# Terms of Reference

# Evaluation of the Reslog project 2018 - 2021

# General information

## Introduction

Within the framework of Sweden’s Regional Strategy for the Syria Crisis 2016–2020 and the updated regional strategy for the period 2021- 2023, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR), through its affiliate SKL International, is implementing the project “Resilience in local governance” (Reslog) in Turkey and Lebanon. The implementation phase started in December 2018 and it ends in December 2021, including a cost extension period (April – December 2021). The project is designed with three separate components: two country components, i.e. Turkey and Lebanon, with separate results frameworks under a common overall goal, and a joint regional component for sharing experiences when possible. The overall goal of the project is *“Sustainable and resilient local governance systems in Lebanon and Turkey, which are peaceful, inclusive and provide equal and effective services to people.”* Three expected project outcomes are defined and structured according to *national*, *regional*, and *local* *levels* in the two countries, with 6 immediate outcomes for Turkey and 6 for Lebanon, as well as one immediate outcome for the regional component.

***The context***

The war in Syria recently entered its eleventh year, still with no obvious end in sight. More than half of Syria’s population has fled their homes and around 13.4 million people are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria. Neighbouring countries have been affected with millions of Syrians fleeing warfare and oppression and around 6.6 million Syrians have sought refuge in neighbouring countries and in other continents. According to the UN, around 5 million of the Syrian refugees are in five neighbouring countries – Turkey (3.6 million), Lebanon (865.000), Jordan, Iraq and Egypt.

The pressure on host communities and local government has been tangible, and the situation has often exacerbated a range of pre-existing structural deficiencies within government systems. In addition, the global Covid-19 pandemic have added a heavy burden on local government since February 2020.

On the other hand, the international community has supported the neighbouring countries with significant financial contributions, primarily through the EU and UN systems. Within the Syrian refugee population, many have been absorbed by local industries, service sector and agriculture, filling needs for skilled labour and subsequently contributing to economic growth of the host communities.

**Turkey** has an unprecedented number of migrants, including Syrians, residing in its cities, some temporary, others most certainly permanently. The financial burden of Turkish municipalities for supplying and delivering services to migrants has been significant, and the sudden increase in population disrupted projected calculations for amenities and infrastructure facilities and investment. The large influx of people changed the outlook of cities and all dimensions of urban life were affected. Turkish municipalities are often limited by legal and financial restrictions to respond while the Turkish Municipal Law, article 13, extends the definition of fellow citizenship to migrants where municipalities are responsible for meeting day-to-day needs of all residents, and promoting a culture of living together.

All service sectors have been affected by the large influx of refugees, i.e. health, education, social services, as well as technical services such as water and sewage, local infrastructure, and waste management, particularly in urban areas. The quick and large influx of refugees have also often changed the social fabric of local communities and municipalities, sometimes leading to social dissonance and competition for jobs and other resources.

**Lebanon** hosts the world’s largest refugee population per capita due to the huge influx of Syrian refugees with some 865,500 registered Syrian refugees as of end December 2020. However as the Lebanese Government instructed UNHCR to suspend new registration at the beginning of 2015, there is a high number of unregistered refugees, making the estimated actual number of refugees quit higher, around 1.5 million, equal to a quarter of the total Lebanese population, according to Lebanese government estimates.[[1]](#footnote-1) In addition to the Syrians, Lebanon has hosted Palestinian refugees since 1948, who remain stateless and lack basic civil rights.

### *Background to Reslog*

Within the framework of Sweden’s Regional Strategy for the Syria Crisis 2016–2020, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) carried out a feasibility study in 2016 - 2017 on resilience in local governance in Syria’s neighbouring countries. The study found a clear need to strengthen long-term resilience of local governance systems. It was concluded that Swedish support through SALAR could complement existing initiatives and create valuable synergies, capitalising on SALAR/SKL-I’s deep understanding and long term experiences of strengthening local governance through closer citizen interaction. A project was defined within the Swedish Regional Syria Crisis Strategy and Turkey and Lebanon were selected as project countries. The project was named Resilience in Local Governance (Reslog). Due to the complexity and unpredictability of the region, it was seen needed to *apply a highly flexible project* *approach* with iterative and cyclical planning and *continuous learning* with *two components responding to the different and concrete needs* of local governments in Turkey and Lebanon. Where possible, exchanges of learnings should take place.

**Turkey** was identified based on the following facts and assumptions: the largest number of Syrian refugees in the region; comparatively well-developed municipal sector; SALAR as a known actor with a good network, including competent consultants and other expertise; municipalities were motivated to engage in governance related cooperation and there were no major formal barriers for SKL International to start working*.* It was decided that the Turkish project component should focus on two Regional Unions of Municipalities; Marmara Unions of Municipalities and Cukurova Unions of Municipalities and a selection of their member municipalities are the majority of Syrian refugees are residing within their constituencies.

