Aid Fund for Northern Syria (AFNS)

Third Regular Allocation Strategy (RA3)

20th November 2024

Allocation Details	
Allocation Title	Advancing Localisation, Resilience, and Early Recovery: Transforming Essential Services and Robust Protection through Extended Locally-Led Programming and the Anchor Organisation Approach.
Allocation Launch Date	20 November 2024 for all Envelopes (16 September for part of Priority 2.1)
Expected Value	US$15 million
Start Disbursement	**Envelope 1:** February 2025 **Envelope 2:** October 2024 and February 2025
Expected Start Date of Projects	28 October (Part of Envelope 2.1) and 3 February (all Envelopes)

Section 1: The Aid Fund for Northern Syria (AFNS)

1.1 Mission

The AFNS brings together donor countries, multilateral agencies, nongovernmental organisations, and the private sector in a collaborative arrangement with a collective mission to maintain the continuity of flexible multi-donor humanitarian assistance to northern Syria in a dynamic context and in harmony with the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP).

1.1 Principles

The AFNS is a Humanitarian Multi-donor Pooled Fund established in November 2022 to meet priority needs of the north of Syria with a primary focus on the northwest of the country, and to maintain continuity and complementarity of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable communities. The AFNS is additional and complementary to the overall response and is based on humanitarian needs alone. The AFNS is:

- Focused on providing flexible humanitarian assistance and humanitarian protection to affected people in northern Syria with un-earmarked funding from a diversity of donor countries.
- People-centred; ensuring we are accountable to affected populations, committed to the prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment, and striving for gender equality and social inclusion in everything we do.
- Demand-driven, financing activities that directly address humanitarian needs and considering the capacity and agency of affected populations.
- Committed to localisation, promoting locally driven mechanisms to identify, define and address humanitarian needs and capacity constraints.
- A responsible partner; we are inclusive and transparent, coordinating and collaborating with others responding to the humanitarian crisis in Syria.
- Committed to following International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law and alignment with relevant international frameworks, including the Grand Bargain and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Striving to ensure the activities we fund respect humanitarian principles and meet standards of best practice, including Core Humanitarian Standards and Sphere standards.
- Committed to ensuring funds are used solely to deliver humanitarian assistance to Syrians and determined to prevent the diversion of funds for any illegal purpose, including financing terrorism or breaching applicable sanctions.

1.2 Objectives

- **Save lives**: Provide lifesaving and life-sustaining humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable people with an emphasis on those in areas with high severity of needs.
- **Strengthen localisation, early recovery, and harmonisation**: Supporting community-based, inclusive, rights-based and conflict-sensitive action that does no harm, contributes to positive change, and drives gender, age and ability equality.
- **Enhance protection**: Enhance the prevention and mitigation of protection risks and respond to protection needs through supporting a protective environment in Syria, by promoting adherence to the rule-of-law, International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, and through principled assistance.
- **Increase resilience**: Increase the resilience of affected communities by improving access to more sustainable livelihood opportunities and basic services, especially among the most vulnerable households and communities.

1.3 Programmes

- **Regular Allocations**: Regular Allocations are rounds of grant funding for implementing partners to deliver humanitarian assistance that is executed strictly in line with pre-defined procedures set out in the AFNS policy and procedural framework.

- **Special Allocations**: Special Allocations are rounds of grant funding for implementing partners to deliver humanitarian assistance that is executed in line with pre-defined procedures set out in the AFNS policy and procedural framework, subject to amendments to deal with any special circumstances.

1.4 AFNS Localisation Strategy

The AFNS Localisation Strategy, developed in 2023 in collaboration with key stakeholders, is a cornerstone of AFNS's efforts to promote locally led humanitarian assistance in northern Syria. The strategy recognises the critical role local actors play in delivering more effective, cost-efficient, and responsive humanitarian programming. By shifting power and funding to community-based local actors, AFNS aims to create a more community-centred and sustainable response framework. The strategy's objectives include fostering equitable partnerships, enhancing capacity sharing, increasing funding flow to local actors, improving funding quality, and ensuring locally led decision-making and leadership.

Central to this strategy is the "Anchor Organisation" approach (Annex 3 – Anchor Organisation Approach). Anchor Organisations are institutions registered as eligible partners with AFNS. They are tasked with prioritising and channelling funding to smaller grassroots and community-based organisations, enabling these local actors to receive AFNS support without needing to meet all the requirements for direct funding. These organisations, whether national or international, demonstrate strong community ties, operational capacity, and a commitment to localisation principles.

Anchor Organisations serve as conduits for funds and resources, overseeing the distribution and ensuring activities align with strategic localisation objectives. They manage larger grants, oversee multi-year projects, and provide targeted capacity strengthening in areas such as financial management, project reporting, and compliance, helping community-based local actors strengthen capacity over time.

This approach is strategically important as it enhances the operational capabilities of local actors while maintaining accountability and efficiency in fund management. By empowering these organisations, AFNS commits to enhancing local capabilities, fostering participatory decision-making, and ensuring interventions are contextually appropriate and sustainable.

The Anchor Organisation framework allows for greater flexibility and adaptability, critical in the dynamic and often volatile context. By leveraging the strengths of community-based local actors, AFNS aims to foster a more resilient and self-sufficient humanitarian ecosystem, ensuring that local actors are not only recipients of aid but active leaders in the response. This approach will bridge existing gaps, addressing both immediate needs and long-term recovery, building a sustainable and community-driven future for northern Syria.

Section 2: Allocation Strategy Development

2.1 Strategy Development

In August, AFNS launched an initial engagement with communities in northwest Syria, and various individual response actors. The findings and recommendations from this process were incorporated into the initial strategy outline, which has been endorsed by the Steering Board on 12th September 2024. To support complementarity, AFNS also shared an overview of the RA3 strategy with the Syria Cross Border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF).

Following the Steering Board's (SB) endorsement, the FMA has proceeded with conducting more in-depth consultations and develop this full strategy document during September and October, incorporating strategic input from the AFNS SB and the AFNS technical team. This strategy document includes results from ongoing research pieces, extended community consultations, engagement with, AFNS partners, and engagement with Clusters and OCHA SCHF.

The outcomes of these consultations have been incorporated into the design of the allocation strategy, including Annex 1 – Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations and Annex 2 – List of Prioritised Locations, attached to this strategy.

The full allocation will be formally launched in November 2024, with a projected total value of US$ 15 million. Around US$2.8 million have been already committed to projects identified by Clusters and SCHF but unfunded by the available allocation envelope of the SCHF, supporting integrated and a timely humanitarian response to emerging challenges. Funding to these projects is disbursed in October 2024 as approved by the SB, reducing the remaining value of RA3 to US$ 12.2 million available for applications.

2.2 Complementarity

In line with the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) 2024, the RA3 strategy integrates with the broader UN-led humanitarian efforts. By meeting UN expectations for coordinated humanitarian action, AFNS interventions support community based local actors often overlooked in funding distributions.

This allocation **complements the SCHF's July 2024 Standard Allocation** by aiming at targeting underfunded sectors and geographies, thus enhancing sectoral coverage and reach underserved locations. The strategy reflects the latest insights from all Clusters, adapting to anticipated gaps and aligning with ongoing donors' discussions to ensure our contributions are both timely, on a long-term basis and relevant.

The strategy incorporates the latest analysis and planning from Clusters, as well as lessons from previous allocations and evaluations. It combines both proven components and innovative pilot projects and is in tune with initiatives fostering a protective environment that supports peaceful coexistence and social cohesion. By empowering community based local actors through the Anchor Organisation approach and prioritising projects that strengthen local governance and promote the rule of law, the strategy will contribute to broader humanitarian and early recovery efforts.

The AFNS Steering Board has approved funding of up to US$2.8 million for three integrated approach projects identified by Clusters and SCHF, which were unfunded by the available allocation envelope of the SCHF. These proposals are subject to review by the AFNS Project Technical Review Committee, aligning with Priority 2.2 to provide contingency support for critical needs identified by Clusters and ensure integrated and timely humanitarian responses to emerging challenges.

By maintaining a dynamic and responsive approach to complementarity, we position ourselves as pivotal contributors to the humanitarian response in northern Syria, helping to bridge critical gaps and fostering a collaborative environment for sustainable development and recovery.

Section 3: Humanitarian Context

3.1 Overall Situation

The humanitarian situation across Syria, particularly in the northern regions, has steadily worsened due to a combination of factors. Governance voids, rampant inflation, economic decline, and the collapse of basic infrastructure and services have compounded the effects of extreme weather, ongoing displacement, and persistent insecurity. Frontline areas continue to experience kinetic activities, with the risk of conflict escalation ever-present. Additionally, diminishing international support has further exacerbated the crisis. In northwest Syria and the Ras Al Ain Tel Abyad (RAATA) region, the ongoing conflict remains one of the most severe humanitarian crises globally, with 4.7 million people in need (PiN). Funding shortfalls, especially in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), have created critical gaps, with the 2024 HRP funded at just 26.9%. This underfunding, combined with the unprecedented number of people in need, underscores the urgent need for sustainable and localised solutions. Syrian NGOs face immense challenges. Smaller organisations are shutting down due to diminishing funds, while larger NGOs struggle with deficits and cash flow issues. The lack of longer-term projects further hinders the development of sustainable solutions and continuity in aid delivery. Enhancing localisation and fostering community-led initiatives are essential for a more effective and adaptive humanitarian response.

Recent geopolitical developments have further strained northern Syria. Since late September 2024, escalating conflict in Lebanon has driven approximately 300,000 individuals—mostly Syrian refugees—back into Syria, predominantly into GoS-controlled areas. As of 16 October, UNHCR[1] estimates that around 4,000 Syrians fleeing the conflict in Lebanon have arrived in north-west Syria, primarily women and children.

Humanitarian actors must also navigate issues related to International Humanitarian Law (IHL), Customary International Law, the Hague Regulations, and the Geneva Convention and Additional Protocol I. The swift changes in geopolitical dynamics over the past three weeks emphasise the need to remain vigilant, closely monitor the situation, and respond flexibly to growing and shifting needs in an increasingly insecure environment that impacts access.

3.2 Gaps according to 2024 HNO/HRP, Community Consultations, and Cluster Analysis

The 2024 HRP, with a budget of $4.07 billion, faces a critical funding gap as it is only 26.9% funded. This substantial deficit is raising alarms across the humanitarian sector, particularly affecting northwest Syria, where it drastically undermines the sustainability of essential services. Many health facilities are already downsizing, closing departments, or reducing operating hours, further straining an already fragile system. Without the required funding, half of functional health facilities risk suspending their services by December 2024, depriving over 1 million people of access to essential, life-saving, and emergency healthcare.

Water and sanitation services are severely compromised; 188 camps in Idleb are without adequate WASH facilities, and many water pumping stations are non-functional. Nutrition security is deeply affected, with almost 75,000 children at risk of severe malnutrition as nutrition support programmes close, affecting both outpatient feeding and rapid response nutrition teams.

The educational future of one million children is in peril, with critical resource shortages driving suspension of operations in 1,054 damaged educational facilities. Schools are often repurposed as shelters during displacements, further reducing their availability for educational purposes. This situation also necessitates a robust response that includes improving measles vaccination coverage in Idleb and Aleppo, where rates are alarmingly low, indicating serious to extreme levels of coverage inadequacy.

From an economic perspective, the situation in northwest Syria is dire according to the 2024 HNO, with 86% of households relying on borrowing and informal credit to meet essential needs, and 11% selling productive assets. Moreover, 10% of households engage in socially degrading or high-risk jobs for survival. These figures highlight a grim economic reality, where 49% of households cite unemployment as a primary barrier to meeting basic needs, leading to severe implications such as sexual exploitation. Household incomes average at $85 per month, starkly juxtaposed against expenditures of US$183 per month, resulting in a 115% income-expenditure shortfall, with nearly 41% of households reporting that their monthly expenditure on food is not sufficient for them to

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[1] https://reliefweb.int/report/syrian-arab-republic/unhcr-northwest-syria-flash-update-4-response-displacement-lebanon-syria-16-october-2024

meet their basic food needs. This financial strain is compounded for female-headed households, which are unable to meet basic needs at twice the rate of male-headed households.

There is also a significant IDP crisis, with almost half of all IDPs in Syria (3.4 million) residing in northwest Syria, nearly 1.9 million of whom live in over 1,525 last-resort sites. These sites are critically overcrowded, with 79% critically exceeding capacity limits. Moreover, 44% of households with at least one member with a disability reported health services as an unmet need.

The provision of legal services, as well as access to justice and promoting the rule of law, is one of the top challenges in northwest Syria. Legal services relating to domestic violence, disappearance, power of attorney, divorce/alimony, inheritance, and many others are amongst the top legal services requested by IDPs and not provided by legal partners due to lack of funding that enables the provision of these legal services.

The urgent need for investment in early recovery and livelihood initiatives is clear, to foster community resilience and reduce reliance on emergency coping strategies. Community members and local stakeholders contributed insights into the Community Consultations facilitated by AFNS in northern Syria, aligning with the AFNS Accountability to Affected Populations and Community Engagement (AAPCE) Strategy. In education, communities and stakeholders emphasised the importance of system building and educational research, alongside developing sustainable solutions for resource shortages and supporting secondary and industrial education levels.

For Protection, communities and stakeholders stressed on the need for strengthening local mechanisms to tackle economic drivers of child labour and marriage, with an integrated approach across sectors. In Health and Nutrition, system-level interventions were highlighted as priority to improve service integration and equity, emphasising localisation and the expansion of local procurement. Food Security discussions centred on livelihood development and climate adaptation in agriculture, mixing immediate aid with long-term agricultural improvements.

Discussions on Early Recovery emphasised the importance of building resilient livelihoods through community-driven initiatives, as for CCCM, WASH, and SNFI, the participants stressed that community ownership in water management and sustainable infrastructure development is crucial. Communities and stakeholders underscored the importance of prioritising vulnerable groups, fostering economic independence, supporting innovation, and engaging local stakeholders in strategy development to ensure responsive and effective humanitarian interventions.

3.3 Geographic priorities

Careful consideration has been given to alignment and prioritisation of geographic locations in this RA3 strategy. The selection process has been informed by the 2024 HNO, Clusters evaluations and other key stakeholders information cross-cutting, ensuring that prioritisation accurately reflects the most current and comprehensive assessment of needs.

Clusters and SCHF have been invited to review the Allocation Strategy Outline, the Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations (Annex 1), and the List of Prioritised Locations (Annex 2), particularly in light of the recent project selections under the SCHF's Standard Allocation (SA1 2024). This review aims to identify any potential overlaps with the new projects funded by SCHF. Ensuring coordination at this stage is crucial for effectively addressing current and emerging needs through new interventions.

Section 4: Strategic Statement

4.1 Goal and objectives

The goal of this allocation is to ensure **maximum complementarity with ongoing humanitarian efforts** while focusing on **localisation, early recovery, resilience, integration, protection, inclusivity, and accountability towards affected populations.** This aligns with strategic objectives derived from the 2024 HRP, ensuring interventions are relevant and impactful. As such, the AFNS is contributing to addressing the profound contextual challenges through RA3, aligned with the three Strategic Objectives (SO) of the 2024 HRP; focused on Providing life-saving and life-sustaining humanitarian assistance (SO1), mitigating protection risks and responding to protection needs by supporting the protective environment (SO2), and enhancing the resilience of affected communities through improved access to livelihood opportunities and basic services (SO3). This strategy prioritises genuine and unprecedented localisation, ensuring resources are delivered to community based local actors, including local syndicates, unions, and associations that can take ownership of interventions. This approach fosters resilience and sustainable recovery, including all sectors, with an emphasis on long-term, hands-on programmes that have proven successful in strengthening capacity and apolitical civil institutions within northwest Syria.

The allocation has two primary objectives, each corresponding to distinct envelopes designed to address specific needs:

- **Envelope 1: Enhancing resilience and wellbeing through integrated programming that strengthens local systems and empowers community based local actors for sustainable recovery (Localisation, Resilience & Early Recovery through the Anchor Organisation approach)** – with an indicative amount US$7.5 million, this envelope aims to:
  - Enhance the resilience, recovery, social cohesion, and wellbeing of affected populations through integrated, multi-sectoral programming. It prioritises engagement with community-based organisations and strengthens local systems of essential service provision.
  - Distinctly, this envelope focuses on empowering community-based actors through capacity strengthening, ensuring that programme delivery and capacity strengthening remain separate yet complementary efforts.

