

# The role of misinformation on CVA for social cohesion in Lebanon

## Co-creation workshop



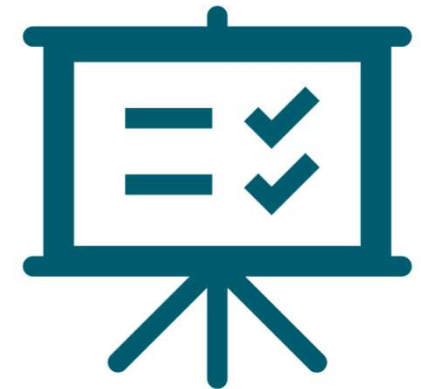
7th August 2024

## Objectives of the workshop

Overall objective: co-construct actionable, impactful and feasible recommendations on the basis of the study's findings

### Specific objectives:

1. Give an overview of the findings
2. Make sure that the recommendations are comprehensive and complementary to existing initiatives
3. Prioritise the recommendations on the basis of feasibility and impact



# Agenda

Study objectives, methodology and data collection

Study findings and recommendations

Brainstorm on recommendations

Feedback in plenary and prioritisation

Conclusions and next steps

# Study objectives and methodology

# Objectives of the study

Overall objective: contribute to mitigating the negative impact of misinformation around CVA on social cohesion in Lebanon.

Three specific objectives:

- Determine the main pieces of (mis)information circulating around CVA that cause social cohesion issues in Lebanon;
- Identify the causal pathways through which misinformation translates into public (mis)perceptions in Lebanon;
- Assess the impacts of misinformation around CVA on behavioural patterns and social cohesion within communities and between communities.



## Scope of the study

Timeframe: 2019 to mid-2024

Geographical areas of the focus groups: urban (Beirut, Tripoli) and rural (Akaar, Mount Lebanon, Bekaa). Baalbek and the South excluded due to the security situation.



### Scope:

- Social cohesion in Lebanon within and between Syrian and Lebanese communities
- Humanitarian CVA within wider landscape (social assistance)

## Research Questions

### I. PIECES OF MISINFORMATION

What are the main pieces of misinformation circulating around CVA that cause social cohesion issues in Lebanon ?