**Lebanon** was identified based on the following facts and assumptions: although dysfunctional governance system, opportunities were seen for achieving results at local level; Sidas’ operationalisation of the Syria strategy is delegated to the Beirut embassy; possibilities to apply bottom-up approaches, working closely with local actors were found; the environment was seen conducive for innovative resilience and systems-based approaches; opportunities to cooperate with like-minded actors existed. The Akkar governorate in the north, being one of Lebanon’s most under-developed regions is hosting a large Syrian refugee community. Akkar was seen as representative of the larger picture in Lebanon, where the majority of Syrian refugees have settled in the country’s poorest regions, due to their lower living costs.[[2]](#footnote-2) A UN study found that many of Lebanon’s 251 most vulnerable localities hosting large numbers of deprived Lebanese and displaced Syrians were in Akkar. These 251 locations host 87% of refugees from Syria, and 67% of deprived Lebanese.[[3]](#footnote-3) The Lebanese component was thus decided to focus on the Akkar governorate and apply an area based approach. In Akkar two Unions of Municipalities were selected; the Union of Municipalities of Dreib al Awsat and Jurd al Qayteh as well as their member municipalities.

***Development problem***

When the project started, the Syriaconflict had been going on for 7 years. The number of refugees had remained stable, with more than 3,6 million Syrian refugees in Turkey and around 1,5 million in Lebanon. The pressures on municipalities in both countries to provide services for all persons living within their constituencies was dire and challenging, calling for support to create greater resilience within local government to manage the situation. Many official Turkish stakeholders started to acknowledge the reality that a majority of Syrian refugees might be in the country to stay and that systems needed to be adjusted to adapt to this. Lebanese municipalities are often very small and struggle to make already insufficient resources and systems cater for its Lebanese constituency and where an often large refugee population further exacerbates the needs.

A migration process can be described to happen in three phases: 1.Arrival, 2. Settlement and 3. Integration. In the Arrival phase, especially in a forced migration process, the most important thing is humanitarian aid for the survival of the migrants. In the Settlement phase, the migrants try to settle properly, seeking self-sustainment like finding a job, getting proper housing, starting to express needs beyond the primary food, shelter, dignity needs. In the Integration phase, the migrants start to accept the place of arrival as home and to become a part of the society. This is a two-way process where the co-habitation also affect and change the hosting community. Settlement and integration place additional and changing demands on national institutions and local authorities. Still, the settlement phase of Syrian refugees had been occurring in both countries with limited awareness, lack of guidance, and mostly in an un-organised manner.

At the start of Reslog, local communities in both countries intuitively sensed and saw that “hosting the neighbours” under temporary protection had in reality come to an end. Communities shared the same streets, parks, apartment block, the same cities and the same economy, voluntarily or involuntarily. With an unprepared local population and a lack of awareness and open discussion, this situation has started to create tensions, especially among the lower income segments of the society. Sharing poverty is clearly more difficult than sharing wealth, since there is little to share.

The settlement or resettlement of Syrian refugees and other migrants in Turkey was seen as closely connected to urbanisation where the local situation could be understood from a regional perspective, seeing linkages and populations flows between localities. Many metro and district municipalities suffer from a lack of housing, infrastructure is strained, and there is still an urgent need for physical and public space. The fierce competition on the employment market has also brought lowering of wages, poor working conditions, exploitation, and risks for segregation. Even though there is an increased competition for jobs, the influx of Syrian refugees has also resulted in more economic activity in the places where they settle. Some has moved their companies to Turkey, and the demand for commodities has increased.

While social cohesion is central to a lot of the discourse on the refugee crisis, it has in Lebanon become a sensitive concept, also connoting integration in Arabic. With the recent history of civil war, and the Syrian crisis potentially threatening Lebanon´s fragile balance by changing demographics, Lebanese authorities have promoted social stability while maintaining the notion that Syrians are temporarily displaced and will eventually return. Municipalities operate under a highly centralized system, their mandates are not clear to citizens[[4]](#footnote-4) and coordination with donors is weak. Municipal responsibilities range from construction and maintenance of local roads, management of primary health care centres and schools, solid waste management, and local policing and public safety. Municipalities authorize and regulate zoning, housing, healthcare, public facilities and businesses.[[5]](#footnote-5) Municipalities in Lebanon are weak, and rarely fulfil the mandate as stipulated in the Municipal law. Most planning is highly centralised and the room for manoeuvre of local authorities is limited. Many municipalities also lack own resources to launch development projects and are therefore dependent on transfers from central government or donations from international organisations.

Increasing risks for tensions between host communities and migrants was prevalent in both countries with limited understanding of the concepts of co-habitation and co-existence. The possibility for municipalities to influence national policy was also limited with few channels for bottom-up vertical policy dialogue. Municipalities were faced with a situation where they should manage tasks and solve problems which their resources and capacities were not designed for. Still, over the years of the Syrian war many municipalities in Turkey had been able to find innovative solutions and gained valuable experience. But the lack of both horizontal and vertical dialogue and structured coordination meant that a lot of important learning and good practice were not shared and replicated or contributed to policy changes.

*Situation in Reslog geographical target areas*

In **Lebanon,** the Reslog project is working in Akkar governorate, and more specifically with two Unions of Municipalities – Dreib al Awsat and Jurd el-Qaytee. Akkar is one of the most deprived area in Lebanon and has a fairly large refugee population. It contains several localities which are included in the list of “most vulnerable areas” in Lebanon, and it is not as saturated with aid agencies as some other areas in the country – particularly when it comes to those working on governance and resilience.

Akkar is the most northern Governorate in Lebanon, bordering Syria. It covers 788 km2 and shares a 100 km boarder with Syria. Today, the total population of the governorate is around 390 000, of which 106 000 are registered Syrian refugees (26 000 households). With a majority of the Akkar population living below the official poverty line, the region is considered the most deprived in Lebanon. Approximately two thirds of Akkar’s inhabitants are Sunni Muslims, while the rest are Greek Orthodox, Maronites (Eastern Catholic), Alawites and Shia Muslims.



