facilitating high quality, regular meetings of Country Directors, thematic working groups, representatives of the INGO Forum and other mechanisms that maximizes the impact of INGO action in Lebanon. Ensuring information flows, feedback, drafting of relevant agenda and timely follow up on action points.
- Encourage active and open dialogue between the INGO Secretariat, NGO Steering Committee and Country Director Group.
- Participate in important policy and planning processes underway at the UN and government level that requires field level operational inputs from INGOs where needed.
- Provide a regular and reliable conduit for the UN, Government, donor representatives and other stakeholders to communicate and coordinate with INGOs
- Support the coordination of visits of high-level evaluation missions, UN and NGO missions, researchers, donors, diplomats as required as needed.
- Increase and enhance INGO engagement with national NGOs and civil society groups to create potential coalitions around key thematic areas.
- Identify opportunities and strategies for coordination with development actors and humanitarians in Lebanon

Senior Level Representation

- Actively represent INGO Forum members in senior humanitarian and development platforms like Humanitarian-Donor Group, Humanitarian access Group, strategic cross-cutting thematic taskforces, and ensure engagement with and high profile external discussions and ensure the dissemination of high quality written feedback.
- Regularly network and represent the INGO community at high-level forums and bilateral meetings including with UN, Donors, Member States, military and government, and other representative bodies including outside of Lebanon at capital level.
- Work effectively with delegated representatives of the INGO Forum and ensure accountability to members.
- Represent INGO Forum members at global meetings and conferences and raise members' advocacy messages and key priorities by participating in high level panel discussions, round tables and closed door meetings.

Advocacy and Policy Leadership

- Lead in implementation of Advocacy Strategy while mobilizing and leveraging support from member organizations.
- Work with INGO Advocacy Working Group to regularly draft policy and positioning papers and briefs in line with collective views of INGO Forum members on topics of concern.
- Actively engage high profile targets and allies within UN, authorities, donor and diplomatic communities in Lebanon and externally to further advocacy objectives.
- Stay informed on global, regional, and national opportunities to further advocacy objectives by anticipating key dates and ensuring adequate time to contribute productively.
- Liaise with relevant consortia to this end.
- Collect, analyze, and share information relevant to members and external stakeholders, often with the goal of influencing policies and improving operational or protection space.

Information Sharing, Analysis and Best Practice

- Acting as focal point for information/experience sharing with and among NGOs on relevant issues including managing NGO Forum and NGO SC membership, contact lists and mailing lists

LHIF Governance Framework

- Offer regular analysis on key thematic and operational issues impacting humanitarian, recovery and development responses and affected populations.
- Ensure timely response to requests for help and information from member organizations, non-member organizations and other stakeholders, such as donors, governments and UN agencies. Often this requires a high degree of coordination and the collection of sensitive information.
- Create feedback mechanisms, open learning channels, support pilot efforts for knowledge management, and ensure information flow between NGOs.
- Conduct active and continued research into prevailing humanitarian, socio-economic, geo-political, security situation in Lebanon, providing the Forum with regular updates.
- Identify gaps in research and analysis that could be used by large numbers of the membership and hire and manage consultants as needed to assist with and complement this task.
- Provide oversight on the development of the Forum resources and rebranding of the Forum including development of a toolbox of branded materials and templates

Project Management and Human Resources

- Ensure high quality INGO Forum donor reporting and proposal development, as well as donor liaison on key areas of progress in collaboration with the Steering Committee and Host Agency.
- Report back to Steering Committee and Country Director Group on project activity progress, expenditure and plans.
- Build and maintain a productive relationship with the Host Agency.
- Manage consultants, researchers and other external support.
- Provide leadership and direction, promote professional working relationships, and encourage staff.
- Conduct regular performance appraisals identifying capacity building needs and further career objectives; follow-up, and maintain updated job descriptions
- Update the INGO Forum Strategy on an annual basis
- Ensure smooth running of the governance model of the INGO Forum and where required make recommendations for changes.