- **Envelope 2: Delivering integrated, multi-sectoral, long-term programming to sustain essential services and protection for at-risk populations. (Integration & Protection)** – with an indicative amount US$7.5 million, this envelope provides:

  o Essential services and Protection are prioritised for those at heightened risk, focusing on integrated, multisectoral essential services delivered where applicable through an area-based approach. Optimising resources to support coherent, targeted initiatives that actively foster peaceful coexistence and transitional justice in northwest Syria. Including justice, and the rule of law, ensuring meaningful impacts within communities. This may include some assistance to address mid-term gaps, potentially including some support for emerging priorities identified by Clusters.

  o Contingency support for critical needs identified by Clusters and unfunded by the available allocation envelope of the SCHF, ensuring integrated and timely humanitarian responses to emerging challenges.

With project **durations up to 24 months**, RA3 will deliver sustained impact and foster long-term resilience through locally-led interventions. This enables more substantial and in-depth interventions to deliver significant and lasting change. This strategic approach enhances the relevance of our interventions and ensures that they are grounded in the realities of the lives of the communities we support.

Goal	Advancing transformative change through the delivery of locally-led and integrated interventions, focusing on early recovery, localisation, and robust protection to enhance resilience, inclusivity, and accountability for affected populations in northern Syria.	
Objectives	Enhance resilience and wellbeing through Localisation & Early Recovery integrated programming	Deliver integrated, multi-sectoral, longer-term programming to sustain essential services and protection for at-risk populations
Envelopes	Envelope 1: "Localisation, Resilience & Early Recovery"	Envelope 2: "Longer-term, Locally-Led & Essential Integrated Services with a Protection focus"
Priorities	• Implement **through the Anchor Organisation Approach** integrated, long-term, multi-sectoral programming that focuses on enhancing **resilience, recovery, social cohesion, and wellbeing**, with a priority on **engaging community-based organisations.**	• Support **integrated actions** that include **essential and protection centred services for populations at heightened risk,** utilising, when suitable an area-based approach to ensure targeted and efficient intervention in prioritised locations, exploring opportunities to address mid-term gaps and potential support for emerging priorities
	• Empower and strengthen the capacities of **community-based actors** and local infrastructures to ensure **sustainable and community-driven essential service provision.**	• **Contingency support** for critical needs identified by Clusters and unfunded by the available allocation envelope of the SCHF SA1 2024, ensuring **integrated and timely humanitarian responses to emerging challenges.**

Section 5: Allocation Priorities

5.1 Overview

RA3 will distribute US$15 million across two envelopes, each underpinned by the 2024 HRP, to support the resilience on the affected population in northern Syria with a focus on locally-led interventions. Each envelope is allocated US$7.5 million, aimed at addressing specific, urgent needs while promoting long-term recovery and local empowerment.

- **Envelope 1:** Implemented through a pilot of the Anchor Organisation Approach, focusing on boosting resilience and wellbeing through robust, locally-led, integrated programming that engages and strengthens local community-based actors, ensuring effective service delivery and capacity building in line with strategic localisation and recovery efforts.
- **Envelope 2:** Targets critical gaps and emerging challenges through locally-led, integrated, multi-sectoral support and contingency measures for needs identified by Clusters but unfunded by the available allocation envelope of the SCHF, where feasible through area-based interventions that ensure comprehensive and sustainable impacts in prioritised locations.

Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) or Multi-Purpose Cash (MPCA) can be utilised as a delivery modality for both envelopes, providing flexibility in addressing community needs.

Goal: Advancing transformative change through the delivery of locally-led and integrated interventions, focusing on early recovery, localisation, and robust protection to enhance resilience, inclusivity, and accountability for affected populations in northern Syria.

Envelopes	Priorities	Geographic Coverage	Est. # Grants	Max. Grant Value** (US$)	Indicative Allocation (US$)	% of Allocation
1. Enhance resilience and wellbeing through integrated programming that strengthens local systems and empowers community based (local) actors for sustainable recovery.	1.1. Implement through the Anchor Organisation Approach integrated, long-term, multi-sectoral programming that focuses on enhancing resilience, recovery, social cohesion, and wellbeing, with a priority on engaging community-based organisations.	See List of Prioritised Locations (Annex 2)	4-5	1.5M	7.5M	50%
	1.2. Empower and strengthen the capacities of community-based actors and local infrastructures to ensure sustainable and community-driven essential service provision.					
2. Deliver integrated, multi-sectoral, long-term programming to sustain essential services and protection for at-risk populations.	2.1. Support integrated actions that include essential and protection centred services for populations at heightened risk, utilising when suitable an area-based approach to ensure targeted and efficient intervention in prioritised locations; exploring opportunities to address mid-term gaps and potential support for emerging priorities		5-8*	1M	4.7M***	31%
	2.2. Contingency support for critical needs identified by Clusters and unfunded by the available allocation envelope of the SCHF, ensuring integrated and timely humanitarian responses to emerging challenges.				2.8M	19%
Total			9-13		15M	100%

Including 3 funded projects with a total value of up to US$ 2.8 million under priority 2.2

*** Maximum grant value regardless of the project's duration*

****Subject to SB approval, new donor contributions received before the end of the allocation process may potentially be included to increase funding for priority 2.1.*

5.2 Allocation Priority Description

Envelope 1: Localisation, Resilience & Early Recovery

Aligned with the 2024 HRPs third strategic objective, this envelope bolsters resilience, recovery, social cohesion, and wellbeing through locally-led, multi-sectoral programming. It emphasises **Localisation** by activating the **Anchor Organisation approach** for longer-term interventions and engaging community based local actors identified through a systematic mapping conducted by AFNS from July to September 2024. Under this envelope, two primary focuses streamline the efforts:

- **Immediate Engagement for Service Delivery:** Utilising the strengths of more capable community based local actors to ensure rapid and effective response to community needs and engagement from communities themselves, fostering immediate improvements in resilience and wellbeing.

- **Targeted Capacity Building:** Offering structured support to high-impact but less-capable local actors, enhancing their operational capabilities and ensuring their further growth into robust service providers.

Innovative financial and logistical solutions (compliant with PTT regulations) enhance the efficiency and impact of humanitarian delivery. This supports immediate needs and builds a sustainable foundation for future adversities, integrating community-led humanitarian aid, livelihood support, and social cohesion initiatives within the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Continuous guidance empowers Syrian actors to lead solutions addressing the complex interplay of humanitarian, recovery, and peacebuilding needs, amplifying their role in community development and ensuring a resilient foundation.

Priority 1.1:	This priority focuses on **delivering integrated, multi-sectoral programming by actively engaging with community based local actors** involved in project design and last-mile delivery. Recognising that not all community based local actors possess the capacity for full-scale implementation, AFNS prioritises partnerships with those demonstrating strong community ties, effective project execution, a commitment to advocacy, and a commitment to advanced localisation principles and shift power to local actors. Special attention is given to ensuring diverse representation, specifically organisations led by women, youth, and those supporting disabled persons.

	Resources, including financial support, materials, and technical assistance will be allocated to these community based local actors, enabling them to deliver services across multiple sectors. These resources are designed to be flexible, adapting to the evolving needs and circumstances of the community.
	Submitting organisations must cover a minimum of two sectors, each receiving no less than 20% of the total project budget, to ensure a genuinely integrated approach.
	Additionally, partnerships will extend to community based local actors adept in **advocacy and community engagement**, leveraging their strengths to further advocacy efforts and enhance the overall impact of interventions. This approach ensures that even community based local actors without direct service delivery capabilities contribute significantly through advocacy and community mobilisation.
Priority 1.2:	This priority complements priority 1.1 and aims to **empower and strengthen the capacities of community based local actors**, focusing on long-term sustainability in essential service provision. It targets particularly capable organisations identified through the AFNS mapping exercise, including those led by women, youth, and people with disabilities, victim associations, and other marginalised groups. Programmatic efforts under this priority will:
	• **Boost community participation and ownership:** By empowering community based local actors and integrating them with broader project activities as their capacities develop, fostering a strong sense of ownership and active participation in the development processes and integrating them with activities under priorities 1.1 as their capacities are developed.
	• **Develop community-led recovery strategies:** Utilising participatory approaches to ensure local communities' voices and priorities are central to recovery and resilience-building efforts, thus enhancing social cohesion.
	• **Provide targeted training and capacity strengthening support:** Offering essential training programmes or effective capacity strengthening interventions covering project management, resource mobilisation, advocacy, and digital tools utilisation to improve service delivery at the community level.
	• **Promote networking among community based local actors:** Organising events and forums to enable community based local actors to share experiences, collaborate on joint initiatives, and build partnerships, thereby enhancing their collective impact and establishing a supportive community of practice.

Envelope 2: Protection & Continuity of Locally-Led & Essential Integrated Services

Aligned with the 2024 HRP's first and second strategic objectives, Envelope 2 targets critical gaps and emerging challenges in northern Syria. It complements the SCHF by addressing needs identified by Clusters but unfunded by the SCHF's 2024 Standard Allocation, contributing to an integrated and effective humanitarian response.

Under this envelope, two primary focuses guide the implementation:

• **Integrated Strategic Interventions:** Focusing on designated areas with complex challenges, this priority utilises an integrated approach to deliver coordinated, multi-sectoral interventions that are sustainable and inclusive. Emphasising protection, community safety, justice, and the rule of law, it encourages partners to integrate additional funding sources, promoting a holistic response that leverages multiple donors for greater impact in their proposals. When suitable, an area-based approach could be used by targeting the most in need sites, as defined through relevant needs assessments and Clusters' inputs (see also Annex 4).

Innovative funding and operational strategies enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of interventions, fostering a resilient and adaptive humanitarian response. This approach addresses immediate needs and establishes a foundation for sustainable community development, integrating multi-sectoral efforts within the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, including system strengthening actions. Continuous support and guidance empower local actors to lead initiatives that tackle the complex dynamics of humanitarian, recovery, and peacebuilding challenges, solidifying their role in driving long-term community resilience.

Priority 2.1:	This priority aims to **foster resilient communities through an integrated approach**, concentrating efforts on specifically designated geographical areas or populations characterised by intricate challenges with long-term sustainable programming and system strengthening initiatives. By implementing innovative, integrated, multi-sectoral strategies and serving population groups in need effectively, thus enhancing local coordination and establishing a basis for sustainable interventions. When suitable, an area-based approach could be used and in that case, partners will be required to present a proper needs assessment, risk assessment, and rationale for selecting certain geographical locations as described in Annex 2 (including approval from relevant Clusters and proof of effective coordination), and demonstrate the ability to cover the population in need within the defined area with all services, acceptance of proposed actions from local communities, prioritisation of core sectors (SNFI, ERL, CCCM, WASH) as described in Annex 2
	The projects will feature coordinated, holistic interventions across pre-selected key sectors to address the needs and bolster the resilience of the targeted communities **with each proposal covering a minimum of two sectors, each receiving no less than 20% of the total project budget.** It is encouraged that proposals particularly integrate a protection-centred approach, including community safety, justice, and the rule of law. Under this priority the AFNS may provide **contingency support for critical humanitarian needs identified by Clusters but unfunded in line with AFNS strategic priorities.**

Priority 2.2:	This priority provides **contingency support for critical humanitarian needs identified by Clusters, and unfunded by the SCHF's 2024 Standard Allocation <u>and in line with AFNS strategic priorities.</u>** By bridging critical funding gaps, this priority bolsters the contingency of the SCHF's efforts and aligns with the strategic objectives of the 2024 HRP, particularly the first and second strategic objectives. Using an integrated approach, this priority ensures that each project comprehensively addresses essential services across various sectors, **with each proposal covering a minimum of two sectors, each receiving no less than 20% of the total project budget** to guarantee a multi-sectoral response. Key areas of intervention may concentrate on **some sectors outlined in the SCHF's 2024 Standard Allocation under the first envelope titled *'Ensuring uninterrupted critical and lifesaving services and enhancing the protection for people and groups at heightened risk'*.** This focused support fills critical gaps, fostering an environment where multi-sectoral collaboration enhances the resilience and well-being of communities in northern Syria, promoting a more robust and integrated humanitarian response. **The amount and number of supported proposals has been determined by the AFNS Steering Board,** thus ensuring that AFNS's contributions are strategically deployed.

Section 6: Proposal Eligibility

General Eligibility Criteria (Both Envelopes):
- Qualified AFNS partners may submit **only one proposal under one envelope** for this allocation.
- Each partner may submit **only one proposal as a direct implementer for this allocation.** If submitting as a direct implementer, <u>partners cannot submit as a direct implementer and be included as a sub-grantee in another proposal regardless of the envelope</u>. Partners can <u>either apply as a direct implementer or be included as a sub-grantee; but cannot apply for both.</u>
- Proposals must align with the priorities of the HNO/HRP and be coordinated with the relevant Clusters.
- Key activities included in the proposals must explicitly be in line with the activities detailed in Annex 1 (Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations)
- The maximum grant duration is 24 months. Most grants are expected to range between 12 and 24 months.

Envelope 1:
- Proposals must include robust assessment and analysis pertinent to the intervention's design, with an allocated budget, along with comprehensive details on risk management strategies, particularly addressing potential risks related to working with community based local actors.
- Submitted proposals must consider all relevant recommendations from the 'Community Mapping of Local Actors Report - Recommendations' (Included in the Opportunities Portal), with particular focus on the following:
  - o It is preferable that funding directed towards community based local actors includes co-funding contributions from the community, including both local residents and the diaspora, thus preserving the organic nature of these organisations, allowing them to remain embedded within their communities and responsive to evolving local dynamics, rather than being completely dependent on external funding.
  - o Proposals should be driven by local knowledge and expertise rather than top-down approaches. Engaging community based local actors in the design, decision-making, and implementation phases of projects.

Envelope 2:
- Proposals must include robust assessment and analysis pertinent to the intervention's design, with an allocated budget.

Section 7: Proposal Selection

Applicants are required to submit clearly articulated proposals that showcase their capacity to address the priority areas outlined in the allocation envelopes. Proposals should demonstrate how they will enhance integration between different sectoral elements, and where applicable, among different specialised partners, contributing to the overall strategic objectives of this Allocation Strategy. Project timelines and associated indirect costs must be based on **a realistic assessment of the time required to deliver the proposed activities** – projects must not be exceeding the necessary duration to deliver or achieving the intended outcome.

Proposals will be evaluated by a Technical Evaluation Panel comprising NGO experts, FMA staff, and advisers, using an agreed scorecard aligned with the principles and processes laid out in the AFNS Manual. The final selection will be based **solely on the scores awarded**, with the highest scoring proposals selected to proceed to final SB approval. The proposal scoring process will particularly emphasise the following:

- **Relevant and recent experience** in the proposed intervention areas, whether directly or through partnerships with specialised SNGOs.
- Experience in **integrated programme delivery** in the proposed intervention areas.
- Preference will be given to partners capable of delivering **through effective partnerships,** supporting the AFNS's aspiration of increasing funding to Local NGOs. Encouraging partnerships between Local NGOs with larger portfolios and those with smaller, specialised portfolios, including community based local actors – will be considered a major advantage.

- **Equitable and fair sharing programme support costs** with sub-grantees. Proposals must clearly reflect this in the budget, including a **comprehensive capacity strengthening plan** for all sub-grantees, including community based local actors.
- **Current access** to the target geographical areas of the proposed intervention.
- **Active membership** of relevant Clusters and adherence Cluster guidelines.
- Blockchain and e-voucher technology requirements for applications with MPCA activities:
  o Have policies for blockchain beneficiary data, including modification, deletion, and adherence to the 'right to be forgotten' principle.
  o Ensure data exchange standardisation aligns with data protection and ethical standards.
  o Assess value-for-money by considering the cost-benefit analysis, project needs, and available resources for blockchain or e-vouchers implementation.
  o Balance the benefits and risks of using blockchain technology, reflecting on its impact on beneficiaries and its appropriateness.
  o Please refer to AFNS Blockchain and Mobile Money Research (September 2023)[5] for more details.