While previously being one of seven districts in the Northern Governorate, Akkar obtained its formal governorate status in 2014 with Halba as its capital – a town of 18 000 inhabitants. There are around 120 municipalities in Akkar, and an additional 20+ villages under the direct supervision of the governor. A majority of municipalities are members of one of the 12+ UoMs in the governorate, most of them recently established.

In the institutional needs assessments carried together with Reslog partners Jurd el Qaytee and Dreib al Aswat it was concluded that among the most urgent challenges were:

-Lack of planning and strategic development perspectives

-Urgent lack of financial and human resources

-Lack of awareness of basic legal framework and regulations related to municipalities in Lebanon

-Lack of data and statistics on many levels, including number of refugees residing

-Lack of institutional systems (finance management, archiving, administration etc)

-Very limited interaction between local authorities and communities, little communication.

-Inter-municipal relations often characterised by conflict and mistrust

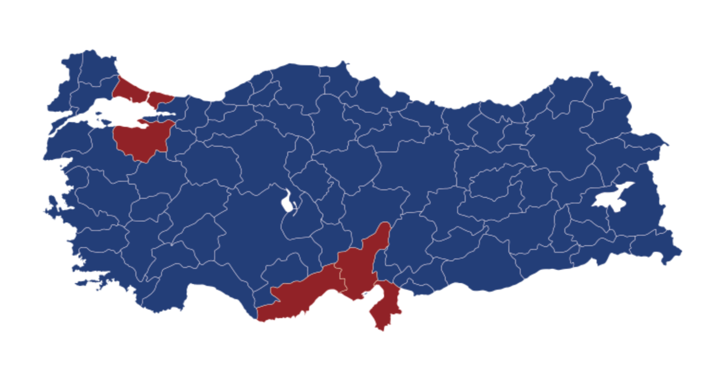
Due to the drastic increase of population as a result of the Syria crisis, basic services and infrastructure are now considered a common and priority need all over the governorate, which includes water, electricity, solid waste management and public roads. Also, these are all related to environment and climate change issues. Since last year, Lebanon is going through the worst economic crisis in decades, compounded by the lockdown measures to stem the spread of Covid-19, and the August 4th Beirut blast. Rapidly the country has slid into an economic crisis with the currency having lost its value steeply on the open market, now close to 80-90% of its worth. The population of Akkar has been hit especially hard, already poor and many previously commuting to Beirut for work now being without jobs. The limited self-reliance possibilities for the refugees, combined with the impact of the recent crises, have led to an exponential rise in extreme poverty among refugees.[[6]](#footnote-6)

All of this has put extra pressure on municipalities and unions to serve people – Lebanese and refugees. The two Reslog partner Unions each have 12 member municipalities which mostly are very small (often with only a few staff members and municipality police) and the Unions themselves have around 4-5 staff. The resources of Unions of Municipalities and municipalities have always been meager, with transfers from the central government being delayed since 2017. With the ongoing financial crisis the situation is more urgent than ever and it is increasingly difficult for local authorities to provide needed services. There is also a clear trust and accountability gap between the Unions of municipalities/municipalities and residents.

The geographical target areas of Reslog in **Turkey** are the Regional Unions of Marmara and Cukorova which together hosts 25-30 % of all Syrian refugees. The project also works locally with 12 pilot municipalities, six in each Union. Turkish municipalities share many of the same challenges in relation to refugee influx and migration. Some of the most pertinent are:

* National policy lagging behind: Turkey continue to suffer from a lack of national sustainable response to the Syrian crisis and national policy making heavily affects local governments. The financial burden for supplying and delivering aid to the migrants, or the sudden increase in population disrupt projected calculations for amenities and infrastructure facilities and investment.
* Lack of local level data: The sharing of data on Syrians under temporary protection remains a sensitive matter. Central government agencies state that all information regarding Syrians under temporary protection is shared with municipalities, but they on the other hand say they do not receive anything more than overall figures at province level. This makes realistic planning challenging.
* Services provision: There are no service sector that has not been affected by the large influx of refugees. This goes for health, education, social services, as well as technical services such as water & sewage, local infrastructure, and waste management. This is especially true in urban areas.
* Legal framework: The legal framework in order to cope with the Syrian refugee situation is a key challenge. The temporary protection scheme, the law prohibiting Syrians from buying land and properties and the municipalities’ unclear mandate all adds to a situation pre-empting long-term sustainable solutions. The system suffers from lack of coordination at national as well as local level, horizontally and vertically, leaving municipalities with little or no guidance.
* Lack of coordination: Coordination and communication between municipalities and within a single municipality is often poor – i.e. having different departments addressing migration or refugee issues without cooperation or that it is seen only as the responsibility of a Unit of Migration Management (if established).
* Increasing tensions: Another major challenge, especially for municipalities, is to work on preventing the growing tension between Syrians and the local population, while simultaneously providing services to both groups and committing to foster social cohesion and cohabitation. The recent finance crisis and the Covid pandemic has brought increasing competition among social groups, and anti-refugee rhetoric has been on the rise in some areas.

There are of course also contextual specifics of each municipalities, depending on size, socio-economic structures, population density, institutional capacities etc. These specifics have been carefully mapped throughout Reslog processes.



