THE MEETING FOR A RENEWED RESILIENCE COMMITMENT reinforced a partnership model toward a stronger and more effective resilience-based response, integrating humanitarian and development approaches to the Syria crisis in the sub-region. Acknowledging and building on key messages from the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) as well as other Syria crisis response frameworks, the meeting brought together regional and national advocacy messages on resilience and the crisis response and served as a curtain raiser in the sub-region to the Second Brussels Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region (24-25 April 2018). Participants represented the Governments of Jordan and Lebanon, members of diplomatic missions in Jordan and with regional mandates, as well as partners from UN agencies and international civil society organizations and think-tanks from Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey.

A GLOBAL, REGIONAL AND COUNTRY-SPECIFIC CRISIS. Participants underlined the need for policy, planning and programming around the crisis to account for the global, regional, and country-specific dimensions of the crisis, particularly when looking for sustainable and durable solutions. The meeting noted particularly the sub-national, localized, decentralized (e.g. municipal) and community-level nature of the impact of the crisis and the need for strengthening responses at the local level, including through partnerships with municipalities, community-based organizations and civil society. Participants further underlined the need to ensure coherence and complementarity between support to central-institutional level and localized-municipal level effort to strengthen resilience. To leave-no-one-behind, and affirming the needs-basis of the resilience response, including inside Syria, participants also stressed the importance of clearly distinguishing between the resilience-based interventions inside Syria and in the neighboring countries.
WORKING ACROSS THE HUMANITARIAN-DEVELOPMENT NEXUS AS CATALYST FOR RESPONSE COHERENCE. Given the protracted nature of the Syria crisis and its devastating humanitarian and displacement consequences, the humanitarian dimension must to be kept at the center when advocating for and carrying out resilience-building interventions. In a continuous effort to strengthen the humanitarian – development nexus, the resilience-based development approach, particularly in host countries, should be designed and implemented in a way to ensure the humanitarian and protection needs that millions of refugees, IDPs, and other vulnerable groups, including millions of children, are still facing. It is crucial to engage early on with national and/or local governments to strengthen the design of social protection systems by introducing features ahead of disaster and crises. With multiple actors, national and international response frameworks and funding modalities, it is however important to avoid creating multiple/parallel response systems addressing the same needs/populations that may generate perverse incentives among the population in need (e.g. integration in formal labor market vs. benefits from assistance activities). Collectively supporting national systems and building institutional resilience is a critical vehicle for aligning downstream interventions with upstream policy-level efforts to accelerate, scale-up, expand scope, efficiency and sustainability of interventions.

RECOMMITTING TO BASIC RESILIENCE PROGRAMMING PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES. In the joint and continued effort toward good practices for resilience programming, participants underlined need to recommit to basic resilience programming principles that strengthen national leadership and ownership. These include: i. integrated cross-sectorial approaches considering gender specificities, ii. continuing to increase the efficiency of the coordinated response, iii. evidence-based policy/programme design and implementation, iv. strengthening the link between short-medium-long term interventions, iv. innovation at the center of resilience-based interventions, v. commitment to the ‘do no harm’ approach, including with regards to the environment, vi. readiness to accept share the burden of risks in a fluid and evolving context, vii. importance of multi-year, predictable and flexible funding, viii. consideration of the urban-rural continuum of needs and recovery efforts, including the need for sustainable rural livelihoods and recognizing their role in reducing urban problems; ix. striving toward the 2030 agenda and the achievement of the SDGs; x. and maintaining the focus on vulnerable populations in livelihoods and resilience programming, including female-headed households and youth.

INTEGRATED APPROACH AND EXPANDED PARTNERSHIP. Learning from and combining best practices from the humanitarian and development fields enhances our joint response as humanitarian and development actors, e.g. the consortium approach and joint programming, and effective use of common platform. Participants noted that cross-sectorial, integrated strategies can address multiple priorities and levels of engagement in a coordinated way and can catalyze innovative responses. Learning from several years of Syria crisis response, further coherence among resilience-building interventions can maximize benefit and reduce cost, such as in the areas of social protection, education and livelihoods/employment, food security/nutrition/WASH and value chain development, and more effective linking between demand-driven skills and relevant training, going beyond short-term emergency jobs to decent and sustainable employment. Participants also underlined the necessity of consolidating and expanding partnerships and financing streams in resilience-building interventions by showcasing the effectiveness a better coordinated response that includes governments, international organizations, IFIs, civil society and the private sector.
PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT. Participants stressed the importance of a greater participation of the private sector in the discussions around and implementation of resilience-building as well as its greater engagement to stimulate economic growth in the countries affected by the crisis. A sustained involvement of the private sector has the potential to significantly enhance economic opportunities through the creation of new quality jobs, while steps to ensure decent work are required to be taken at the same time. In this regard, participants recalled the importance of revitalizing trade channels in the region and globally to allow for such investments and engagement (including as part of the Jordan Compact and Lebanon Statement of Intent). Participants also emphasized structural reforms and transformation in crisis-affected countries boosting the involvement of the private sector and job creation, including for young national populations. Moreover, participants acknowledged the key function of the private sector in finding innovative ways in building resilience and finding durable solutions.

ALIGNMENT TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE 2030 AGENDA, AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS). It is timely for the resilience response to the Syria crisis to be aligned to national development agendas and aspirations toward achieving Sustainable Development Goals, especially in their promotion of justice, inclusion and equity. Within the context of a social protection approach to the crisis response (for example through cash transfers and better access to social services), national systems can be reformed and strengthened, and further aligned to social security schemes covering the most vulnerable refugees and host communities, and fostering social cohesion. Participants emphasized the criticality of demonstrating the positive impact of a resilience-based crisis response on national development and the achievement the national SDG goals, including through enhanced measurement practices and tools. Evidence and lessons from the RDPP/UNDP Policy Options initiative highlighted these emerging policy areas and approaches, and that the future of building resilience is expanded support to national systems.