- Proposals will be scored in accordance with the Proposal Scoring Methodology, detailed in Annex 5.

Section 8: Process and Timeline

Step	Envelope 1		Envelope 2		All Envelopes
	Priority 1.1	Priority 1.2	Priority 2.1	Priority 2.2	
Allocation strategy outline development	1 Aug - 9 Sep				
Engagement with the SCHF	25 Aug – 23 Oct				
SB approval of allocation strategy outline	12 Sep				
Envelope full development	23 Oct	23 Oct	23 Oct	13 Sep	23 Oct
Consultations with Clusters	18 Oct				
Community consultations	18 Oct				
Allocation strategy approval	24 Oct				
Allocation strategy launch	20 Nov	20 Nov	20 Nov	16 Sep	11 Nov
Proposal development and submission deadline	30 Dec	30 Dec	30 Dec	8 Oct	30 Dec
Technical evaluation of proposals	6-17 Jan	6-17 Jan	17 Jan	15 Oct	17 Jan
Proposal revision and resubmission	24 Jan	24 Jan	24 Jan	17 Oct	24 Jan
Final review of proposals	27 Jan	27 Jan	27 Jan	23 Oct	27 Jan
Technical Evaluation Panel endorsement of final proposals	27 Jan	27 Jan	27 Jan	23 Oct	27 Jan
Projects and allocation budget approval by SB	30 Jan	30 Jan	30 Jan	28 Oct	30 Jan
Award letter issuance (project start date)	3 Feb	3 Feb	3 Feb	30 Oct	3 Feb
Start disbursement processes	14 Feb	14 Feb	14 Feb	1 Nov	14 Feb

Section 9: Contacts and Complaints

8.1 Key Contacts

For specific inquiries this allocation strategy, please contact the relevant individual below:
- Andrea Quaden, Executive Director, Andrea.Quaden@afns.org
- Murad Maithalouni, Deputy Executive Director, Murad.maithalouni@afns.org

For questions about your organisation's eligibility or the submission of your application, please contact:
- Humam Alwan, Deputy Fund Manager, Humam.Alwan@afns.org

9.2 Complaints and Feedback Mechanism

For complaints and feedback during any part of the allocation process, please contact us under the following e-mail address: info@afns.org

Complaints and feedback are dealt with in a confidential manner. The FMA, with support from the Safeguarding Adviser when needed, will compile, review, address and, when necessary, raise the issues to the AFNS management and/or the Steering Board, who will take a decision and recommend necessary actions Partners that have any issue during the allocation are asked to share these issues to the extent possible before the Technical Review Committee convenes if it is linked to process-related issues. Late submission of issues will be reviewed but may not be actionable.

Section 10: List of Annexes

Annex 1: Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations
Annex 2: List of Prioritised Locations
Annex 3: Anchor Organisation Approach
Annex 4: The AFNS Area-Based Approach
Annex 5: Proposal Scoring Methodology

Annex 1: Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations

This annex presents the Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations, developed through engagement with Clusters, analysis of the 2024 HNO, and direct engagement with affected communities and stakeholders in northern Syria. Guided by the overarching goal of *advancing transformative change through the delivery of locally led and integrated interventions, focusing on early recovery, localisation, and robust protection to enhance resilience, inclusivity, and accountability for affected populations in northern Syria*, this framework serves as a guide for partners to design and execute interventions that are synergistic, impactful, and sensitive to GESI considerations. <u>This annex should be used in conjunction with Annex 2: List of Prioritised Locations</u>, ensuring that activities are aligned with identified needs and priorities for maximum impact. <u>The description of the activities to be included in the project proposal should be used exactly as they are in this annex, unless amendments are absolutely necessary.</u>

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)	**Infrastructure Improvements in IDP Sites** Implement a full package of infrastructure improvements in IDP sites, including: • Repair and quick rehabilitate main and sub-roads within IDP sites to improve accessibility and reduce mud during rainy seasons. • Repair and extend the existing drainage systems to prevent flooding and standing water. • Install and extend the solar lighting to improve safety and security at night in the communal facilities to mitigate the protection risks in IDP sites. **Site Monitoring and Coordination** • Conduct site monitoring, assessments, gap analysis, and coordinate assistance delivery to ensure effective camp management. • Establish, train and support service-based committees; Health, Education, Protection, WASH, Shelter, FSL & Nutrition, for sustainable programming in camps. Monitor, report and mobilise communities to improve/own services delivered to the community **Community Mobilisation and Participation** • Strengthen community mobilisation and participation through camp/site representative structures. • Establish Camp Management Committees to include/involve the community in decision-making and ensure consistency and fairness in services delivery to build trust between IDPs and local community. **Improvements in Camp Governance** • Facilitate improvements in governance of planned and informal IDP camps to promote dignified living conditions and resilient communities. **Site Maintenance**	• **Education**: Establish temporary learning spaces within camps; support educational activities for children and youth. • **ERL**: Provide life skills and vocational training (TVET for host communities' residents, in addition to the provision of other CCCM services including TVET for IDPs; CfW for limited maintenance of infrastructures in IDP camps and/or other employment creation outside camps; Provision of self-employment support and MSME support in host communities, in addition to other CCCM services in camps such as offer start-up grants and income-generating activities for IDPs in sites. Prioritise activities that foster social cohesion. • **FSL & Nutrition**: Coordinate on food security and nutritional support; integrate nutrition programs in camps. • **Health**: Integrate primary health care services within camps; coordinate on health awareness and services through dedicated health teams; established trained and activated. • **Protection**: Set up Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) and Women and girls' safe spaces / centres; address protection concerns; ensure safety and well-being of residents, especially vulnerable groups; expand measures to address GBV risks; establish clear referral pathways for survivors. Train partners and first line responders on GBV Risk mitigation, safe referral, PFA and SEA. • **Shelter/NFI**: Collaborate on shelter interventions and distribution of NFIs in IDP sites. Collaborate with SNFI on community led interventions through trained and supported semi-skilled groups to repair, maintain infrastructures and lighting; • **WASH**: Coordinate on WASH interventions on camp sites, especially water provision and sanitation services.	• **Inclusive Governance**: Establish camp management committees that include representation from women, youth, PWDs, and minority groups (at least 50-50% women) • **Protection from GBV**: Implement safety measures such as adequate lighting and patrols; ensure that facilities like latrines and showers are gender-segregated and well-lit. • **Community Participation**: Facilitate active participation of women and marginalised groups in decision-making processes within the camp by including them into community-based structures/initiatives • **Access to Services**: Ensure all groups have equal access to services and information, including those who may face mobility or communication barriers. • **Referral Pathways:** Expand measures to ensure that camp design and the services provided address GBV specific risks, such as clear referral pathways for survivors.

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	• Maintain and repair basic physical infrastructure and pre-existing facilities, including drainage channels, culverts, disability-friendly installations, lighting poles, repairs of communal facilities, flood defences, and other Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) activities. **Emergency Preparedness and Response** • Implement disaster risk reduction activities; prepare for emergencies through community engagement. • Provide fire points and equipe them with essential fire mitigation materials	• Establish and skill community-based wash management teams to monitor, report and mobilise communities on WASH needs in sites	
Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA)/Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA)	**Deliver MPCA as per CWG Guidelines** • Provide regular MPCA rounds (6 to 8 rounds) aiming to meet basic needs, achieve positive protection outcomes, reduce negative coping mechanisms, and facilitate access to critical services. • Implement measures to avoid concentration in camps by conducting risk assessments; consider piloting research on MPCA impact on GESI. • Ensure integration of MPCA in other sectoral programs (e.g., Shelter/NFI, Protection, Health, Nutrition, Education, ERL, FSL) as a safety net and component of the graduation model. • Integrated activities can include income-generating initiatives, business support, food production, processing, packaging, trading, TVET, and employment creation starting from mid-rounds based on assessments and economic profiling. • Incorporate safeguarding mechanisms to prevent risks of exploitation, abuse, or theft; ensure safe and accessible distribution mechanisms. • Include gender-based needs assessments and gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation processes; collect gender-disaggregated data on cash usage and its influence on household dynamics. • Promote establishment of voluntary community committees inclusive of women, girls, and PWDs. • Integrate GBV survivors into MPCA programs integrated with ERL and/or FSL, following CVA and GBV SOPs through referrals and financial eligibility assessments.	• **Education**: Facilitate access to education by reducing financial barriers; coordinate on education-related expenses; support back-to-school campaigns and cash for education. • **ERL**: MPC coupled with TVET assistance to increase livelihoods opportunities/ consider cash assistance as part of graduation models; MPC coupled with short-to-medium term employment creation; MPC coupled with support to self-employment and other business initiatives. • **FSL**: Complement food security interventions; support households in meeting food and basic needs; align with food production and livelihood support. • **Health**: Enable households to access healthcare services; coordinate on health-related expenses; include health awareness and PSS services during nutrition activities. • **Nutrition**: Implement cash for nutrition; integrate nutrition awareness and behaviour change messaging for MPCA beneficiaries. • **Protection**: Incorporate protection considerations; refer vulnerable cases needing additional support; ensure that cash assistance does not exacerbate risks; integrate GBV prevention and risk mitigation. Train partners and first line responders on GBV Risk mitigation, safe referral, PFA and SEA, Link CVA with CP Case management. • **Shelter/NFI**: Assist households in covering shelter-related costs; coordinate on shelter assistance. • **WASH**: Include hygiene promotion for MPCA beneficiaries. Support households in purchasing hygiene items and accessing WASH services; include hygiene promotion.	• **Equitable Targeting**: Use vulnerability criteria that prioritise women-headed households, PWDs, the elderly, and other marginalised groups. • **Control Over Assistance**: Ensure that cash assistance empowers recipients, especially women, giving them control over how assistance is used. • **Accessible Delivery Mechanisms**: Implement cash distribution methods that are accessible and safe for all, including mobile transfers or home deliveries for those with mobility challenges. • **Monitoring Impact**: Collect gender-disaggregated data, as required by the AFNS, to monitor the impact of cash assistance on different groups.

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
Early Recovery and Livelihoods (ERL)	**Access to Livelihood Opportunities** • Provide Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) linked to self-employment interventions, apprenticeship schemes, on-job trainings, career guidance, job placement services, and other programs for job creation. • Create short-to-medium term employment opportunities linked with (preventative) public and private infrastructure rehabilitation interventions, support to businesses for productivity increase, and support to green job creation (e.g., debris management interventions). Mechanisms must be in place to ensure security and integrity in the disbursement of wages • Provide start-up grants/packages for social or business entrepreneurship start-up and recovery; support MSMEs with grants or micro-credit; support of homebased businesses; support non-agricultural value chains. • Establish Village Savings and Loans Associations (VSLAs) and seed funding activities in settled and stable communities, integrated with other livelihoods activities. **Access to Basic Services** • Provision of energy supply systems including solar systems for households and public facilities. • Rehabilitate roads (and sewage lines), water stations/systems, local markets/warehouses, basic productive infrastructure, education facilities, health facilities, and other civilian, non-governmental infrastructure; include social cohesion components. • Support of spaces with improved access (e.g. for PWDs) • Employ local labour for rehabilitation of public and private infrastructure; create employment opportunities through infrastructure projects. • Build capacity of individuals to support the provision of quality services; and provide equipment and tools to support public services. • Solid waste management; establishment/strengthening of sustainable waste management systems. **Social Cohesion** • Promote social cohesion through community engagement, initiatives, and capacity-building	• **CVA/MPCA**: Implement cash-for-work programs; integrate with MPCA where appropriate. • **Education**: Link vocational education graduates with employment opportunities; encourage children engaged in labour to pursue vocational education. • **FSL**: Collaborate on value chains, business support, and infrastructure rehabilitation. • **Health**: Provide health services in rehabilitated health facilities; improve access to healthcare. • **Protection**: Support campaigns against child labour; promote safe work environments. Coordination and collaboration with ERL on social cohesion activities. Train partners and first line responders on GBV Risk mitigation, safe referral, PFA and SEA. • **Shelter/NFI**: Collaborate on shelter interventions • **WASH**: Provide training on water system maintenance and repair; create employment opportunities within the community.	• **Empowering Women through Skilled Training:** Courses, apprenticeships to enable and encourage women to develop skills for use in viable occupations, including those that are not traditionally pursued by women, taking into consideration flexible or home-based working opportunities for women with children, especially for single female-headed HHs. Courses and apprenticeships programmes targeting adolescent girls and boys should also aim to discourage child labour • **Youth Employment Readiness:** Complementary training on employment readiness and life skills can enhance trainees' ability to participate in society and to succeed in the labour market, and this is particularly important if the programme is targeting youth • **Gender-Sensitive Working Conditions:** Safe and fair working conditions support gender equity and women's economic empowerment. Gender-sensitive employment-creation interventions should consider possible lack of control over the cash that women earn, risk of theft and violence, childcare and household commitments. • **Social Equity in Employment:** Employment-creation interventions must contain safeguards against the risks of creating social divisions or exacerbating conflict, and they should also strive to reduce disaster risk. Including all groups in targeted community. • **Disaster-Resistant Infrastructure:** Infrastructure(s) built or rehabilitated under an employment scheme is disaster-resistant • **Risk-Aware Self-Employment Initiatives:** The processes of selecting, providing, and monitoring start-up grants and packages for Self-employment projects must be conflict and disaster-risk sensitive • **Gender-Responsive Infrastructure Development:** Gender-sensitive work on

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	activities to raise awareness and participation around early recovery and livelihoods outcomes. (in and outside of camps) • Build capacity for disaster preparedness and response; implement community-based DRR activities. Any potential for exacerbating social tensions should be identified and mitigated prior to project implementation • Establish green committees and community projects focused on environmental sustainability; pilot climate early warning systems tailored to local needs. • Development of context (sensitivity) analysis and community led ERL plans. • Provide training to existing community committees (including members from both IDP and host communities) on effective service delivery in IDP camps, ensuring inclusivity and equitable representation. • Organise structured dialogues between host communities, IDPs, and local authorities to address service delivery challenges, fostering mutual understanding and cooperation.		infrastructure rehabilitation should promotes gender equality and women's economic and social empowerment and should be gender-responsive in both design and process. • **Women in Rehabilitation Jobs:** Rehabilitation efforts should also offer opportunities for providing short-term employment for women and girls, and when applicable, encourage women's participation in non-traditional fields with specific targeted support for overcoming cultural barriers. • **Community-Focused Rehabilitation:** For infrastructure rehabilitation, the process must be conflict and disaster-risk sensitive. The infrastructure and the rehabilitation process itself should create space for more frequent and constructive interaction within the community.
Education	**Formal and Non-Formal Education** • **Restore, Sustain, or Create Pathways to Education:** Provide safe and inclusive formal education (for 5th graders and above) and non-formal education (for all grades as a pathway to formal education). • **Establishment of Temporary Learning Spaces (TLSs):** Establish TLSs when schools are not available; replace inadequate tents with dignified learning spaces. • **Minor Rehabilitation and Infrastructure Support:** Undertake light repairs and small rehabilitation work to school buildings; create additional classroom space. • **Provision of Learning Materials and Supplies:** Provide students with textbooks, school bags, stationery kits, desks, furniture, and safety equipment. • **Teacher Support and Capacity Building:** Recruit, train, and ensure equitable compensation for teachers and education staff; provide training on learning recovery strategies, DRR/DRM, child protection, and child rights. • **Operational Support and Winterisation:** Offer operational support for learning spaces; address	• **CCCM:** Coordinate education services within camps; align with camp management plans; establish classrooms and rehabilitate roads. • **CVA/MPCA:** Provide cash for education to reduce financial barriers; support back-to-school campaigns. • **ERL:** TVET and employment creation (incl. CfW) for rehabilitation of education facilities; link vocational education graduates with employment opportunities; Market-based support, including cash, to access services incentivizing school attendance (e.g. transportation incentives, childcare service) in addition to the provision of other Education services; Rehabilitation of infrastructures critical to provide Education services, in addition to the provision of other Education services. **Health:** Implement school health programs; conduct joint health and education campaigns focusing on dental hygiene and vaccinations; provide awareness programs promoting health practices. Integrate MHPSS for parents, teachers, and students; train teachers to recognise signs of trauma, abuse, and GBV; offer integrated MHPSS programs.	• **Equal Access:** Promote enrolment and retention of both girls and boys (specifically for girls, after school clubs and CVA); address barriers that prevent girls from attending school, such as safety concerns or cultural norms. • **Inclusive Education:** Adapt learning materials and facilities to accommodate children with disabilities; train teachers on inclusive education practices (ex: Special education provision). • **Safe Learning Environments:** Implement policies to prevent and respond to bullying, harassment, and GBV in schools. • **Community Engagement:** Involve parents and community leaders in promoting the importance of education for all children. • **Promote equality among teachers:** Remove obstacles to female teachers' equal employment opportunities, including access to leadership positions in the education sector • **School WASH infrastructure is gender sensitive:** Provide separate, secure latrines for girls, and ensure the availability of dignity