RESLOG partner Regional Unions of Municipalities

Marmara is one of oldest associations of municipalities in Turkey, thanks to the scale, profile and vision of its member municipalities, which are serving among the most developed and industrialised cities of Turkey. Marmara operates in 13 cities, six of which are metropolitan: Balıkesir, Bilecik, Bolu, Bursa, Çanakkale, Düzce, Edirne, Istanbul, Kırklareli, Kocaeli, Sakarya, Tekirdağ, and Yalova. Marmara is the most densely populated area in Turkey with over 20 million inhabitants.  
  
**SYRIANS IN MARMARA REGION**

Being Turkey’s one of the most economically viable regions, Marmara has historically been a center of attraction for both domestic and international migration. The region houses more than half of the international migrants who are allowed to stay in Turkey. Refugees and migrants join the labor market as registered or unregistered labor. In this respect, flow of people is not only a dynamic that redefines the settlement and service provision patterns in the region, but also a determining factor in the socio-economic development. Istanbul and Bursa are the two chief destinations for Syrian migration in the region is Bursa.

Istanbul, with a population that corresponds approximately to 19% of Turkey’s population is one of the main destinations for international migrants in the region. The international immigration profile of the city is divergent in terms of the socio-economic status, origin country, migration reasons and motivations. Syrian refugees with a temporary protection status is approximately 556.600. Bursa is the fourth most populous city in Turkey and one of the most industrialised metropolitan centres in Turkey. The official population of Bursa (as of 2017) is 2.901.396, while the number of registered in this city is 106.893.

Recent studies displays that both in Istanbul and Bursa, most of the Syrian families reside in the ground floors or basements apartment buildings, as is relatively more affordable. Most Syrian women and men work for inequitable wages in jobs they are over-qualified for. They are subject to discrimination because of their ethnicity, nationality and prejudices and negative thoughts concerning the hygiene habits, religious beliefs or the exploitation of the cash aids provided by the Turkish governments. While Syrian men experience socio-economic pressures within the labour market due to unemployment, labour exploitation and poverty, women are subject to a neighbourhood level discrimination/exclusion in their everyday encounters with the fellow residents while performing everyday tasks such as shopping, taking the children to school or benefitting from healthcare services due to their "guest", "temporary" and "foreign" status. Either due to costs of education, lack of information concerning the education system, not being accepted to nearby schools because of the quota system, or because of peer pressure, most Syrian children do not attend school and have no access to education. In most cases, these children informally and illegally take part in the job market. The children often work within textile sector at workshops or shoemakers, or within service sector at cafes, restaurants or kiosks. A smaller population of Syrian children are employed in the industrial sectors such as furniture production and automobile factories. Along with the unhealthy and unjust working conditions for Syrian children, men and women, Syrians constitute a cheap labour-force, which negatively affects salaries and working conditions of the labour market. This, in return, causes social tensions due to competition in the field of employment

Çukurova is regionally located in the south/southeast of Turkey, its significance can be associated with its member municipalities hosting large number of Syrians with varying profiles due to its close proximity to the border. The region is a large stretch of flat, fertile land which is among the most agriculturally productive areas of the world. Throughout history, Çukurova was a gateway from Europe to the Middle East and, being the shortest access point to the Mediterranean from the northern Middle East and Central and accommodates two major seaports and an oil terminal. It also has a large tourist industry. This attracts different profiles of Syrians for settlement purposes to its cities after their arrival to Turkey. Members of Çukurova union are the metropolitan and district municipalities of Adana, Mersin, Hatay and Osmaniye. The partner Union is based in Adana.

**SYRIANS IN ÇUKUROVA REGION**

Çukurova region attracts different types of migration since the beginning of 1970's. Among the main factors that have attracted immigration to the region are the employment opportunities in various sectors. Ever since the Iraq war Çukurova region has been subject to mass forced migration movements with Adana, Mersin and Hatay provinces being major destinations.

As of March 2018, there are 190.472 Syrians in Adana and 204.694 Syrians in Mersin. The ratio of Syrians to total population is 8.59% in Adana and 11.41% in Mersin. In addition to the Syrians, especially in Adana, there exists refugees from Afghanistan, Iraq and Iran. In addition to the issues concerning access to housing education and services Syrian refugees face difficulties concerning social and economic inclusion. For instance, in Adana, socio-economic disparities between the North and the South of the city coincides with the distribution of the migrant populations within the city. The migrant groups (especially the Syrians) are settled in the relatively disadvantaged southern sections of the city that already hosts other vulnerable communities and the urban poor. Although immigrants are easily absorbed by these neighborhoods and immigration is not considered a visible urban problem, the uncontrolled increase in the population negatively affects the infrastructure service provision in the already under-privileged areas. In Mersin, the economic activity of the Syrians (in the field of entrepreneurs and trade) is relatively higher than in Adana. This is due to the already existing economic and kinship ties of Mersin with Syria.

In addition to the issues related to urban and infrastructure development and socio-spatial integration, Syrian migration has also had drastic and unexpected consequences on the local economic development. The decrease in the prices of work of led to the increase of domestic unemployment in the region. For instance, the employment opportunities for the working groups in rural and seasonal agricultural work declined. In addition, with the increase of the labor population, not only the living conditions for the Syrian refugees employed in sectors such as seasonal agricultural work, but also the living conditions (already with no heating, no WC bath, sterilization problem, lacking security) of the already existing labors worsened. Lastly, the socio-political unease has negatively affected the tourism sector, as one of the locomotive sectors for the region.