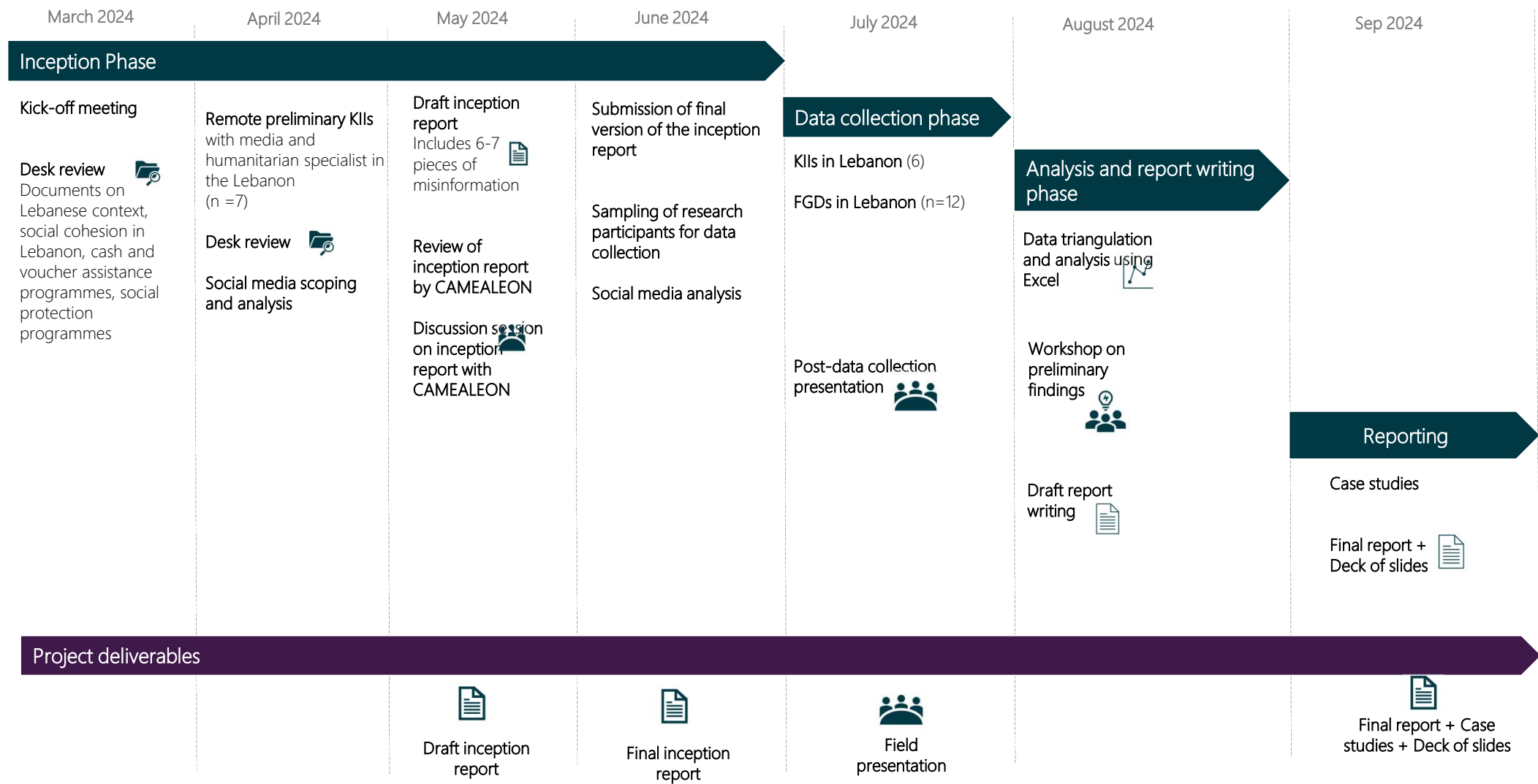
### II. CAUSAL PATHWAYS

What are the causal pathways through which misinformation translates into public (mis)perceptions?

### III. IMPACTS OF MISINFORMATION AND (MIS) PERCEPTIONS ON SOCIAL COHESION

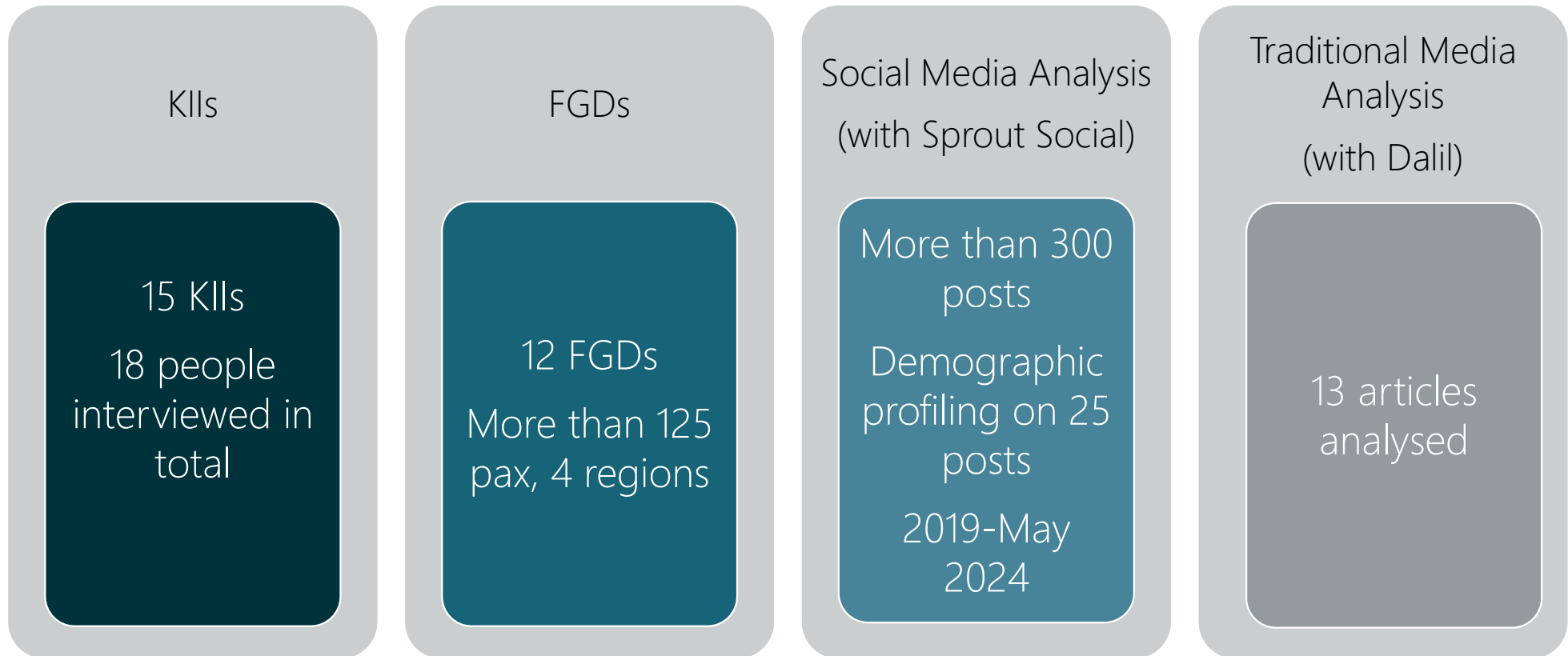
What are the effects of misinformation around CVA in Lebanon on behavioural patterns and social cohesion?