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	winterisation needs to ensure educational continuity during harsh weather conditions. • **Support for Transitional and Public Exams**: Support transitional and 9th & 12th-grade exams; provide cash for education prioritising out-of-school children. • **Integration of Services and Community Engagement:** Integrate MHPSS, referral mechanisms, and child safeguarding in schools; establish Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Management Committees (SMCs). • **Disaster Risk Reduction and Safety Measures**: Strengthen community-based or school-based DRR; improve protection of children in their communities; ensure schools are equipped with mechanisms to identify and support children at risk of abuse or violence. • **Collaboration with Communities**: Use open schools to develop multi-sectoral referral pathways; connect parents with services; disseminate key messages as part of RCCE. **Strengthening Education Systems and Community Engagement** • **Establish an NGO-Hosted Print House**: Provide textbooks and curriculum support materials at scale for lower costs. • **Capacity-Building Programme for Teachers**: Develop and implement a comprehensive capacity-building programme for professional development of teachers. • **Microgrants for Schools**: Provide microgrants linked to improvement of learning outcomes. • **Community-Based Literacy and Numeracy Events**: Organise reading campaigns and math competitions to support school-based learning. • **Identify Out-of-School Children (OOSC)**: Conduct door-to-door visits to identify OOSC and link to the central Education Management system. • **Post-Primary Non-Formal Education Support**: Provide support for OOSC to access education pathways.	• **Nutrition**: Provide school-age children with innovative school feeding interventions; conduct nutrition education/messaging through teachers and students. • **Protection**: Integrate CP measures; establish referral mechanisms; conduct caregiver capacity building and awareness; provide life skills and ensure schools are equipped with mechanisms to identify and support children at risk of abuse or violence; promote safe and inclusive learning environments. Integrate MHPSS for parents, teachers, and students; train teachers to recognise signs of trauma, abuse, and GBV; offer integrated MHPSS programs. Deliver awareness raising sessions on GBV basics, risk mitigation and access to services to teachers, school personnel and students. Strengthen confidential and safe complaints and feedback mechanisms at the field level to include procedures for reporting sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse with the support of PSEA focal points. Train school personnel and enable them to provide basic support to survivors at school. • **Shelter/NFI**: Collaborate on infrastructure improvements. • **WASH**: Ensure access to child-friendly WASH facilities in schools; provide water points, plumbing, latrines, and solid waste management; promote hygiene practices.	kits for adolescent girls who may need them for menstrual hygiene to reduce dropout rates among girls, especially in higher grades. • **Accessible Facilities:** Rehabilitate schools "when needed" to be accessible for students with physical disabilities (ramps, accessible toilets).
Food Security and Livelihoods (FSL)	**Enhance Food Access and Availability** • Deliver CVA for food in line with established FSL Cluster targeting criteria to vulnerable households. • Support rehabilitation of food processing units, storage facilities, and other essential infrastructure.	• **CVA/MPCA**: Integrate MPCA as a safety net; support farmers, livestock owners, and business owners in meeting basic needs while receiving support to generate income. • **Education**: Pilot collaboration to design and launch school feeding programs; provide	• **Targeted Assistance**: Ensure food distribution and agricultural support reach vulnerable groups, including female-headed households and marginalised communities. • **Gender-Sensitive Programming**: Incorporate gender analysis to understand

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	• Focus on wheat, olive, pistachio, vegetables, fodder crops, dairy, and meat value chains; partners may propose alternatives if substantiated by assessments. **Improve Livelihoods in the Agri-Food Sector** • Implement market-driven IGAs, including vocational training, food processing, job placement, apprenticeships, and scaling of businesses. • Encourage entrepreneurship and business scaling, particularly in camps and underserved areas. • Support partnerships among local CBOs, focusing on Women-Led Organisations (WLOs). • Conduct research initiatives focused on market analysis to inform future investments. • Promote cultivation of climate-resilient crops; implement water harvesting techniques. **Enhance Support for Livestock Producers** • Promote forage crop cultivation; distribute fodder in alignment with livestock working group criteria. • Integrate fodder production into community-based value chains. • Deploy mobile veterinary clinics; implement artificial insemination programs. • Conduct vaccination campaigns; provide advisory services as needed. **Promote Research and Green Initiatives** • Maintain or pilot early warning stations; develop digital platforms for climate and technical information. • Advance use of solar energy, biogas, and climate-smart agriculture practices. • Support research on agricultural resilience and water scarcity. • Build local capacity to address climate change impacts and drought conditions.	agricultural training programs; engage youth in agriculture. • **ERL**: TVET focused on both urban livelihoods (ERL) and rural/agricultural livelihoods; Creation of CfW/short-to-medium term employment in urban (ERL) and rural (FSL) communities (e.g. climate smart agriculture, forage cop planting, green jobs creation, etc; Urban (ERL) and rural (FSL) business support in communities (climate smart agriculture, support to green-renewable businesses, etc.); Rehabilitation of infrastructures critical to provide FSL services, in addition to the provision of other FSL services; • **Health**: Liaise with health authorities for sanitary and safety checks on livestock products; define policies and enforce standards. • **Nutrition**: Implement nutrition-sensitive agriculture; promote cultivation of nutrient-rich crops; conduct nutrition awareness and screening for children and PLWs. • **Protection**: Adopt gender-sensitive agriculture practices; implement strategies to prevent child labour; establish solidarity groups and committees; ensure safe and dignified work environments. Train partners on GBV Risk mitigation, safe referral, PFA and SEA, Engage women and girls to inform the set up of distributions or group activities. Increase knowledge on how to safely refer GBV survivors to specialised services and make information accessible on the available specialised services. • **Shelter/NFI**: Ensure shelters are equipped to support agricultural activities where applicable. • **WASH**: Integrate solar-powered water systems into agricultural projects; support irrigation for crops; promote sustainable farming practices.	different needs and roles of women and men in food security. All interventions will have to start with preliminary analysis and studies of the intra-household dynamics to better how the work is distributed among family members and the income distributed, decided upon and utilised. For women participating in agriculture and vocational activities, offer childcare support to allow them to fully engage in these activities. • **Capacity Building for Women**: Support women with training and resources in agriculture, livestock, and income-generating activities. • **Preventing Child Labor**: Design programs that reduce reliance on child labour by improving household food security. • **Link with GBV actions:** The interventions will also link with gender and protection actors to support women participants and inform them about initiatives to prevent or respond to GBV • **Accessibility:** Ensure that Livelihood activities include specific considerations for PWDs, such as accessible training halls, tailored vocational training and business grants.
Health ——————— *Focus on Supporting Essential Health*	**Strengthening Primary Care Services and Supporting Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health** Deliver a comprehensive Essential Health Package in primary care settings, focusing on early detection and management of cardiovascular diseases while covering key areas such as Child Health, SRH (PNC – ANC –FP and STIs), NCD, CD, Nutrition, and MHPSS. Additionally, supporting maternal, neonatal, and paediatric health services, while enhancing referral systems for	• **CVA/MPCA**: Provide cash assistance to patients needing access to critical treatments; integrate with MPCA programs where appropriate. • **Education**: Implement school health programs; conduct mapping of primary health centres near schools; conduct joint health and education campaigns; provide awareness programs in schools. Integration of health, nutrition and	• **Accessibility**: Ensure health facilities are physically accessible to PWDs; provide services that are affordable and culturally sensitive. • **Health Education**: While conducting outreach and education campaigns, ensure targeting both men and women on health

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
Services and Systems Strengthening	specialised treatment when necessary. **For secondary healthcare, only the highest-priority hospitals will be accepted based on very strict criteria.** Preventive Health Programs and early cancer detection • Expand preventive health efforts; integrate preventive screenings into primary care. Prioritise early cancer detection programs; train healthcare providers; introduce cash distribution programs to support access. Specialised Mental Health Care and Addiction Treatment Centres • Support dedicated facilities for specialised mental health care and addiction treatment. Surveillance and Health Information Systems (HIS) • Strengthen and expand HIS; improve data collection, management, and utilisation; implement quality assurance programs. Blood Bank Network • Establish and enhance a robust blood bank network; improve blood collection, storage, and distribution, Enhancing Referral Systems and Supporting Health Networks • Enhance the referral network and coordination among healthcare services to ensure efficient patient transitions and continuity of care while addressing gaps in medical supplies and rehabilitation services. Optimise referral efficiency across all levels to avoid duplication, and standardise protocols, Address governance gaps, build capacity in health protocols, and ensure timely access to essential medicines to sustain long-term health system resilience. Medication and Supplies for Critical Conditions: • Support the provision of medications and medical supplies for patients with chronic conditions, prioritizing those with cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and kidney failure. Additionally, establish cash distribution programs for stage three and four cancer patients to facilitate their access to chemotherapy and related medications. Medical Service Points in Frontline Areas:	education initiatives, focusing on trauma-informed approaches and cross-sector collaborations to support both the physical and emotional well-being of students. • **ERL:** Create employment opportunities within health projects; Rehabilitation of infrastructures and energy support to provide Health services, in addition to the provision of other Health services. • **FSL:** Coordinate on nutrition and health services; ensure food security supports health outcomes. • **Nutrition:** Include outpatient therapeutic feeding programs (OTP) in health facilities; support stabilisation centres; build capacity of healthcare workers; strengthen referral pathways between health and nutrition sectors. • **Protection (CP):** Ensure health services are accessible to vulnerable groups; . Integrate CP case management in health facilities, especially paediatric hospitals; Train healthcare workers to identify and refer CP cases, strengthen referral pathways between health and CP sectors. • **Protection (GBV):** Integrate GBV case management in health facilities, especially maternity hospitals;; integrate GBV messaging in health communications. Train Health and SRH providers, including Gynaecologists and Obstetrics, on SOPS and Referral pathways at the hub level to enhance the capacity of Health service providers to serve and refer GBV survivors based on survivor-centred approach principles Strengthen the provision of services to GBV survivors, especially in Health facilities, including PHC • **Protection (General):** Integrate protection teams in HFs to provide awareness sessions, follow up on protection risks, and offer support and referrals, train medical staff on protection services including identifying and supporting at-risk individuals, strengthen the referral pathway for effective support, integrate PSS teams at all service levels to assist mental health doctors and protection staff, incorporate general protection case management services by specially trained teams, and align facilities to ensure safe and equal access for persons with PWDs and vulnerable groups	issues, including reproductive health and disease prevention. • **GESI Awareness:** Implement awareness programs to educate patients about their rights and available services, focusing on marginalised groups to ensure they are informed and empowered. • **GESI Training for Health Workers:** Provide training sessions for healthcare workers on gender equality, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity to enhance awareness and skills in addressing diverse patient needs. • **Gender Policies:** Ensure that health facility/health programs policies reflect a commitment to gender equality and outline specific measures to address gender disparities in service delivery. • **Staff Composition:** Ensure that the composition of staff reflects local cultural norms and gender roles, facilitating trust and acceptance within the community.

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	• Equip frontline medical service points with the necessary resources to deliver advanced first aid, ensuring critical patients are stabilised before being referred.	• **WASH**: Rehabilitate WASH infrastructure in health facilities; ensure functional water, sanitation, and hygiene systems; focus on waste management and sewage disposal. Conduct routine maintenance of WASH infrastructure in health facilities and for medical incinerators to sustain operations and prevent breakdowns. • **Shelter/NFI:** complementarity with winterisation assistance will decrease seasonal illnesses and suffering beside that the delivery of dignified shelter will maintain better mental health situations.	
Nutrition	**Provision of Nutrition Curative Services - Children (boys and girls) aged 6–59 months, Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLWs)** • **Treatment of Children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) Without Medical Complications:** Provide outpatient therapeutic feeding programs (OTP) for children aged 6–59 months with SAM without medical complications. • **Treatment of Children with Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) With Medical Complications:** Provide inpatient care at stabilisation centres for children aged 6–59 months with SAM with medical complications. • **Treatment of Children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM):** Implement targeted supplementary feeding programs (TSFP) for children aged 6–59 months with MAM. • **Treatment of Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLWs) with MAM:** Provide nutritional support and counselling for PLWs with MAM through TSFP. **Provision of Nutrition-Specific Preventive Services addressing stunting and prevent malnutrition risk in children aged 6–59 months, adolescent girls, and PLWs** • **Distribution of Micronutrient Tablets (MNT) for PLWs:** Provide iron and folic acid supplements to PLWs to prevent anaemia and support healthy pregnancies. • **Provision of Micronutrient Powder (MNP) for Children:** Supply MNP to boys and girls aged 6–59 months for four months to improve micronutrient intake.	• **Education:** Implement school-based nutrition education for all children, targeted awareness for adolescent girls. Integration of health, nutrition and education initiatives, focusing on trauma-informed approaches and cross-sector collaborations to support both the physical and emotional well-being of students. • **FSL:** Advance the cultivation of nutrient-rich crops, ensure nutritional needs are addressed through food assistance programs, and collaborate on BSFP via the General Food Assistance platform. • **Health:** Incorporate OTP services in all EHSP facilities and maternity hospitals, enhance skills of healthcare workers for malnutrition management, and improve health-nutrition referral pathways. Integrate nutrition awareness into all health projects. • **Protection:** Train nutrition workers on GBV and PSS, incorporate nutrition services into safe spaces for women, girls, and children, and strengthen protection-nutrition referral pathways. Train partners and first line responders on GBV Risk mitigation, safe referral, PFA and SEA Connect organisations managing Women and Girls' Safe Spaces (WGSS) and Nutrition actors to conduct breastfeeding information sessions on Infant and young child feeding support (includes information on the benefits of breastfeeding) at the WGSS. Messaging, working with IYCF counsellors to disseminate GBV related messages during Nutrition sessions. Include identification of GBV risks and actions in assessments and surveys (in collaboration with GBV specialists)	• **GESI Awareness:** Provide training sessions for nutrition workers on gender equality, inclusivity, and cultural sensitivity to enhance awareness and skills in addressing diverse patient needs. • **Gender Policies:** Ensure that nutrition programs policies reflect a commitment to gender equality and outline specific measures to address gender disparities in service delivery. • **Staff Composition:** Ensure that the composition of staff reflects local cultural norms and gender roles, facilitating trust and acceptance within the community. • **Targeted Support for Vulnerable Groups**: Focus on pregnant and lactating women, children under five, adolescent girls, and PWDs who may be at higher risk of malnutrition. • **Gender-Sensitive Approaches**: Recognise the roles of women and men in household nutrition; involve both in nutrition education programs. • **Community Engagement**: Engage community leaders and caregivers in promoting optimal feeding practices and nutrition awareness. • **Accessible Services**: Ensure nutrition services are accessible to those with mobility challenges; consider home visits where necessary.