***Applicable Strategies***

Reslog is implemented under the Swedish Regional Strategy for the Syria Crisis (2016-2020, and 2021 - 2023), objective 1: *Strengthened resilience, human security and freedom from violence with a focus on increased access to public services.* More specifically, it aims to contribute to: *Improved access to inclusive and equitable basic services for people in vulnerable situations in neighboring countries, including refugees from Syria as a result of the Syria crises.*

Reslog is also framed under Agenda 2030, especially contributing to SDG #11: *Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,* and #16:  *Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.*

Reslog is also implemented within the *SKL International Strategic Plan* and *Domains of Change*.

## 1.2 The evaluation object

This section describes the object of the evaluation, i.e. the Reslog project.

*The evaluation object*

The object for the evaluation is the Reslog project; i.e. its three parts; the two country components in Turkey and Lebanon and the smaller joint component for sharing experiences. Each component is governed by a results framework with separate long-term and intermediate expected outcomes and sets of progress indicators. In the Turkish component, the project’s contributions on the three levels (national, regional and local) shall be covered by the evaluation. In the Lebanese component, the evaluation shall focus on the regional and local levels, as the key focus of the component is to apply an areas-based approach in Akkar. The more limited component on policy work at the national level, should not be included in the evaluation object. The smaller regional component, focusing on exchange of experiences between the three countries shall be part of the evaluation object.

*Time period*

The time period to be evaluated is the project’s implementation period from November 2018 to December 2021, including the no-cost and cost extensions approved during 2021. The inception period of December 2017 – November 2018 shall not be included in the evaluation.

*Organizational set up and project management*

The aid modality of Reslog is project-based support, with project teams of long- and short term consultants based in Ankara, Istanbul and Adana in Turkey, in Halba and Beirut (through the partner organisation DRI) in Lebanon, as well as overall project management and administration at SKL-International in Sweden. The overall project manager and administration at SKL-International in Stockholm, are managing the totality for both project countries. A part time project manager for Lebanon is based in Stockholm, a national project manager for Turkey, is based in Ankara and a national deputy project manager is based in Halba, Lebanon. Two teams of long term and short term consultants with expertise in the various processes included work at site in the two countries, with long term experts embedded with the Regional Union of Municipalities in both countries. In addition, international experts and service providers are linked to the project on needs-basis.

*Budget expenditure*

Total budget spent for the entire Reslog project (i.e. Turkey, Lebanon, Sweden) until end of 2021 will be 99 000 000 SEK (incl. 25% Swedish VAT). Separate budgets exist for the different components.

*Geographical scope and migration framework*

The geographical scope of the evaluation is the same scope as the Reslog project. In Turkey, this involves the national level, with the National Union of Municipalities (UMT) as the key stakeholder, the two regions and regional unions of Marmara and Çukurova, the 12 pilot municipalities in these two regions with their residents, as well as other municipalities participating in some processes from other parts of the country. 80% of the Syrian refugees in Turkey live in the constituencies of Reslog’s regional partners. In Lebanon, the project is focused on the two Unions of Municipalities in Akkar governorate, i.e. Dreib al-Awsat and Jurd al-Qayteh Union of Municipalities, their member municipalities and the host and refugee communities living in these municipalities. About 10% of the refugees in Lebanon live in Akkar. Reslog’s *ultimate beneficiaries* are residents in host communities and Syrian refugees living in the municipalities, who in the long run are expected to benefit from improved services and be able to take active part in the local governance where they live, contributing and participating as active citizens.

*Stakeholders and project target groups*

The stakeholders in the project and in this evaluation are Sida (the Swedish Embassy in Lebanon, which is managing Swedens’ Regional Strategy for the Syria crisis, SALAR/SKL-International, the Reslog teams of consultants in the two countries, including the partner organisation Democracy Reporting International (DRI) in Lebanon and the project key partners. In Turkey the two regional unions of municipalities i.e. the Marmara (MMU) and Çukurova (CMU) and the participating Turkish municipalities and the key partners. The national Union of Municipalities (UMT) is also an important stakeholder as the guarantor in relation to the Turkish Government. In Lebanon, the project key partners are the two Unions of Municipalities in Dreib al-Awsat and Jurd al-Qayteh and their member municipalities and community groups. The evaluation results shall be shared with these key stakeholders.

While residents in host and refugee communities are target groups of the project, the *direct beneficiaries* howeverare the participating municipalities and unions of municipalities, which are expected to become more resilient by developing migration related capacities, structures, collaborations and practical experiences to better manage the complex migration situation and provide better municipal services to all its inhabitants, including Syrian refugees. The evaluation results are for practical reasons not expected to be shared with refugee and host communities in the two countries.

*The**Theory of Change*

Reslog’s Theory of Change applies a systems approach to local governance and resilience development. This means drawing on multi-disciplinary competences, and focusing on interactionsbetween levels, actors and sectors, as well as on organisation specific migration related capacity needs. Like any sub-system, local governments interact and are linked to their environment and therefore evolve in conjunction with other sub-systems, e.g. communities where community members participate in local processes affecting their daily life. Through such interactions the processes and outcomes of local governance occurs. Having a systems approach, Reslog aims to address capacity gaps, financial circumstances, structures, planning processes, and decision-making procedures of the **partner** **organisations** themselves, as well as at looking at **interactions** between actors within the system - vertically and horizontally - and the **enabling environment**. This systems approach is summarised in the following picture:



Thus, Reslog contributes to *create change* in terms of increasing resilience in local governance by working simultaneously with different levels in the complex system in each country:

Local: individual municipalities, communities (host and refugee), civil society, citizens representation fora, etc.