# Study Process



# Data Collection

## Data collection update



## Examples of posts on Social Media & Focus Groups Discussion's quotes

انا رغم معي بطاقة من الأمم ولكن لا استفيد منها شي ورغم  
عندي طفلين تحت عمر سنتين رفاهية عم تحكو عنها مصنوعة  
بس نشوقها ع تلفونات قدمات كتير باسم أطفالي وللأسف ما  
شفنا شي

2y Like Reply

Author

UNICEF Lebanon

آنسة ، ندعوكم للإطلاع على عمل  
Inaam Abdel Fattah:  
اليونيسف في لبنان عبر هذا الرابط  
<https://uni.cf/32Ncl21>

لأي طلب محدد ،يمكنك التواصل معنا عبر الرسائل  
الخاصة.

UNICEF.ORG

Press Center

الأمم المتحدة ترضي الصناديق المانحة وهي عالاغلب دول تريد بقاء السوريين في  
لبنان لذلك تخفي الحقائق حتى لا يحتاجوا أوروبا... مليارات السوريين اتت لتغذية  
الاقتصاد السوري عبر التهريب لإرضاء المجرم بشار. ولكن لن يطول الامر لأن حبل  
الكذب قصير والكارثة ستكون اعمق..

Translate post

11:36 PM - Jan 23, 2023 from Lebanon - 41 Views

*“Before August 4, we all liked each other! After, there were so many tensions! Between neighbours, friends, within the communities.” (Women’s FGD participant, Mount Lebanon).*

*“When the Syrians are ringing, the phone actually works!” (Men’s FGD participant, Mount Lebanon)*

*“We feel like it’s unfair, some people receive and they don’t deserve. We don’t get angry at other people, we get angry at organisations.” (FGD Lebanese participant in Tripoli).*

# Findings

## Research Question 1 - PIECES OF INFORMATION

Themes	Existing pieces of misinformation and perceptions or beliefs around CVA
<b>Aid Bias – Targeting and legitimacy of CVA programs</b> Those receiving aid are not necessarily those who need it the most: aid is being misused, is inadequate or doesn't reach the most in need.	(1) Displaced Syrians receive significant payments from international aid organisations. All Syrians receive CVA without any targeting. Some Syrians go back to work in Syria and return to Lebanon just to collect aid. Lebanese are left behind by international aid programmes. <i>(Lebanese perspective)</i>
	(2) International aid organisations are more attentive to the Lebanese's voice than the Syrians' one. Some Syrians refute receiving aid despite extreme poverty, and some claim not receiving sufficient aid <i>(Syrian perspective)</i>
	(3) Displaced Syrians receive aid in dollars while Lebanese receive assistance in Lira. Syrians receive "better aid." <i>(Lebanese perspective)</i>
<b>Labour Market</b> CVA impacts job competition between Lebanese and Syrians	(4) CVA exacerbates the tensions on the labour market by enabling displaced Syrian to accept lower wages, driving competition for low-skilled jobs <i>(Lebanese perspective)</i>
<b>Education</b> CVA helps Syrians to access school disadvantaging Lebanese	(5) Schooling is provided free of charge for Syrians <i>(Lebanese perspective)</i>
<b>Coping strategies</b> People take advantage of the aid targeting system	(6) Syrian families give birth to many children to receive more CVA <i>(Lebanese perspective)</i>
	(7) Lebanese families live with extended family members to fit into the criteria to receive aid <i>(Syrian perspective)</i>
<b>Political level</b>	(8) Allegations of an agenda to keep Syrian refugees in Lebanon permanently and perceptions that UN agencies are manipulating aid distribution for this purpose, narrowing down all resources for living for the Lebanese.