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	• **Provision of Multiple Micronutrient Supplements (MMS) for PLWs:** Provide MMS, including iron and folate, to PLWs for six months to enhance maternal nutrition. • **Improve parenting skills** and strengthening communities in malnutrition prevention by implementing MAMI care package, Cash for Nutrition • **Nutrition Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) for Children:** Support children aged 6–23 months by providing CVA linked to the Blanket Supplementary Feeding Program (BSFP) to improve dietary diversity and intake. • **Nutrition CVA for PLWs:** Provide CVA to PLWs to support nutrition outcomes as part of the BSFP. Improving Nutrition Information Systems • **Stabilising Nutrition Information Systems:** Strengthen the infrastructure and processes for reliable nutrition data management. • **Strengthening Data Collection and Reporting Mechanisms:** Enhance tools and methodologies for accurate data collection and reporting on nutrition services. • **Conducting Nutrition Assessments and Surveys:** Carry out regular nutrition assessments and surveys to inform programme planning and response. • **Capacity Building of Local Staff:** Train local staff on the use of nutrition information systems to improve data quality and utilisation	• **WASH:** Combine essential WASH messages with hygiene promotion at CMAM sites.	
Protection (Including HLP, Child Protection, Gender Based Violence - GBV,and Mine Action)	Protection • **Emergency response and reception centres preparation in frontline areas**, Early warning system for improved/coordinated Protection response, increased capacity for IDPs response in entry points, for the provision of integrated protection services. • **Enhance Community Capacity in Rule of Law and Transitional Justice:** Provide community-based PSS for transitional justice; map existing peacebuilding capacities; collaborate with human rights organisations for rights violation documentation and enhanced pacific resolution of conflict among communities.	• **Shelter/NFI & CCCM:** Ensure shelters are safe and accessible; allocate shelters to evicted and at heightened protection risks HHs, identified by the PC. Identify alternatives for relocation processes for evicted families. HLP rights and due diligence to prevent additional HLP rights violations • **ERL:** Provision of ERL interventions to create employment targeting/beneficiary selection based on PC analysis of community, accounting for different layers of vulnerability, in addition to the provision of other Protection services (Protection, GBV, CP, Mine Action): Provide TVET and employment opportunities as part of reintegration or in support of vulnerable groups e.g. GBV	• **GBV Prevention and Response:** Provide confidential and survivor-centred GBV services, including case management, psychosocial support, and legal assistance. • **Child Protection:** Implement programs to prevent child labour, early marriage, and exploitation; provide safe spaces for children. • **Inclusion of Marginalised Groups:** Ensure protection services are accessible to PWDs, the elderly, and minority groups; adapt services to meet their specific needs. • **Community Awareness:** Conduct awareness campaigns on rights, protection issues, and

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	• **Community-Based Mechanisms:** Implement mechanisms to enhance protection response and mitigate exposure to protection risks in frontline communities and high-risk areas. • **PSS support:** at the community level in peaceful coexistence, social cohesion, and transitional justice processes. • **Cash and in-kind support:** Provide Cash and in Kind support to address protection impacts at the household and community level, including support for community based initiatives for risks mitigation and peaceful coexistence **House, Land and Property Rights (HLP):** • **HLP Ownership documentation safeguarding:** including community awareness sessions, and support with the documentation safeguarding process. • **HLP rights and Due Diligence:** provision of legal support on inheritance, due diligence, mediation and arbitration to prevent HLP violations. • **Provision of legal services:** in all areas included under the PC2023 legal strategy • **Evictions and relocations:** provision of protection services for communities facing eviction risks, coordinated support with CCCM and Shelter clusters to find relocation alternatives, particularly in frontline areas and including the provision of legal, mediation and Cash services. **Child Protection (CP)** • **Identifying and Responding to Children at Risk:** Continue child protection services in high-severity and underserved areas; provide MHPSS programs, case management, and referrals. • **Targeted Interventions for Adolescents:** Develop interventions addressing child labour and exploitation; focus on life skills and psychosocial support; strengthen gender-responsive approaches. • **Support for Children Deprived of Liberty:** Provide legal support, reintegration assistance, psychological rehabilitation, and family reunification programs under a case management approach. • **Inclusion Support and Caregiver Engagement:** Strengthen community-based approaches; train and engage communities; promote family reunification	survivors, caregivers/parents of most vulnerable boys and girls. Rehabilitation of community infrastructures, including Protection components such as protection analysis and risk mitigation, peacebuilding and transitional justice with the community; Provision of ERL interventions to promote social cohesion, together with the provision of other Protection services such as peacebuilding, community mediation. • **FSL:** assign 10% case load of overall food security registration processes to the PC for the identification of at heightened protection risks HHs. • **CCCM:** Coordinate in IDP sites to promote social cohesion and safety; improve site governance. • **CVA/MPCA:** Provide cash assistance within GBV case management; integrate with MPCA programs. **Education:** Collaborate on school protection policies; train teachers to recognise and address GBV and CP issues; implement school-based protection measures. • **FSL:** Ensure food security for vulnerable groups; integrate GBV risk assessments in FSL interventions. • **Health:** Integrate GBV and CP case management in health facilities; strengthen referral pathways; train healthcare workers to identify and refer GBV and CP cases; integrate GBV messaging in health communications; include mental health services. • **Nutrition:** Include nutrition services in Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) and Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS); enhance referral pathways. • **WASH:** Ensure facilities are safe and accessible; incorporate protection considerations in WASH programming. • **Shelter/NFI, Health, Education:** assessments on UXO in contaminated, frontline and shelter related project areas. • **GBV/CP: Women and Children Centres** can be considered only if regulated by relevant SOPs and accountability of women and child protection interventions remains with the respective work force.	available services, targeting all community members. • **Accessibility:** Ensure the physical accessibility of humanitarian facilities to accommodate CWD (children with disabilities), ensuring inclusivity across all activities and services.

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	and alternatives to institutional care; include children with disabilities. • **Build capacity for effective data collection and management to improve service targeting for at-risk children:** Enhance the monitoring of child protection situations and implement CPIMS+ (Child Protection Information Management System). • **Strengthen community capacity for emergency response:** Engaging community-based child protection committees, volunteer groups, and youth groups to play active roles in service delivery, advocacy, and child protection during crises. • **Empowering:** Empower community members to take an active role in advocacy and service delivery, particularly through community child protection committees, volunteer groups, and youth groups to strengthen community ownership and capacity in emergency contexts • **Mapping, capacity assessment, development and results consolidation of the social service workforce** to identify gaps, particularly in high-severity and underserved areas. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) • **Integrated GBV and SRH Services**: Provide GBV and Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) services at health facilities, including mobile clinics; offer case management and psychosocial support. • **Innovative GBV and FSL Interventions**: Implement models integrating GBV and FSL to promote socio-economic empowerment of vulnerable groups, particularly women; offer life skills training; provide micro-grants and financial literacy training. • **Men and Boys Engagement Initiatives**: Pilot initiatives to address harmful social norms; implement programs like EMAP (Engaging Men through Accountable Practice). • **Capacity Building for Women-Led Organisations (WLOs):** Enhance capacities of WLOs in GBV programming; provide trainings, mentorship, and resources; support WLOs in operating women and children centres/WGSS. • **Training for Non-GBV Frontline Workers**: Train non-GBV frontline workers on survivor-centred approaches, GBV principles, Psychological First Aid (PFA), and referrals.		

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	● **Sustain existing women and girls safe spaces** in locations where community centres and CFs are absent Provide cash assistance in the framework of GBV case management Procure and distribute dignity kits to women and girls of reproductive age **Mine action (MA)** ● **Risk education:** for communities in frontline and contaminated areas. ● **Victims assistance:** PSS, legal support ● **Community Surveys:** in contaminated areas to prevent new incidents		
Shelter and Non-Food Items (S/NFI)	<u>Dignified Shelter Assistance</u> ● Provide access to dignified and safer living conditions through the construction or installation of new dignified shelters, following the Shelter/NFI Cluster guidance and respecting cultural aspects. ● This has to be linked to a comprehensive infrastructure package in IDP sites, including site planning, roads, storm water drainage, street lighting, and flood mitigation measures within existing IDP camps. <u>Design Considerations (Dignified Shelter Assistance)</u> ● Avoid establishing shelters in isolated areas; ensure proximity to markets and urban centres. Priority will be given to targeting already existing sites that are included in the Shelter NFI Cluster prioritised list.Ensure shelters are connected to kitchen and WASH facilities to promote dignified living conditions. ● Create safe and protected living areas; consider Housing, Land, and Property (HLP) due diligence guidance. ● Consider the preferable modality of service delivery by the affected population that can also take into account the capacity and previous experience of the partners. <u>Recommended Modalities</u> ● **Cash for Shelter (CFS)** where the organisation demonstrates capacity and experience. ● **Contractor modality** ● **Cash for Work** <u>Winterisation (Winter 2025 - 2026 Planned Response Only)</u>	● **CCCM:** Coordinate on site planning and camp management; ensure alignment and establishment of camp governance. ● **CVA/MPCA:** Incorporate cash-for-work activities and long-term training for workers to become skilled rather than unskilled labour over a one-year period. ● **Education:** Provide dignified educational spaces; support schools with winterisation interventions. ● **ERL:** Collaborate on livelihood opportunities during shelter delivery; promote environmental sustainability through clean energy solutions (e.g., solar systems for public facilities and households); support rehabilitation of electrical networks, of infrastructures outside camps in addition to other SNFI services in camps (e.g. dignified shelters/improvement of infrastructures in camps; integrate cash-for-work activities for dignified shelter interventions and/or improvement of camps infrastructures; Employment creation linked to specialised training programs; vocational trainings/TVET on dignified shelter practices and maintenance, related local market opportunities; Support business development along the dignified shelter value chain, and provision of self-employment and MSME support in host communities, in addition to other SNFI services in camps ● **FSL:** Coordinate if delivering winter seasonal assistance or cash for winter to ensure complementarity. ● **Health:** Ensure access to healthcare services in proximity to shelter sites; coordinate on health facility rehabilitation.	● **Gender-Focused Shelter Assistance:** Mainstream protection and gender considerations into shelter assistance, by addressing the specific needs and vulnerabilities of displaced populations, including women, children, and vulnerable individuals such as PWDs. ● **Safe & Secure Shelter Solutions:** Provide safe and secure shelter options to mitigate protection risks, particularly in overcrowded shelter units ● **Inclusive Shelter Planning:** Involve women and marginalised groups in the planning and decision-making processes for shelter intervention, ensuring that their perspectives are reflected in the implementation of the shelter interventions. ● **Gender-Sensitive Design:** Separation of members according to the gender of members especially if they are above 12 years old, enough surrounding space around the shelter and consider the privacy, separation between latrines and bathrooms. ● **Women Capacity Building:** Offer capacity building/capacity strengthening programs for women in shelter related sectors to enable them to contribute to the shelter overall interventions. ● **Disability and Cultural Considerations:** Shelters designed for 1 or more member with disability must include a squat latrine as

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	2025-26 Winterisation assistance that includes heating fuel and stoves, winter clothing kits, winter NFI kit (please refer to the updated guidance by shelter NFI cluster for winter components and services). The preferable modality is cash and voucher assistance **Infrastructure Improvement Assistance through Special System-Related Initiatives** • Strengthen basic infrastructure in IDP sites through flood risk reduction prior to winter season. • Install solar energy systems in shelters to provide sustainable electricity. • Build capacity of individuals/beneficiaries to undertake sector interventions and initiatives through cash-for-work programs, promoting skill development and employment. **Design Considerations (Infrastructure Improvement Assistance)** • Integrate environmental sustainability by promoting the use of clean/green energy solutions in construction. • Continue coordination with local authorities for infrastructure alignment. • Incorporate earthquake risk considerations into designs where applicable.	• **Nutrition**: Ensure shelters are conducive to healthy living conditions; integrate with nutrition programs where appropriate. • **Protection**: Identify vulnerable families through protection actors to prioritise shelter services; enhance protection and gender mainstreaming in shelter assistance; ensure shelters address specific needs of women, children, and PWDs. • **WASH**: Ensure shelters are connected to WASH facilities; integrate WASH services within shelter projects.	well to fit the cultural needs for the rest of the family members. • **Seasonal Aid for IDPs:** Provision of seasonal and supplementary NFIs (voucher or cash) for IDPs in acute needs (new and protracted ones). Special attention must be given to women, children and most vulnerable groups that suffer from winter's harsh weather conditions.
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) _____ *Provision of Resilient WASH Interventions*	**Rehabilitation and Maintenance of Water Systems** • Rehabilitate and maintain existing water systems, including operational support. • Upgrade water systems with solar power or grid connections where feasible. • Utilise solar energy for water sources; construct elevated tanks to distribute water via gravity. • Encourage community-based cost recovery mechanisms for mid- to long-term sustainability. **Wastewater Treatment and Sewage Systems** • Restore and establish wastewater treatment plants. • Rehabilitate and upgrade open sewer systems. • Implement clear plans for sludge management after desludging in areas not connected to sewage networks. • Extend water and sewage networks to reach existing camps with proper HLP documentation. **Solid Waste Management**	• **CCCM**: Coordinate WASH services within camp management plans; ensure alignment with camp governance; improve overall site conditions, flood response and prevention. • **CVA/MPCA**: Support households in accessing WASH services; include hygiene promotion for MPCA beneficiaries. • **Education**: Improve WASH facilities in schools; integrate water systems into school infrastructure; promote hygiene education. • **ERL**: Provide training/TVET programs on water system maintenance and repair; create employment opportunities linked to specialised training programs within the community; Support business development along the WASH value chain, Provision of self-employment support linked to specialised trainings, Provision of MSME support, in addition to other WASH services; Rehabilitation of infrastructures critical to provide WASH services, in addition to the provision of other WASH services.	• **Safe Access to Facilities**: Design WASH facilities that are safely accessible to women, girls, and PWDs, considering location and privacy. Reducing Protection Risks for women by contributing to safe WASH infrastructure. • **Menstrual Hygiene Management**: Provide appropriate materials and private spaces for menstrual hygiene management; include education on menstrual health. • **Inclusive Community Engagement**: Involve women, men, boys, girls, and PWDs in WASH committees and decision-making processes. • **Accessibility Features**: Equip facilities with features like handrails, ramps, and wider entrances to accommodate PWDs. • **Gender-disaggregated data:** To be included in monitoring and evaluation processes to assess the impact of WASH resilience interventions on different genders, and People with specific needs

Cluster/Sector	Priorities & Activities	Possible Integration with other Sectors	GESI Considerations
	• Support solid waste management systems; rehabilitate landfills and dump sites; provide communal garbage bins and compost plants. **Water Disinfection and Quality Monitoring** • Provide dosing pumps and chlorine supplies to systems operating without disinfection. • Conduct regular water quality monitoring at sources and points of use. **Capacity Building and Surveillance** • Build capacity of local staff, local councils, field technicians. • Conduct surveillance of water quality, water systems, sanitation, and sewer systems functionality. **Community-Based Hygiene Promotion** • Implement hygiene promotion campaigns targeting both males and females; address gender-specific hygiene needs, such as menstrual hygiene management for women and girls.	• **FSL**: Integrate solar-powered water systems into agricultural projects; support irrigation for crops; promote sustainable farming practices, use of treated wastewater for agriculture. • **Health**: Collaborate as a preventive sector focusing on public health outcomes; rehabilitate WASH infrastructure in health facilities; prevent waterborne diseases. • **Nutrition**: Provide WASH services to malnourished children and caregivers; integrate hygiene promotion with nutrition interventions, consider the minimum package for WASH-Nut activities. • **Protection**: Ensure WASH facilities are safe and accessible; address protection risks; include PWDs in decision-making processes to improve access and equity of WASH services. Promote installation of household level sanitation facilities to reduce GBV risks due to shared facilities. Provide training to WASH staff on how to safely refer GBV survivors to specialised services. • **Shelter/NFI**: Integrate WASH services with shelter projects, including dignified shelters and infrastructures, to ensure shelters have access to water and sanitation facilities.	• **Community engagement:** Engage diverse community members, including marginalised groups, in planning, monitoring and decision-making processes to ensure that the water systems meet the needs of the entire community • **Hygiene promotion:** Campaigns should target both males and females, addressing gender specific hygiene needs, such as menstrual hygiene management for women and girls. • **Decision making processes:** When establishing WASH community committees, these should be gender balanced, and PWDs should be included in the decision-making processes.

Annex 2: List of Prioritised Locations

This annex presents the list of prioritised locations for RA3, established through a comprehensive review of the 2024 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and engagement with Clusters. It aims to ensure interventions address the most pressing needs in northern Syria. For a complete understanding of strategic alignment, **this list should be used in conjunction with Annex 1: Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations.** Partners are required to use this list to prioritise locations in their proposals, ensuring that submissions are closely aligned with identified needs. Separate guidance will be provided for Area Based Approach interventions.