Regional: Regional Unions of Municipalities

National: National Unions of Municipalities (UMT – in Turkey only), central government agencies, policy institutions, donors etc.

*Strengthened resilience* means using the system-based perspective to develop transformative capacities of various actors in the governance system. The key partners are supported in developing migration related institutional capacities, but also in their engagement with other levels of governance as well as with local communities, including Syrian women and men, living in their constituencies. By fostering a sense of ownership for local development among and between authorities and the residents – host communities and migrants, governance is increased. It is in the relationship and interaction between actors in the governance system where functionality is ultimately manifested in terms of changes in attitudes, behaviours, conceptual understandings and practises. The project uses progress indicators to monitor progress towards greater resilience and contributions towards the objective in the Syria strategy: *Improved access to inclusive and equitable basic services for people in vulnerable situations in neighboring countries, including refugees from Syria as a result of the Syria crises.*

***Approach to results-based management***

RESLOG applies a results-based management (RBM) approach which is inspired by some key principles of Outcome Mapping. This includes:

* Partner focus - i.e. clearly defining which actor that is in focus for project activities and is going to be affected directly, and those who are otherwise engaged.
* Outcomes as behavioural change – It is primarily through changes in ‘behaviours’ of individual actors, groups and organisations, and changes in their enabling environment, that overall systemic change can eventually be realised.
* Tracking results through gradual change: Progress ‘Indicators’ will help assess whether RESLOG is moving in the right direction and getting closer to the intended result. Thus, they need to be expressed as gradual change, not a once off success or failure. Three levels of results indicators are used to track gradual change:

***Expect to see***: These are the most fundamental changes needed to move forward, which usually are within the control of the project and its direct partners, and this can be attributed to activities organized by the project.

***Like to see***: Here partners have enough knowledge, skills and conviction and are starting to take desired actions themselves, with the support of the project and in support of the project objectives,

***Love to see****:* The change is institutionalised in the participating organisations and set-up mechanisms, and there is more sustainability and thereby an ownership in terms of continued change

Moving through “like to see” and “love to see” the perspective changes from one of **attribution** (the project does) to one of **contribution** (i.e. the project is one among several influencing factors on change). Also, this is not to be understood solely as a linear or chronological order of ‘outputs’ where it is possible to e.g. say that within year one of implementation *the expect to see* has been achieved, while it will take another year and a half to reach the level of *like to see*. Although the levels are expressed as somewhat ‘linear change’ it is more accurate to see it as a gradual change towards how sustainable, owned, and institutionalized the results are, in line with an adaptive results based management approach, where learnings are gradually captured and integrated.

Reslog is guided by a well-based and well-researched general results framework for the three components. These are complemented with annual work-plans which serve as the main management, monitoring, and communication tool during implementation. The volatility of the Lebanese and Turkish (and Syrian) contexts brings the necessity to remain vigilant and pragmatic in regards to activity planning. Flexibility and responsiveness, and conflict sensitivity go hand in hand, and it also fosters trust among partners. Reslog applies an iterative and incremental planning and management approach, where proactive planning is coupled with adaptation and exploration – i.e. searching for opportunities, making small changes, observing results, and then adjusting along the way.

The Stockholm office is supported by a part-time MEL advisor who supervises the MEL work in Turkey and Lebanon. In terms of reporting, there are annual reports submitted to Sida. These are developed from systematic internal reporting cycles of monthly and quarterly reports, indicating progress towards indicators in the results framework.

## 1.3 Evaluation rationale

The rational for conducting this evaluation at this stage in time, is two folded. It is firstly a contractual requirement between Sida and SKL-International to evaluate the project during 2021. Secondly, the project is presently in a cost extension period, ending in December, and aims to after the summer 2021 start the process of planning for a potential second phase. Applying a strong utilization focus, the evaluation is expected to contribute to this process with critical observations, analyses and recommendations which will provide inputs to upcoming discussions concerning the development of a new phase. Through the evaluation, a deeper discussion on performance, added value, strategies and results is expected to be conducted, which will serve as important contributions in the preparation for a potential new phase of Reslog during the autumn of 2021.

# 2. The assignment

## 2.1 Evaluation purpose and scope

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide Sida, SALAR/SKL-International and its project partners with an input to upcoming discussions concerning preparation of a possible new phase of Reslog.

The key users of the evaluation are Sida/Swedish Embassy in Beirut, SALAR/SKL-International, the Reslog teams and the Turkish and Lebanese partners; UMT, MMU and CMU and the Unions of Municipalities in in Dreib al-Awsat and Jurd al-Qayteh. .

The scope of the evaluation is the entire implementation period, including the no-cost and cost extensions. The evaluation should cover the three levels of the Turkish component i.e. the national, regional and local levels, with the main focus on the regional and level levels. In Lebanon, the evaluation shall be limited to the regional and local levels in line with the area based approach, focusing on Akkar.The evaluation shall also include the regional component.