Accountability to Beneficiaries

- Act as liaison and represent the Forum with local, regional and global NGO forums
- Spearhead and manage joint advocacy and operational initiatives, as agreed by members.
- In cooperation with the LHIF Steering Committee, oversee the LHIF Advocacy & Communications Advisor, Advocacy Focal Group and other LHIF thematic working groups in the development and implementation of LHIF advocacy strategies, identification of potential advocacy opportunities and consolidation of joint statements and talking points from LHIF.
- Follow and undertake analysis on issues relevant to the LHIF Strategic Directions; synthesize and provide briefings on key concerns for LHIF members.
- Research and draft policy, position and background/analysis papers on LHIF issues, as tasked by the Steering Committee or Plenary, and support LHIF members in identifying recommendations for moving forward.
- Ensure members are kept up-to-date on developments and consolidate member feedback to the UN, donors and government on issues related to the response strategy, management, coordination, and leadership.
- Attend relevant sector working groups, inter-agency, and other coordination meetings.
- Facilitate enhanced NGO engagement in coordination mechanisms through advocacy for NGO leadership positions, orientations for NGO staff, and other support as needed.
- Develop and maintain working contacts with relevant external stakeholders (e.g. RC/HC, UN agencies, donors, diplomats, MOSA, Red Cross, national NGOs, etc.)

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- Organize any ad-hoc meetings or events with policy makers and relevant stakeholders in consultation with the LHIF SC to advance humanitarian issues raised by the LHIF.
- Support the LHIF Steering Committee in jointly representing LHIF in meetings with donor governments, the Government of Lebanon, the United Nations, national NGOs, and other external stakeholders, to convey views of the LHIF members. Coordinate and attend LHIF meetings with external stakeholders; consolidate key issues and talking points from LHIF members in advance of meetings; record and disseminate notes to all LHIF members following meetings.
- Facilitate and ensure consistent LHIF representation in response leadership and planning mechanisms, such as the LCRP Steering Committee and HCT.
- Represent LHIF in the Inter-Sector Working Group, and other coordination and planning mechanisms as delegated.
- Act as liaison and represent LHIF with the Syria INGO Regional Forum (SIRF), ICVA, InterAction, and other local, regional and global NGO fora.
- Draft and disseminate to various audiences any LHIF statement / position / press release agreed on by the LHIF. If relevant and agreed, organize press conferences and manage media relationships.
- Monitor and propose specific revisions as necessary to LHIF Governance Framework and Host Agency Agreement, for approval of the LHIF Steering Committee, Host Agency, and/or Plenary.
- Oversee the LHIF Steering Committee election processes.
- Undertake annual LHIF Strategic Planning, oversee implementation of and report on the agreed Strategic Directions.
- Manage LHIF membership and observer processes and fee collection.

In addition to the above general responsibilities the LHIF Country Director will ensure delivery of the following:

A) Specific Responsibilities:

- Manage and provide strategic and technical expertise on joint advocacy and operational initiatives agreed on by LHIF members
- Support the LHIF Steering Committee in representing LHIF in different fora and meetings in Lebanon and abroad.
- Facilitate and ensure consistent LHIF engagement in response leadership and planning mechanisms, such as the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), HCT, and Inter-Sector.
- Lead the LHIF Secretariat, including management of activities, staff, administration, and finances

B) Directly or via management of Secretariat staff:

- Organize and facilitate LHIF Plenary Meetings, LHIF Steering Committee Meetings, and the meetings of agreed LHIF sub-groups.
- Record and disseminate minutes of internal and external meetings to the LHIF members
- Maintain an up-to-date Contact List of all LHIF member and observer representatives, alternates, and issue focal points
- Facilitate an improved communication and information sharing plan by ensuring that relevant LHIF communication channels and platforms are enhanced and that reports, announcements, developments, etc. are circulated to all LHIF members
- Plan and coordinate LHIF-sponsored trainings and workshops
- Maintain a “bird’s eye” mapping of LHIF member and observer sector, donor, beneficiary, and geographic coverage (to be updated quarterly).

LHIF Governance Framework

- C) In close coordination with the LHIF Host Agency:
- Manage LHIF Secretariat staff and consultants.
 - Manage LHIF Secretariat budget and expenditures.
 - Develop proposals, extensions and modifications to ensure ongoing funding for the LHIF Secretariat and LHIF initiatives.
 - Timely reporting on LHIF funding and proposals.