Governorate	District	Sub-District	Admin3 Code	Population[1]	Overall PiN[2]	Priority[3]								
						CCCM[4]	Education	Health	Nutrition	Shelter[5]	FSL	WASH	ERL	Protection
Al-Hasakeh	Ras Al Ain	Ras Al Ain	SY080400	65,250	46,914	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	A'zaz	A'zaz	SY020400	322,458	267,917	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	A'zaz	Aghtrin	SY020401	116,418	93,134	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	A'zaz	Mare'	SY020403	72,447	65,314	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	A'zaz	Suran	SY020405	97,227	83,463	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Afrin	Afrin	SY020300	295,932	236,746	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	Afrin	Bulbul	SY020301	35,781	31,388	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Afrin	Jandairis	SY020302	111,196	88,957	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Afrin	Ma'btali	SY020306	39,898	32,402	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	Afrin	Raju	SY020303	65,724	56,497	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	Afrin	Sharan	SY020304	80,126	71,105	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	Afrin	Sheikh El-Hadid	SY020305	28,686	22,949	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Al Bab	A'rima	SY020206	42,870	36,435	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Al Bab	Al Bab	SY020200	231,558	208,850	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Al Bab	Ar-Ra'ee	SY020203	26,912	22,433	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Al Bab	Tadaf	SY020201	22,713	20,726	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Jarablus	Ghandorah	SY020801	27,132	21,055	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Jarablus	Jarablus	SY020800	91,330	73,064	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Aleppo	Jebel Saman	Atareb	SY020001	261,755	232,962	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st
Aleppo	Jebel Saman	Daret Azza	SY020004	85,224	68,179	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	1st
Aleppo	Menbij	Menbij	SY020500	318,821	283,751	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	1st
Ar-Raqqa	Tell Abiad	Suluk	SY110201	46,457	32,519	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	1st
Ar-Raqqa	Tell Abiad	Tell Abiad	SY110200	49,994	39,995	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	2nd	1st	1st
Idleb	Al Ma'ra	Kafr Nobol	SY070203	1,190	783	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	2nd	1st
Idleb	Ariha	Ariha	SY070500	110,734	98,767	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st

Governorate	District	Sub-District	Admin3 Code	Population[1]	Overall PiN[2]	Priority[3]								
						CCCM[4]	Education	Health	Nutrition	Shelter[5]	FSL	WASH	ERL	Protection
Idleb	Ariha	Ehsem	SY070501	56,622	54,331	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st	1st
Idleb	Ariha	Mhambal	SY070502	41,605	29,124	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd
Idleb	Harim	Armanaz	SY070305	79,207	63,366	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd
Idleb	Harim	Dana	SY070301	1,262,641	1,123,750	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st	1st
Idleb	Harim	Harim	SY070300	75,681	52,977	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st
Idleb	Harim	Kafr Takharim	SY070303	36,034	25,224	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	2nd
Idleb	Harim	Qourqeena	SY070304	113,868	94,673	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd
Idleb	Harim	Salqin	SY070302	195,765	149,206	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd
Idleb	Idleb	Bennsh	SY070002	56,370	48,171	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Idleb	Idleb	Idleb	SY070000	302,862	222,158	1st	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Idleb	Idleb	Maaret Tamsrin	SY070005	377,532	319,956	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Idleb	Idleb	Saraqab	SY070003	3,159	2,527	2nd	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Idleb	Idleb	Sarmin	SY070006	14,800	11,689	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Idleb	Idleb	Teftnaz	SY070004	17,712	14,170	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	2nd	1st
Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	Badama	SY070401	52,081	42,321	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st
Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	Darkosh	SY070402	86,931	73,227	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	1st	1st
Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	Janudiyeh	SY070403	61,430	43,001	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	2nd	2nd	1st	2nd	2nd
Idleb	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	Jisr-Ash-Shugur	SY070400	126,380	101,104	2nd	1st	1st	1st	2nd	1st	1st	2nd	1st

[1] Population is **at the sub-district level** - OCHA Population Estimate July 2023

[2] The data used herein is sourced from the 2024 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) People in Need (PiN) and Severity Dataset (data is at the sub-district level)

[3] To optimise the impact of the funding provided for this allocation, we have clarified prioritisation by categorising sub-districts based on severity levels. Sub-districts with a severity level of none, 1, 2, or 3 are designated as second priority, indicated by '2nd'. Sub-districts with a severity level of 4 or 5 are designated as first priority, indicated by '1st'. This approach ensures that resources are directed towards the areas with the most critical needs, maximising the effectiveness of interventions.

Source (for dataset): https://data.humdata.org/dataset/syrian-arab-republic-humanitarian-needs-overview

[4] CCCM Prioritisation has been updated according to the October 2024 CCCM Site Prioritisation Update (utilised to reflect changes in the context, including the latest displacements to and within northern Syria)

Source (for dataset): https://sheltercluster.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=e9874960c2b8cea7a09d5f048&id=3d05946993&e=2ed5089cbb\

[5] Shelter Cluster Prioritised Sites for Dignified Shelter shared in October 2024; sub-districts including sites classified as 'High' Priority were classified as 1st, 'Medium' and 'Low' Priority as 2nd (Applicants are kindly requested to collaborate with the Shelter cluster to secure specific sites)
Please see the Shelter Cluster 'Action Plan for Dignified Shelter & Living Conditions in North-West Syria' for additional details
https://sheltercluster.s3.eu-central-1.amazonaws.com/public/docs/Action%20Plan%20for%20Dignified%20Shelter%20%26%20Living%20Conditions%20in%20NW%20Syria_Draft_v5_0.pdf?VersionId=42qfSHs0vySSJVOY_vapykXpWONB51FS

[6] Area Based Interventions must include all four of the following sectors; CCCM, ERL, Shelter, WASH. Applicants must coordinate with the relevant Clusters to ensure proper prioritisation of sites.

Annex 3: AFNS Anchor Organisation Approach

Introduction

Community Based Local Actors, particularly smaller organisations, operating inside northern Syria are the primary focus of AFNS's Localisation Strategy[2]. Selected "**Anchor Organisations**", registered as eligible Partners with AFNS, will help <u>prioritise and channel funding</u> to these **Community Based Local Actors,** enabling them to receive AFNS support without needing to meet eligibility criteria for direct AFNS funding.

Note: **Community Based Local Actors are the primary focus of the AFNS Localisation Strategy** and are prioritised for their alignment with the AFNS localisation objectives. They include an array of smaller, Grassroots Organisations, Community-based Organisations, Women-led Organisations, Youth Associations, etc. **(see Annex 3 for definition)**

This concept paper outlines the operational framework for integrating Anchor Organisations as central partners in the AFNS Localisation Strategy. The goal is to formalise the approach towards identifying, engaging, and collaborating with Anchor Organisations, crucial for delivering a more effective, locally driven humanitarian response.

Anchor Organisations are vital for localisation, ensuring that humanitarian responses are led by entities with intimate local context understanding. By empowering these organisations, AFNS commits to enhancing local capabilities, fostering participatory decision-making, and ensuring interventions are contextually appropriate and sustainable. These organisations serve as knowledge and resource hubs, linking international support with local needs, and play a pivotal role in aligning humanitarian practice with local actor leadership.
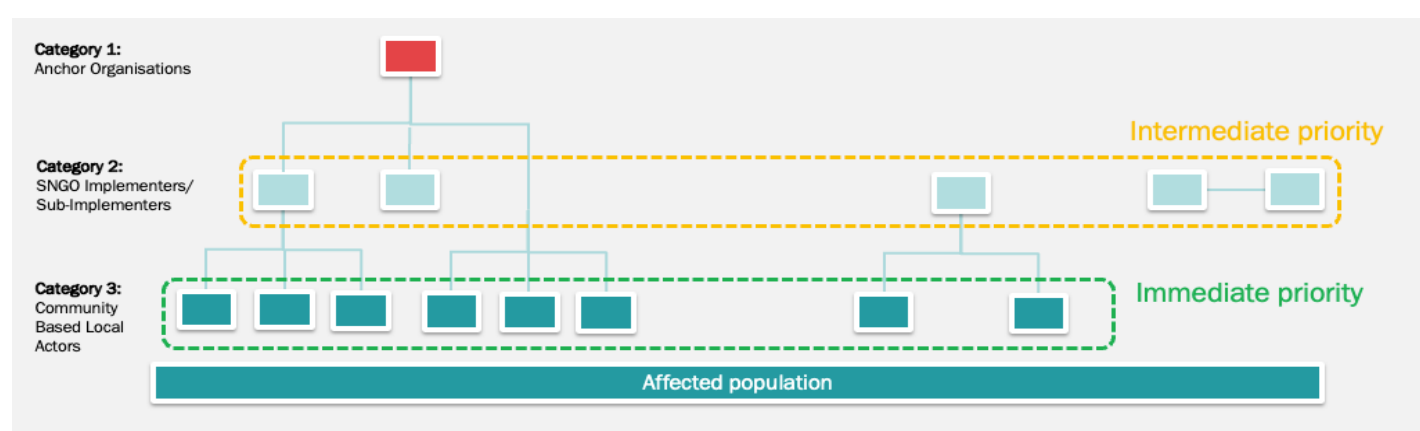

Figure 1- Categories of AFNS Partners & Relations with Anchor Organisations: Anchor Organisations may work with Community Based Local Actors directly and through sub implementers. Nonetheless, it is the responsibility of the anchor organisation to ensure that the localisation objectives are achieved.

Note: There can be a variety of different Anchor Organisations, each with different capacities and strengths. The **common element is their commitment to localisation objectives**, as covered by the additional capacity assessment described in this document. This is **in addition to their ability to deliver strong humanitarian and early recovery projects**, as measured by previous capacity assessments. It is the combination of these two areas that makes Anchor Organisations strong. From the pool of eligible organisations applying as Anchor Organisations, AFNS will determine which have specific strengths, aligning with the requirements of the respective priorities of the allocation strategies.

Background

The localisation agenda, highlighted in global humanitarian reform discussions such as the Grand Bargain[3], emphasises the need for responses to be as local as possible and as international as necessary. In northern Syria, international efforts have faced logistical challenges, security concerns, and cultural mismatches, leading to inefficiencies. **Key lessons include:**

- **Building trust and mutual respect**: Successful engagements respect local knowledge and practices, fostering trust and open communication
- **Capacity strengthening**: While local organisations possess invaluable local knowledge and networks, they often need support in project management, financial accountability, and technical expertise to meet international standards.
- **Flexibility and adaptability:** Projects that allowed flexibility in implementation strategies to adapt to changing ground realities proved more successful and sustainable.
- **Direct funding and reduced bureaucracy**: Directly funding local organisations, while ensuring accountability, enables swift, effective responses to emergent needs.
- **Power shifts:** Meaningful involvement of Community Based Local Actors, including grassroots, youth-led, and women-led organisations, is crucial. Decision-making power should be shifted to these actors by involving them in allocation strategies and project co-design.

These lessons inform the strategic approach for operationalising the Anchor Organisation framework, addressing past challenges, and leveraging local entities' strengths more effectively.

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[2] AFNS Localisation Strategy; December 2023 (under constant revision): https://afns.org/volumes/doc/AFNS-Localisation-Strategy_2023-1.pdf?v=1702479607

[3] IASC – The Grand Bargain (official website): https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain

Definition of Anchor Organisations

Within the AFNS framework, an Anchor Organisation is defined as **a national or international entity that possesses significant operational capacity and a proven track record in humanitarian response and embodies the principles of localisation by demonstrating strong community ties and leadership**. These organisations are well-established within their operational regions, having deep-rooted connections and a clear understanding of the local socio-cultural and political landscape. To qualify as an Anchor Organisation within the AFNS Localisation Strategy, **an entity must be a qualified AFNS partner** and must exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Organisational capacity and stability**: Demonstrates robust organisational structures, institutional capacity, skilled technical personnel, and the ability to manage large-scale projects and funds in compliance with international standards.
- **Alignment with localisation principles**: Shows a commitment and internal capacity to enhance local capabilities and shift power to community-based/local actors, ensuring community participation in decision-making, power shifts, and advocacy for local rights and needs.
- **Transparency and accountability**: Operates with a high degree of transparency to stakeholders, including but not limited to the AFNS, maintains clear and accessible records of operations and financial transactions, and adheres to international accountability standards.
- **Innovative and adaptive practices**: Engages in innovative practices and shows adaptability in programme planning and implementation to meet the changing needs of the communities effectively.
- **Sustainability focus**: Works towards sustainable outcomes, aiming to build long-term resilience in communities rather than providing only immediate relief.

While all Partners in the AFNS ecosystem are valued for their contributions, Anchor Organisations are distinct in that they lead the design and implementation of community-led projects. They serve as the main conduits for funds and resources, overseeing the distribution and ensuring that activities align with strategic localisation objectives. Unlike other partners who may have more limited scopes or specific focus areas, Anchor Organisations have a comprehensive role that spans across various sectors and initiatives.

Selection process

The selection of AFNS Anchor Organisations follows a structured and transparent process, ensuring that these pivotal entities are well-equipped to lead local humanitarian efforts effectively:

1. **Application Process:** AFNS issues an application process for all its qualified partners, clearly delineating the eligibility criteria, expected roles, and application procedures for potential Anchor Organisations (see Annex 1).
2. **Internal Review:** An internal review by an AFNS evaluation panel assesses compliance with AFNS requirements set in the call for applications. This includes adherence to localisation principles and previous collaborative engagements with community-based local actors inside northwest Syria.
3. **Approval and Onboarding:** Final approval is supported by recommendations from the evaluation panel. Successful organisations undergo an onboarding process that aligns operational and strategic goals and introduces them to AFNS operational frameworks and support systems. They are introduced to the AFNS mapping exercise from which they will need to independently select some local partners. They will be able to access a specific module of RA3 on community-based local actor support.
4. **Performance Management:** As part of the AFNS routine performance management process, Anchor Organisations will be subject to regular performance evaluations. These evaluations will assess whether they continue fulfilling all specific eligibility requirements (see Annex 1).

Selection criteria

To become an Anchor Organisation, entities are chosen based on rigorous criteria to ensure they can effectively manage and lead local initiatives:

1. **Eligibility (Mandatory to apply):**

- Must qualify for direct funding based on AFNS guidelines, demonstrating financial stability and compliance with AFNS funding requirements.
- Must have a Capacity Performance Score (with AFNS) equal to or more than 65%
- Must have a cumulative budget equal to or greater than US$ 20M over the past 3 consecutive years (not including Calendar Year 2023)
- Must have access to all areas of northwest Syria, including Idleb and Northern Aleppo (RAATA considered a plus).

2. **Other operational competence and alignment aspects to be evaluated through the scorecard:**

- **Alignment with localisation principles**: Capable and committed to enhancing local capabilities, promoting participatory decision-making and power shift, and aligning with the broader strategic goals of the AFNS.
- **Commitment to equitable cost sharing**: Demonstrates a strong commitment to sharing operational and administrative costs with sub-implementers including Community Based Local Actors, ensuring fair and supportive partnerships within the localisation framework. A clear plan for shifting funds to Syrian NGO by reducing internal staff and other costs.
- **Demonstrated ability to mobilise and support Community Based Local Actors, particularly grassroots such as women-led organisations**: Proven capacity to identify, support, and mobilise Community Based Local Actors for the implementation of comprehensive programming.

Linkages with AFNS mapping exercise

The ongoing AFNS mapping exercise is vital within the Localisation Strategy, aimed at systematically assessing community-based local actors in northern Syria. It evaluates the operational capabilities of Community Based Local Actors, their impact on community development, and the potential risks of partnering with them, helping identify those who can effectively plan, implement, and monitor humanitarian projects.

Using a scorecard approach designed by AFNS, the mapping covers indicators such as project management proficiency, financial accountability, community engagement, and overall impact on community resilience. The results are crucial for selecting AFNS programme partners. Anchor Organisations use this data to prioritise their partner base for project implementation.

Note: Detailed profiles from the scorecards enable Anchor Organisations to identify promising Community Based Local Actors. This ensures that funding and support are directed to entities capable of achieving substantial, sustainable impacts. This approach aligns with AFNS's goals of empowering local actors and enhancing the effectiveness of humanitarian responses in northern Syria.

Selected sub-partners may not be chosen for large-scale service implementation but can contribute to key areas like community acceptance, participation, inclusion of hard-to-reach individuals, advocacy on key topics, and area-based programming support.