The evaluation shall cover relevance in terms of the project addressing needs and priorities of key partners, strategies and approaches used and relevance and added value of SKL-International as an institutional partner. It shall assess results achievement in relation to the results frameworks, linkages, synergies and unintended effects for partners and refugees, inclusion of mainstreaming perspectives of the Human Rights Based Approach, Gender, Environment and Conflict Sensitivity. The evaluation shall also assess the project’s cost efficiency.

## 2.2 Evaluation objective and criteria

The specific objective of the evaluation is to:

* evaluate the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of the Reslog project and to formulate recommendations as inputs to foreseen discussions concerning the preparation of a new phase of support.

As mentioned, the project applies results based management and is guided by the results frameworks for the two countries and the regional component which are continuously monitored in different ways. The results frameworks are inspired by the outcome mapping approach and use progress indicators to monitor changes in knowledge attitudes, behaviors and institutionalized practices. The results frameworks form the basis for the project planning and reporting and will also frame the evaluation.

By applying the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, the evaluation should focus on relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

## 2.3 Evaluation questions

Applying the three criteria, the evaluation shall address the following evaluation questions:

***Relevance:***

1. To what extent has the project conformed to the needs, priorities and challenges which the municipalities and Regional Unions of Municipalities have faced in relation to Syrian refugees’ settlement and integration in the host communities?
2. Were the strategies and processes implemented at the different levels relevant to achieve the project objectives and expected outcomes? How could they be adjusted to be more relevant in the next phase to better reflect the needs of the Syrian communities? Is Reslog’s Theory of Change still valid?
3. How relevant has SALAR/SKL-I been as an institutional partner to facilitate changes processes and promote ownership for change among the Unions of Municipalities and their member municipalities? To what extent have the key partners benefited from SALAR/SKL-I’s added value of expertise on local governance, inclusion and citizen participation? What were advantages and disadvantages with this institutional set-up?
4. To what extent has Reslog been implemented in a conflict sensitive manner, given tensions connected with Syrian refugees and political changes in the contexts of Turkey and Lebanon?
5. To what extent has gender mainstreaming, Human Rights Based approach and environmental sensitivity been adequately applied in the project’s planning, implementation and follow-up? How could it be improved?

**Effectiveness***:*

1. To what extent has the project contributed to the development goal, specific objectives and intended outcomes? If so, why? Why not?
2. According to key partners and stakeholders what is working well and what changes or adjustments are needed to make the project more effective?
3. To what extent has Reslog generated significant positive or negative intended or unintended effects for migration related challenges on the various levels and where relevant, had effects on the situation of Syrian refugees?
4. How could the linkages between the three countries be optimized and used more effectively?
5. To what extent has lessons learned from what has worked well and less well been used to adjust and improve the transformative processes at different levels? Particularly lessons learned at the local level regarding interaction between host communities, refugees and local authorities should be highlighted. What are the main lessons learned so far that can be relevant to consider when planning for a potential next phase?

**Efficiency***:*

1. To what extent has the project delivered or is likely to deliver results in an economic and timely way?
2. What alternative strategies could have been applied for greater cost-efficiency?

Key questions are expected to be further developed by the evaluation team during the start-up phase of the assignment and be presented in a first consultative meeting with the Steering Group (see below for more information).

## 2.4 Evaluation approach and methods

The evaluation should be guided by the following principles:

* Be utilization focused, contributing with important use for the stakeholders
* Provide opportunities for learning for the stakeholders
* Be conducted in a participatory spirit
* Be forward looking, providing recommendations for future design

The evaluation should critically assess the project and its implementation processes towards achieving the results as well as be for practical use for the future. It shall be conducted as two country parts, also including the smaller regional component, with an overarching ambition to draw conclusions on the totality.

The evaluation process should start with an inception phase, where the evaluation team will have space to collect more information and gain a proper understanding of the project in both countries, to design the methodology for the evaluation process. It is expected that the evaluation team describes and justifies the evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection in the tender. The evaluation design, methodology and methods for data collection and analysis are expected to be fully developed and presented in an inception report.

The field work and analysis phase should be conducted during two – four weeks where the evaluation team will conduct interviews and analytical sessions with various stakeholders. Travel is not expected to occur to all parts, and distance methods of e.g. phone-calls, surveys, online interviews should be used as a complement. The evaluation team members are however expected to also undertake physical visits to the two project sites, and possibly to Stockholm.

A draft report should be presented for comments and discussions with the stakeholders. Through this, the evaluation is expected to feed into and contribute to the parallel process of designing a new phase of Reslog. The evaluation shall result in a final report at the end of the process, summarizing the methods, observations, findings, conclusions and recommendations for the future. The report should be maximum 30 pages long, excl. annexes. The final report shall be written in English and be professionally proofread.

The final report should have a clear structure and follow the report format in the Sida Decentralised Evaluation Report Template for decentralized evaluations (to be provided to the team). The executive summary should be maximum 3 pages. The evaluation approach/methodology and methods for data collection used shall be clearly described and explained. All limitations to the methodology and methods shall be made explicit and the consequences of these limitations discussed. Findings shall flow logically from the data, showing a clear line of evidence to support the conclusions. Conclusions should be substantiated by findings and analysis. Recommendations and lessons learned should flow logically from conclusions. Recommendations should be specific, directed to relevant stakeholders. Descriptive elements should be kept to a minimum. The evaluator shall adhere to the Sida OECD/DAC Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation.

Although this evaluation is not directly procured by Sida, evaluators are advised to consult and be guided by chapter 1 on approach and principles in the Sida evaluation manual. <https://publikationer.sida.se/contentassets/48202a8b18b64edf9c58b96675dcd683/sida_evaluation-handbook_extern_2020_webb.pdf>

## 2.4 Organisation of evaluation management

A steering group will be set up to guide the evaluation team in the process. The steering group will compose of the SKL-I project manager, the national project managers, the donor, the SKL-I local governance advisor and the international MEL advisor. The evaluation team and the steering group will have a start-up meeting, meet at midterm during the implementation and have a concluding meeting. A webinar with a presentation of findings and discussion on recommendations to which key stakeholders will be invited will end the process.

The evaluators will be supported by the national officers in Turkey and Lebanon who will facilitate access to any kind of documentation requested. Key documents are listed in the Annex I and there is and there is a large number of additional documentation that the evaluation team are welcome to have access to. The two project offices will also assist in any logistical matter.

## 2.5 Evaluation quality

The evaluation should apply the OECD/DAC glossary. Quality control should be exercised throughout the evaluation process. As Reslog is a complex multi-layered project, quality control should be both carried out through the evaluators’ internal mechanism and through the steering committee. The evaluators should describe the quality assurance approach and methods according to DAC quality standards for evaluations. These are intended to improve the quality of development evaluation processes and products, facilitate comparison of evaluations and increase development partners’ use of each other’s evaluation findings.

### 2.6 Time schedule

The evaluation should start no later than October 2, 2021, and be completed no later than December 29, 2021. The foreseen milestones of the evaluation process are the following:

*Tendering:*

-Invitation to tender

- Deadline for submission of tenders, August 31, 2021

-Assessments of bids and awarding the contract, September 15, 2021

*Inception phase:*

-Start-up meeting, October 2, 2021

-Documentary study and initial interviews

-Inception report describing the methodology and evaluation process, October 16, 2021

*Data collection:*

-Field work for information gathering and analysis, October – November, 2021

*Analysis of findings at country regional and on the overall level:*

- Mid term steering group meeting, November 15, 2021

*Report writing:*

-Submission of a draft report for comments, December 4, 2021

-Concluding meeting

-Finalization of the evaluation report

*Presentation of findings:*

- Webinar with key stakeholders to discuss findings and recommendations

It is expected that a time and work plan is presented in the tender and further detailed in the first consultative meeting between the Steering Group and the evaluators. The timing of any field visits, surveys and interviews need to be settled by the evaluators in dialogue with the main stakeholders during the start-up phase.

### 2.7 Qualifications of the evaluators

The evaluation team should consist of two evaluators, whereof one shall be the overall team leader and also responsible for one of the countries, and the other responsible for the other country. The evaluators should have academic degrees in social sciences, migration studies, public administration, urban development, or similar, and preferably be experienced academic researchers. They should be experienced evaluators of donor funded larger scale change projects, preferably related to local governance and have professional work experience in conducting reviews and evaluations of institutional and capacity development projects and programmes. Experience of evaluating Outcome Mapping-inspired programmes is an added value, as is experience from working with Swedish-funded programmes or projects. The evaluators should be learning oriented and have the ability to create trust among stakeholders.

The evaluators must be fluent in English. One team member should be fluent in Turkish and one in Arabic. The evaluators should preferably be living in Turkey and Lebanon respectively and or have relevant experience working in or with those countries.

A CV for each team member shall be included in the proposal. It should contain a description of relevant qualifications and professional work experience. The evaluators must be independent from the evaluation object and evaluated activities and have no stake in the outcome of the evaluation.

2.8 Assessment of proposals

The evaluation will be procured by SKL International/SALAR in accordance with its procurement regulations. Dead line for submission of proposals are August 31, 2021. The proposal should be addressed to Marléne Hugosson, SKL-International, and submitted by e-mail: marlene.hugosson@skr.se.

An evaluation committee will be established to evaluate the submitted proposals. The following assessment criteria will be used when evaluating the proposals:

1. The team members’ competences and qualifications
2. Proposed methods and organisation of the assignment
3. Proposed timeline
4. Suggested work plan
5. Total price. The price shall be broken down into fees for the team members and reimbursable costs (international and local travel, accommodation, per diems etc.)

## Financial and human resources

The evaluation has a Budget ceiling of 500 000 SEK, covering all fees and reimbursable costs (traveling, hotels, per diem, communication). The evaluators are responsible for covering their social costs, insurances and taxes and shall invoice SKL International after approval of the evaluation report.

The contact person for the evaluation is the Project Manager Marlene Hugosson <marlene.hugosson@skr.se. The contact person should be consulted if any problems arise during the evaluation process. Contact details to intended users (cooperation partners, Swedish Embassies, other donors etc.) will be provided by the contact person. The evaluators will be required to arrange the logistics such as booking interviews and preparing visits, including any necessary security arrangements.

## Annexes:

**List of Key documentation**

* Project Document
* Results framework
* Annual reports
* Quarterly reports
* Research papers from 2020/2021 commissioned by the project

1. UNHCR (2019 update), ‘Lebanese crisis response plan 2017–2020’ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Oxfam (2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. UNHCR (2019 update), p. 12 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. UNDP & UN Habitat (2020), ‘Municipal Empowerment and Resilience Project’ [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. UNDP & UN Habitat (2020), ‘Municipal Empowerment and Resilience Project’ [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. UNHCR, February 2021, Fact Sheet, Lebanon [↑](#footnote-ref-6)