Approach to funding smaller entities

Funding allocation: Anchor Organisations will receive allocations specifically earmarked for distribution among smaller entities. These funds will be disbursed based on a project-by-project approval system, ensuring that each funded initiative aligns with AFNS strategic objectives and local needs.

Sub-granting process: Building on the initial AFNS mapping initiative (see above) Anchor Organisations will identify potential Community Based Local Actors based on their on-ground impact, community reach, and alignment with the humanitarian needs of the region. Projects proposed by Anchor Organisations must incorporate these smaller entities, especially to enhance their expertise areas, such as geographic coverage.

Capacity strengthening: Acknowledging the limitations in the operational capabilities of Community Based Local Actors, Anchor Organisations will provide targeted training and support in areas like financial management, project reporting, and compliance. This support is to ensure they meet AFNS's minimum standards over time and will be based on the assessments of sub-grantees, with additional backing from the AFNS team as required.

Monitoring and evaluation: Anchor Organisations will implement a tiered monitoring system to track the usage and impact of funds by Community Based Local Actors. This system will include regular site visits and project audits to ensure appropriate fund usage. Sub implementing partners are required to submit periodic progress reports and financial statements for review before the disbursement of subsequent funding tranches. For more details, refer to appendix 4 for Performance Indicators.

Risk management: Risk assessments will be conducted by Anchor Organisations for sub-implementing partners as part of the application process to identify specific challenges and potential compliance issues. Mitigation strategies, including more frequent audits, targeted capacity building, or adjusted funding mechanisms, will be tailored based on the assessed risks.

Feedback and grievance mechanisms: Clear channels will be established for community members and local actors to report issues, provide feedback, or raise concerns directly with Anchor Organisations. Anchor Organisations will consolidate these reports to AFNS, address the inputs according to its policies, conduct necessary investigations, and make adjustments to project approaches, mitigating measures, or funding distributions as required. AFNS maintains a zero-tolerance policy for non-reporting of cases.

Ensuring sustainability: Anchor Organisations will support Community Based Local Actors in developing their operational capacities to meet direct funding eligibility criteria in the future. Succession planning will be integrated into all projects to ensure that once the initial funding cycle concludes, local actors can sustain activities and potentially qualify for direct AFNS funding or other international support. This strategy not only ensures compliance and accountability but also maintains the necessary flexibility to effectively engage with smaller, Community Based Local Actors. By doing so, it enhances the reach and impact of humanitarian interventions and builds the capacity of local entities, fostering a more resilient and self-sufficient humanitarian ecosystem in northern Syria.

Appendices to Annex 3

Appendix 1: Qualification for status as 'Anchor organisation' with AFNS
Appendix 2: Approach to inclusion of Community Based Local Actors
Appendix 3: Definition of 'Community Based Local Actors'
Appendix 4: Performance Indicators and Monitoring Framework
Appendix 5: Risk Management and Shared responsibility

Appendix 1: Qualification for status as 'Anchor organisation' with AFNS

Application procedures:

AFNS will open a call for applications from **all eligible AFNS Fund Partners** interested in becoming an 'Anchor Organisation'.

Anchor Organisations will be allowed to apply through AFNS GMS, and they should fill out an application form and provide supporting documents showing they respect the set requirements.

Anchor Organisation eligibility criteria:

1. **Financial stability and compliance:**

    o   **Stability:** Must qualify for direct funding based on AFNS guidelines, demonstrating financial stability and compliance with AFNS funding requirements.
    o   **Capacity Performance Score:** Must have a Capacity Performance Score (with AFNS) of more than 65%
    o   **Budget over last 3 years:** Must have a cumulative budget equal to or greater than US$ 20M over the past 3 consecutive years (not including 2023).

2. **Geographical accessibility:**

    o   **Access to key regions:** Must have access to all areas of northwest Syria, including Idleb and Northern Aleppo (RAATA considered a plus).

Operational Competence and Alignment

a) Alignment with localisation principles:

Capable and committed to enhancing local capabilities, promoting participatory decision-making and power shift, and aligning with the broader strategic goals of AFNS.

The applicant will need to clearly demonstrate:

*   Previous experience in capacity assessment of sub-partner organisations.
*   Previous experience in organisational and programmatic capacity strengthening of local actors with demonstrated achievements.
*   Clear examples of decision-making power shifts that the organisation have done in the past with local actors.
*   Experience in governance and coordination (including area-based) and not only focus on implementation

Experience	Score	Verification tools
Capacity assessment of local actors	• **Score 4**: Assessment completed for all partners using all tools: self–assessments, anchor assessment[4], scorecard for local partners • **Score 3**: Assessment completed for all partners at least one tool: self–assessments, anchor assessment, scorecard for local partners • **Score 2**: Assessment completed for some partners using at least one tool: self – assessments, anchor assessment, scorecard for local partners • **Score 1**: Assessment completed for all/some partners using other tools • **Score 0**: no assessment done	Capacity assessment results (self –assessments, anchor organisation assessment, scorecard for local partners).
Capacity strengthening (CS) of local actors	• **Score 4**: Effective and measurable CS plans (operational and programmatic) co-designed with and in place for all local partners • **Score 3**: Some effective and measurable CS plans (operational and programmatic) in place for all local partners • **Score 2**: All CS plans are in place, but results are not measurable • **Score 1**: Some CS plans are in place, but results are not measurable • **Score 0**: No CS in place for local partners	Capacity strengthening plans (operational and programmatic) co-designed with sub-partner organisation partners and measured results.

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[4] Anchor Assessments are assessments conducted by Anchor Organisation for the grassroots organisations to evaluate their performance, capacity, and compliance.

Experience	Score	Verification tools
Decision making power shift	• **Score 4**: Organisation documents all the following: co-design of projects with sub-partners, consultations on strategic decisions, feedback mechanism, and transition of key implementing position from anchor to partners. • **Score 3**: Organisation documents at least two of the following: co-design of projects with sub-partners, consultations on strategic decisions, feedback mechanism, and transition of key implementing position from anchor to partners. • **Score 2**: Organisation documents at least one of the following: co-design of project with sub-partners, consultations on strategic decisions, feedback mechanism, and transition of key implementing position from anchor to partners. • **Score 1**: Organisation documents some decision-making power shifts but not one of the ones listed above • **Score 0**: Organisation cannot document any decision-making power shifts	Clear/ documented cases of 'power shifts' (co-design with local partners, consultations with local actors on strategic decisions, transition of key implementing position from anchor to local partners, presence of an active feedback mechanism).
Experience in local governance strengthening and coordination (including area- based approaches)	• **Score 4: Extensive** - Proven track record in: (a) local governance strengthening and (b) coordination, including area-based coordination • **Score 3: Significant** - Proven track record in local governance strengthening and some experience in coordination, including area-based coordination • **Score 2: Partial** - Proven track record in coordination, including area-based coordination, and some experience local governance strengthening • **Score 1: Limited** - Limited track record in: (a) local governance strengthening or (b) coordination, including area-based coordination • **Score 0: None** - No track record in: (a) local governance strengthening or (b) coordination, including area-based coordination	Evidence of interventions led and managed by the organisation that demonstrate a successful track record in strengthening local governance Evidence of interventions led and managed by the organisation that demonstrate a successful track record in coordination, including area-based coordination

b) Commitment to equitable cost sharing:

Demonstrates a strong commitment to sharing operational and administrative costs with sub-implementers, ensuring fair and supportive partnerships within the localisation framework.

The applicant will need to clearly demonstrate:

• Full commitment of sharing overhead costs with the sub-grantees fairly (demonstrate how they will calculate a fair share for each sub-partner)

• Describe the Anchor organisation plan for shifting funds to local partners (including, but not only, path to make local partners independent in their fundraising efforts, reduction of direct implementing staff vs partnership support staff).

Experience	Score	Verification tools
Sharing overhead costs fairly	• **Score 4**: Overhead costs are regularly shared, properly calculated and the anchor supports the local partner in defining effective use • **Score 3**: Overhead costs are regularly shared and properly calculated • **Score 2**: Overhead costs are shared in certain cases and properly calculated • **Score 1**: Overhead costs are shared only in certain cases and not properly calculated • **Score 0**: Overhead costs are never shared	Show if this has happened before, how the share is calculated, how the anchor is supporting the local in planning for shared overhead costs
Funds shift in terms of funding	• **Score 4**: Plans to transfer direct more funds and/or donors to partners within the next 3 years are in place • **Score 3**: Plans to transfer direct more funds and/or donors to partners within the next 5 years are in place	Describe how the anchor is planning to transfer funds/donors to the local partner in the following 3-5 years (reduction of anchor organisation programmatic staff, etc)

	• **Score 2**: Plans to transfer direct more funds to partners and/or donors to partners are in place with no clear timeline • **Score 1**: Plans to transfer more funds and/or donors to partners are somewhat in place • **Score 0**: No plans in place	

c) Demonstrated ability to mobilise and support Community Based Local Actors:

Proven capacity to identify, support, and mobilise smaller, Community Based Local Actors for the implementation of comprehensive programming.

The applicant will need to clearly demonstrate:

• Local actors with whom they are already collaborating or have collaborated in the last 5 years.

• Capacity to support local actors during implementation

Experience	Score	Verification tools
Number of local actors that are or have been partnering with in the last 5 years	• **Score 4**: 8 to 6 organisations (at least 1 WLOs or 1 YLOs) • **Score 3**: 6 to 4 organisations (at least 1 WLO or 1 YLO) • **Score 2**: 4 to 2 organisations • **Score 1**: less then 2 organisations • **Score 0**: no organisation	List of partner organisations that are local actors (see appendix 3). Previous sub-grants provided.
Implementation support to local actors	• **Score 4**: Fully formed Partnership/programme team with at least weekly contact with the local partner • **Score 3**: Fully formed Partnership/programme team with at least by-weekly contacts with the local partner • **Score 2**: Partly formed Partnership/programme team with at least monthly contacts with the local partner • **Score 1**: Partly formed Partnership/programme team with limited contact with the local partner • **Score 0**: No partnership team to support local partners	Prove previous experience and existing structure (e.g., organigramme) that is supporting local partners organisations in daily implementation and problem solving (ex: partnership support dedicated staff)

Appendix 2: Approach to Inclusion of Community Based Local Actors

The logic behind the Anchor Concept is to treat each sub-partner as unique, tailoring their involvement in the consortium based on their specific sise, expertise, and characteristics and, with a strong emphasis on shared understanding and co-design practices. This approach ensures that the concept does not merely become a conduit for passing more funding to Syrian NGOs, transforming them into local versions of INGOs. Instead, the core idea is to enhance local actors in their areas of strength, which include, but are not limited to: community acceptance, advocacy on key/difficult community-driven topics, access to target beneficiaries and most vulnerable groups, and cultural sensitivity that allows them to explain complex topics to communities in an easily understandable manner.

Their unique added value and expertise should be acknowledged and integrated into the project design, contributing to the Anchor Organisation's goals while benefitting from capacity strengthening.

Some ways Anchor Organisations can engage with local actors are:

- **Community mapping and needs assessment:** Anchor Organisations and Community Based Local Actors collaboratively conduct participatory community mapping exercises and needs assessments to ensure a comprehensive understanding of local dynamics and priorities.

- **Community outreach programmes:** Joint development and implementation of outreach programmes to improve access to target beneficiaries, especially in hard-to-reach areas, leveraging Community Based Local Actors' local knowledge.

- **Beneficiary feedback systems:** Establish continuous feedback mechanisms from beneficiaries, with Community Based Local Actors leading the design based on their direct connections and insights.

- **Leadership development:** Offer leadership training programmes to enhance the leadership skills of Community Based Local Actors, focusing on advocacy, negotiation, and community mobilisation.

- **Visibility and advocacy support:** Collaboratively support Community Based Local Actors in gaining visibility and recognition through advocacy campaigns and representation in local and national forums, fostering mutual recognition.

- **Targeted interventions:** Jointly design and implement targeted interventions for specific vulnerable categories, particularly in economic empowerment and livelihoods development, combining the Community Based Local Actors' insights with Anchor Organisations' resources and expertise.

- **Communication skills training:** Enhance communication skills, focusing on translating complex topics into easily understandable language for beneficiaries, with Community Based Local Actors leading based on their direct experience.

- **Community accountability mechanisms:** Develop and support accountability mechanisms such as community scorecards and public feedback sessions, with Community Based Local Actors taking a leading role based on their close community connections.

- **Sustainable practices:** Encourage the adoption of sustainable practices and technologies that align with local contexts and reduce dependency on external aid.

- **Collaborative projects:** Promote collaborative projects that involve multiple Community Based Local Actors working together on common goals, supported by Anchor Organisations' resources.

Appendix 3 - Definition of Community Based Local Actors

Community Based Local Actors within the AFNS Anchor Concept encompass a diverse array of organisations and entities that are integral to the socio-political fabric of northern Syria. These actors are characterised by their deep-rooted connections to the communities they serve, embodying local values and fostering community resilience. **Community Based Local Actors that can be supported through the Anchor Concept include:**

- **Civic Organisations:** Entities that operate on a value-based framework, aiming to enhance the political agency and representation of Syrian civic actors. These organisations work towards elevating their presence in decision-making platforms and advocating for the rights and needs of local populations.

- **Grassroots Associations:** Community-led groups that are deeply embedded within local contexts, focusing on addressing immediate community needs through participatory and inclusive approaches (parent-teacher associations, victim associations, etc.)

- **Community-Based Organisations (CBOs):** Local entities that provide a range of services directly to community members, often focusing on health, education, and social support, ensuring that the most vulnerable groups have access to essential services.

- **Women-Led Organisations (WLOs):** Organisations led by women and other feminist groups that focus on gender-specific issues and advocate for women's rights, empowerment, and active participation in community decision-making processes.

- **Youth Associations:** Groups that represent and work towards the interests of young people in the community, fostering youth engagement and leadership in local governance and development initiatives.

- **Community based Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):** Indigenous or locally founded NGOs that operate within northern Syria, providing a range of humanitarian and development services, and maintaining a commitment to localisation principles.

- **Faith-Based Organisations:** Entities that deliver services and support based on religious values, playing a crucial role in community cohesion and moral guidance.

- **Academia and Research Institutions:** Local universities, colleges, and research bodies that contribute to knowledge generation and capacity building within the community.

- **Professional Unions:** Also known as professional associations or trade unions, these organisations are formed by workers within a particular profession or industry (e.g., teachers, lawyers, students, doctors) to advocate for their specific issues and rights.

- **Private Sector:** Local businesses and enterprises community based that engage in humanitarian and development initiatives, contributing to the economic resilience of the community.

Appendix 4: Performance Indicators and Monitoring Framework for the Anchor Concept

The concept behind the performance indicators is to provide a framework for evaluating the effectiveness and progress results of the AFNS Anchor Organisation Concept, tailoring the assessment based on specific goals and objectives. This approach ensures that the initiative is not limited to being a funding mechanism but a strategic effort to enhance the capabilities and impact of local actors, as part of AFNS localisation strategy. The core idea is to measure progress in key areas such as funding allocation, operationalisation of Anchor Organisations, capacity-building efforts, and the establishment of feedback and safeguarding mechanisms. These indicators reflect the unique strengths of Community Based Local Actors, including their community acceptance, advocacy on critical issues, and ability to reach the most vulnerable groups. Additionally, a detailed monitoring framework will be developed during the inception period (first 4 months) of implementing the anchor concept and will be annexed to the AFNS Localisation Strategy.

Initial targets and finalisation of the Anchor Performance Indicators (currently the below is only provisional) will be completed after the drafting of RA3, the completion of the ongoing Localisation Mapping Process and the registration of partners submitting the Expressions of Interest to become Anchor Organisations. This Anchor Organisation Concept is not typical in the context of northern Syria, and due to its unprecedented scale, the targets set for the indicators will need to be revised and/or have a progressive nature after the completion of the first year of implementation of the anchor concept and thus could be subject to change.

Performance Indicators

Performance Indicator	Definition/Logic
% of total funding directed to Community Based Local Actors through Anchor Organisations*	Measures the proportion of AFNS funding that is allocated to Community Based Local Actors (including grassroots organisations) via Anchor Organisations in a calendar year. Thus, reflecting the commitment to supporting local actors and enhancing their capacity to manage resources effectively.
% of Community Based Local Actors showing improved practices in key operational areas	Measures the percentage of Community Based Local Actors that demonstrate improvements in practices as assessed by periodic KAP** assessments in key operational areas such as community engagement, project implementation, or governance strengthening
# of Anchor Organisations selected and operationalised	This indicator tracks the number of Anchor Organisations that have been selected and are fully operational. It provides insight into the expansion and implementation of the Anchor Organisation framework.
# of Community Based Local Actors receiving funding through Anchor Organisations	This indicator counts the number of Community Based Local Actors that receive funding through Anchor Organisations. It highlights the reach and inclusiveness of the funding strategy towards local actors.
# of new operational systems, policies, processes, roles, or functions established by Community Based Local Actors through capacity strengthening efforts*	Measures the tangible outcomes of capacity building initiatives by counting the number of new operational systems, processes, roles, or functions that Community Based Local Actors have successfully established.
# of Community Based Local Actors receiving comprehensive support through the Anchor Concept	Measures the number of Community Based Local Actors receiving a range of non-financial support aimed at operational enhancement (e.g., community mapping, outreach programmes, collaborative projects), not limited to conventional training.
# of feedback and safeguarding mechanisms established by Community Based Local Actors*	This indicator tracks the number of feedback, and safeguarding mechanisms put in place by Community Based Local Actors. It reflects the emphasis on accountability, transparency, and community engagement in project implementation.

* *disaggregated by type of Community Based Local Actor;*

** *Knowledge, Attitude, and Practice.*

Monitoring

Monitoring will be conducted in line with the AFNS Monitoring approach explained in the AFNS Manal[5] (Section 6) and relevant annexes.

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[5] AFNS Manual: https://afns.org/volumes/doc/AFNS-Manual.pdf?v=1681925368

Appendix 5- Risk management and shared responsibility

Anchor Organisations are pivotal in extending the fund's reach by channelling support to Community Based Local Actors that do not meet traditional funding eligibility criteria. While this role is crucial, it also exposes Anchor Organisations to risks, particularly related to compliance and operational stability of these smaller entities.

Strategies for mitigating these risks include:

- **Risk assessment**: Before initiating any funding for a Community Based Local Actors (CBLA), Anchor Organisations will conduct a risk assessment. This assessment will evaluate the entity's risk profile, focusing on financial stability, governance, legal compliance, and operational risks.

- **Shared compliance framework**: AFNS together with CBLAs will develop a compliance framework tailored to the capacities of Community Based Local Actors. This framework will provide clear, achievable compliance milestones that are progressively scaled to match their operational maturity. Anchor Organisations will guide these smaller entities in meeting these standards, with periodic reviews to track progress.

- **Risk-sharing mechanisms**: AFNS will implement risk-sharing agreements that clearly delineate the liabilities and responsibilities of both the Anchor Organisation and AFNS. These agreements will include provisions such as indemnity clauses and reserve funds specifically set aside for mitigating unforeseen compliance-related liabilities.

- **Capacity building and support**: Recognising that risk is often a function of capacity, AFNS will invest in comprehensive capacity-building programmes. These programmes will focus on financial management, governance, and compliance for Community Based Local Actors, facilitated by the Anchor Organisations and funded and supported by AFNS.

- **Escalation and intervention protocols**: Clear protocols will be established for escalating issues from smaller entities to Anchor Organisations and, if necessary, to AFNS. This ensures that risks are managed proactively and that AFNS can intervene directly when certain risk thresholds are exceeded.

- **Regular training sessions**: Anchor Organisations will conduct regular training sessions for the staff of Community Based Local Actors and sub-IPs to ensure they understand and can effectively implement the required compliance standards.

- **Performance-based funding**: Release of funds will be contingent on compliance and performance benchmarks being met, ensuring that smaller entities have a continual incentive to adhere to prescribed standards.

- **Transparency and reporting**: Enhanced transparency mechanisms will be put in place, requiring detailed reporting and auditing of projects handled by smaller entities. This will include regular financial and operational audits, the results of which will be shared with both AFNS and the Anchor Organisation.

Other challenges and risk mitigations

Challenge	Description	Mitigation Strategy
Cultural & operational misalignments	Differences in organisational cultures and operational approaches may lead to misunderstandings and inefficiencies.	Conduct cross-cultural training and regular alignment sessions to ensure mutual understanding and coordinated efforts.
Resource constraints	Limited resources can strain the capacity of Anchor Organisations to meet project demands effectively.	Develop contingency funding strategies and enhance capacity building to optimise resource use and ensure sustainability.
Political & security instability	Changes in the political or security landscape can disrupt project implementation and outcomes.	Implement flexible project plans with adaptable strategies to respond to changing environments. Establish strong communication channels for rapid response to crises.
Compliance & accountability	Challenges in maintaining high standards of financial and operational accountability across all levels.	Strengthen oversight mechanisms, provide training in financial management, and implement robust monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure transparency and accountability.
Dependency risks	Over-reliance on Anchor Organisations might hinder the development of Community Based Local Actors	Promote diversification of partnerships and capacity enhancement for Community Based Local Actors to reduce dependency and encourage more balanced development within the sector.

Annex 4: The AFNS Area-Based Approach

This annex summarises the **AFNS Area-Based Approach (ABA)** to be implemented under AFNS Third Regular Allocation (RA3). With a commitment to enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian aid, the ABA seeks to contribute to addressing the complex and evolving needs within specific geographic areas through integrated, multi-sectoral assistance. <u>This annex should be used in conjunction with Annex 1: Strategic Framework for Integrated Activities and GESI Considerations (specifically taking in account the 'possible integrations with other sectors') and Annex 2: List of Prioritised Locations</u>,

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Note: The **ABA, or often referred to as Area-Based Programming (ABP) is not a new concept**; it builds on fundamental principles of humanitarian aid that emphasises the need for integrated service provision, including the Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) commitment[6] of providing communities and people affected by crisis with coordinated, complementary assistance. This approach is grounded in the understanding that effective humanitarian responses require addressing multiple needs simultaneously, rather than focusing on isolated services.

What is meant by 'Area-Based-Approach?'

ABA encompasses multi-sectoral, integrated, and multi-stakeholder interventions that are focused on specific geographic areas considering the entire population of such areas.

- Multi-sectoral, integrated interventions entail the provision of a combination of essential and/or complementary services that are interdependent, covering multiple response sectors. This means partners can either address gaps in existing services or contribute to enhancing areas that are partially covered. The aim is to help address the most fundamental needs through an integrated approach.
- ABA considers the whole population of an area, which includes all affected people regardless of their legal status, vulnerabilities, and associated groups. In this sense, it contributes to enhancing social cohesion and forming inclusive initiatives in the selected areas.
- Specific geographic areas with high levels of need and common challenges can be identified within certain administrative boundaries, such as districts, sub-districts, communities, or neighbourhoods. They can include both urban and rural contexts.
- ABA requires the engagement of numerous, diverse stakeholder groups present in the target area, including affected communities, local coordination bodies, international and community-based local actors (CBLAs), and the private sector.

Why invest in ABA in northern Syria?[7]

- ABA enables the shift from single-sector, geographically scattered, short-term strategies to mid to long-term strategies and interventions. Such a shift contributes to fostering sectoral integration, minimising silos in the provision of assistance, and increasing value for money.
- ABA facilitates the testing of innovative, multi-sectoral, interventions aimed at serving all population groups within these areas. This improves coordination among local stakeholders in the pre-identified areas, establishing the groundwork for sustainable interventions, assessing the potential for scaling and replicating the approach across northwest Syria, and developing standard tools.
- ABA facilitates working with community based local actors, including grassroots, that are well-established and recognised in specific areas.
- Furthermore, ABA facilitates the promotion of early recovery initiatives, including the building of a holistic vision for addressing dignified shelter and living conditions.
- Following best practices in the humanitarian sector, the testing of ABA contributes to further developing this approach for northern Syria, and possibly other contexts.

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[6] The CHS: Nine commitments to people affected by crisis
[7] Additional considerations on ABA can be found in 'Systemic Resilience in Practice', COAR-AFNS, September 2023.

Figure _1_: Simplified Logic for Investing in ABA

How will the target areas be identified?

Strategic approach

The ABA pilot will be initiated in specific geographical areas that have been prioritised based on IDP site assessments conducted by **the Shelter and Non-Food Items (SNFI) Cluster, in collaboration with the ERL, CCCM and WASH Clusters**. These **four sectors** form the core focus of AFNS's ABA. The goal of this prioritisation is to address the needs of both IDPs residing in the prioritised sites and the most vulnerable residents in the hosting communities. Please see Annex 1 & Annex 2.

Areas and Sectors targeted by area-based initiatives

Partners interested in implementing through the ABA pilot approach under RA3 (through projects that are either totally funded or partially/co-funded by AFNS) will be requested to select sites and integrated activities based on the guidance received from the SNFI, ERL, CCCM and WASH clusters which are included in Annex 1 and 2. In particular, the following core elements will support partners in developing their ABA :

- **Locations:** areas jointly prioritised by the four core Clusters, preliminary sectoral data/assessments available in the pre-identified areas, and information gaps (Annex 2).

- **Mandatory and Complimentary Sectors:** To apply for an ABA intervention, partners must include activities related to **at least 3** of the following core sectors in their project proposals: **SNFI, CCCM, WASH, and ERL**. Additional complimentary sectors may also be included based on partner assessments, addressing the needs of both IDPs and host community challenges in the selected areas. Not all activities need to be funded solely by AFNS; co-funding by other donors or partial funding by AFNS is encouraged.

- **Integrated Activities:** Annex 1 presents a detailed selection of prioritised integrated actions to be selected and covered through the ABA approach under the core mandatory sectors and the additional complimentary sectors.

Annex 5: Proposal Scoring Methodology

This annex provides the Proposal Scoring Methodology, detailing the criteria and process used by the Technical Evaluation Panel to assess and score proposals using the Evaluation Scorecard. It explains some of the factors that may lead to the disqualification of proposals. The methodology ensures that each proposal is evaluated consistently, with adherence to the submission guidelines. **This annex must be viewed in conjunction with Section 7 of the RA3 Allocation Strategy (Proposal Selection).**

Proposals are subject to initial screening to ensure compliance with stipulated guidelines as outlined in Section 7 of the RA3 Allocation Strategy. Proposals could be disqualified for reasons including, but not limited to, insufficient allocation across sectors, misrepresentation of budget items, submission of a proposal with only one sector, or failure to adhere to proposal selection guidelines. For example, a proposal that fails to allocate at least 20% of its budget to any required sector will be automatically rejected. Similarly, duplications in content among proposals will lead to the disqualification of all affected submissions to maintain originality and integrity in the funding process. Once a proposal passes these initial filters, it proceeds to the evaluation phase conducted by the Technical Evaluation Panel, which consists of AFNS and Technical NGO Experts. If a relevant Cluster decides to participate, the scoring weights are adjusted so that each constituency (AFNS, NGO Experts, and Cluster) holds an equal share of 33.33% of the total score. This adjustment ensures fairness and inclusiveness in the evaluation process.

Terms and Definitions

- **Weight by Budget (UB):** Indicates the percentage of the total programmatic budget allocated to each sector, excluding support costs. For instance, if 60% of the budget is allocated to Sector A, then Sector A weighs 60% of the overall proposal.
- **Unweighted Scores (UWS):** Each evaluator provides a score out of 100% for each sector.
- **Total Unweighted Score (TUWS):** Aggregates the UWS for each sector, highlighting the proposal's technical strengths. This score forms the basis for detailed discussions during sector-specific reviews.
- **Weighted Scores (WS):** These scores are calculated by applying the sector's budget weight to the TUWS, then divided by the number of evaluators to ensure a balanced assessment.
- **Total Weighted Score (TWS):** Sums the WS across all sectors to derive the overall score for the proposal, determining its advancement for further consideration.

Examples

Example 1: Rejection for Insufficient Allocation

The proposal allocates 55% to Sector A, 15% to Sector B, and 30% to Sector C. Since the overall budget for Sector B is below the 20% budget threshold specified in the allocation strategy, this proposal is automatically rejected.

> ⇒ **Note:** Submitted proposals must adhere to the requirements specified in the AFNS Manual. Failure to comply with AFNS instructions, such as not using the AFNS proposal template, missing key documents like the M&E plan or AAP plan, not using PTT for cash transfers into northern Syria, or not sharing programme support costs with sub-partners will result in the proposal being disqualified or rejected.

Example 2: Rejection for Misrepresentation

An applicant claims that the budget of the submitted proposal is distributed as follows: 50% to Sector A, 25% to Sector B, and 25% to Sector C. However, upon detailed examination, the Technical Evaluation Panel discovers that the budget listed under sector C includes substantial costs that are administrative in nature. These costs are generally expected to be covered separately and should not be included in the programmatic budget. Examples of such costs could include overhead charges, salaries for administrative staff not directly involved in project implementation, or capital expenditures unrelated to direct Nutrition activities. Upon calculating the budget, the Technical Evaluation Panel asserts that the actual budget assigned to Sector C is less than 20%.

The Technical Evaluation Panel unanimously determines that the budget for Nutrition includes significant unrelated administrative costs, falsely inflating its percentage, or that the cost of Nutrition activities has been inflated to reflect integration. The proposal is rejected for not reflecting a genuine integration.

Examples 3: Acceptable Distribution (Clusters voluntarily decide to be part of the scoring process)

This proposal allocates 60% to Sector A, 20% to Sector B, and 20% to Sector C. This distribution is backed by a detailed budget showing realistic cost estimations for activities in each sector. The Technical Evaluation Panel finds that the allocations are justified by the proposed activities and budget narrative and approves the proposal for further evaluation and thus will be scored as per the scoring breakdown (next scenario).

Example 3.1: Cluster Non-Participation Evaluation; the relevant Clusters do not join the Technical Evaluation Panel to assess a proposal consisting of Sector A (60%), Sector B (20%), and Sector C (20%) – the proposal is evaluated as follows:

Sector (Weight by Budget)	AFNS UWS	Cluster UWS	NGO 1 UWS	NGO 2 UWS	NGO 3 UWS	Average NGO UWS	TUWS $\frac{\sum UWS}{2}$	AFNS WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{2}$	Cluster WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{2}$	NGO WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{2}$	TWS
A (60%)	80		50	60	60	56.66	68.33	24		16.9	40.9
B (20%)	40		80	50	80	70	55	4		7	11
C (20%)	50		60	40	50	50	50	5		5	10
Final Score (Sum TWS)											61.9

Example 3.2: Partial Cluster Participation; Some of the relevant Clusters do not join the Technical Evaluation Panel to assess a proposal consisting of Sector A (60%), Sector B (20%), and Sector C (20%) – the proposal is evaluated as follows:

Sector (Weight by Budget)	AFNS UWS	Cluster UWS	NGO 1 UWS	NGO 2 UWS	NGO 3 UWS	Average NGO UWS	TUWS $\frac{\sum UWS}{3*}$	AFNS WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{3*}$	Cluster WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{3*}$	NGO WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{3*}$	TWS
A (60%)	80		50	65	50	55	67.5	24		16.5	40.5
B (20%)	40	80	80	50	65	65	61.67	2.67	5.33	4.33	12.33
C (20%)	50	75	60	40	95	65	63.33	3.33	5	4.33	12.66
Final Score (Sum TWS)											65.49

Divided by a denominator of three for B and C, but not for A, as in this theoretical example, cluster A did not participate in the scoring process.

Example 3.3: All of the relevant Clusters join the Technical Evaluation Panel to assess a proposal consisting of Sector A (60%), Sector B (20%), and Sector C (20%) – the proposal is evaluated as follows:

Sector (Weight by Budget)	AFNS UWS	Cluster UWS	NGO 1 UWS	NGO 2 UWS	NGO 3 UWS	Average NGO UWS	TUWS $\frac{\sum UWS}{3}$	AFNS WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{3}$	Cluster WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{3}$	NGO WS $\frac{UWS \times WB}{3}$	TWS
A (60%)	80	99	50	66	50	55	78	16	19.8	11	46.8
B (20%)	40	80	80	50	65	65	61.67	2.67	5.33	4.33	12.33
C (20%)	50	75	60	40	96	65	63.33	3.33	5	4.33	12.66
Final Score (Sum TWS)											71.79