## RQ 2 – Causal pathways through which information translates into (mis)perceptions

### SOURCE AND DISSEMINATION – MAIN PATHWAYS

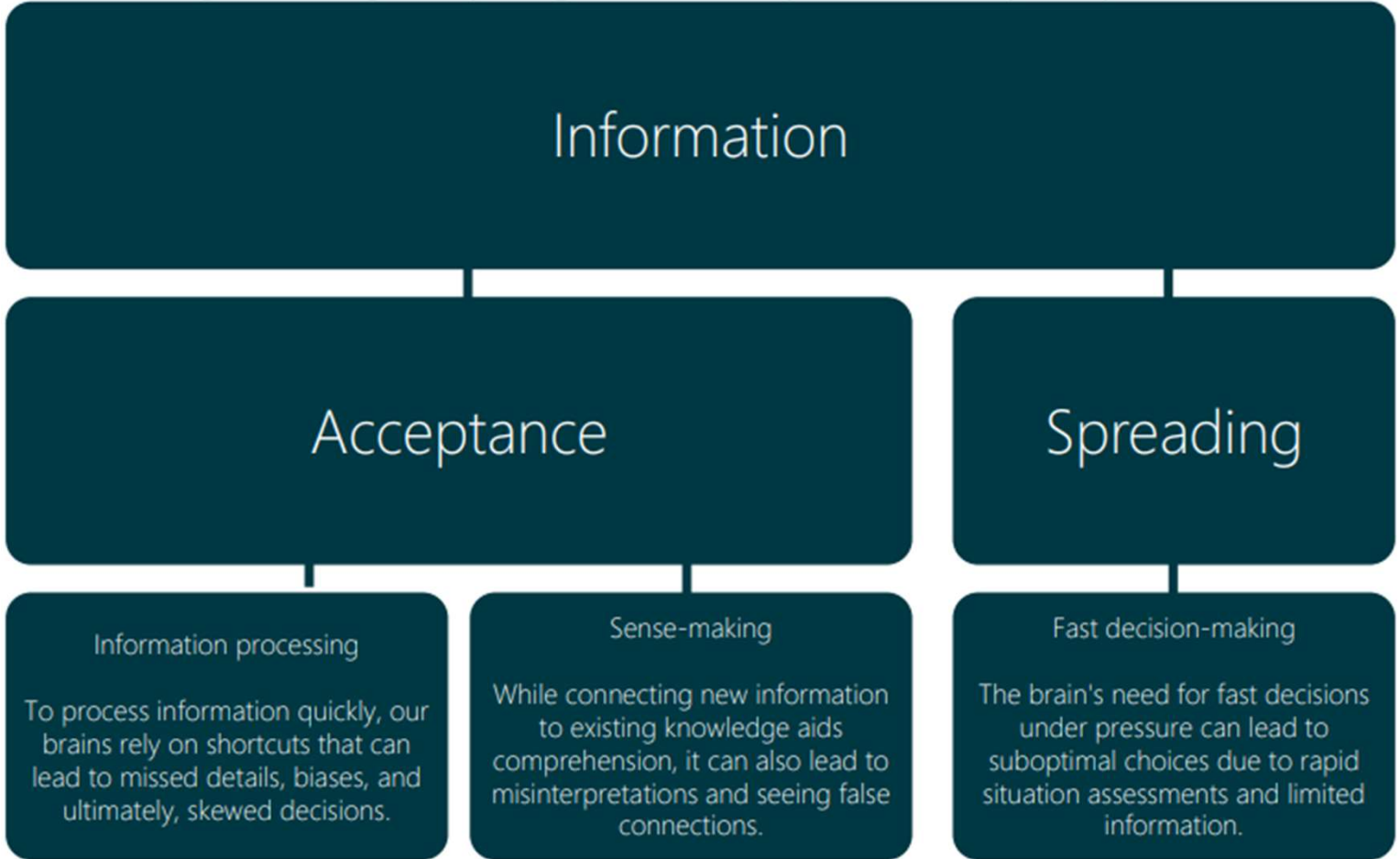
#### Scenario A - the most common

- Information provided when delivering CVA (accurate, inaccurate without willing it, deliberately inaccurate); or visits from aid & social actors interpreted wrongly from the neighbours observing it
- Spreads via word of mouth with family members and neighbours
- Disseminates via social media
- Becomes public information for different purposes

#### Scenario B

- Information circulates through traditional media and social media
- Disseminates through the word of mouth
- NGOs workers try to correct information but there is a loss of control because the social and traditional media reach out to many in a fast time

# SECONDARY PATHWAYS THROUGH WHICH INFORMATION TRANSLATES INTO (MIS)PERCEPTIONS



## INTERCONNECTION:

- History (micro and macro) & cognitive bias
- Perceived inequities & injustice
- Social circles

## RQ 3 – IMPACTS OF MISINFORMATION & (MIS)PERCEPTIONS ON SOCIAL COHESION

### TARGETING & LEGITIMACY OF CVA

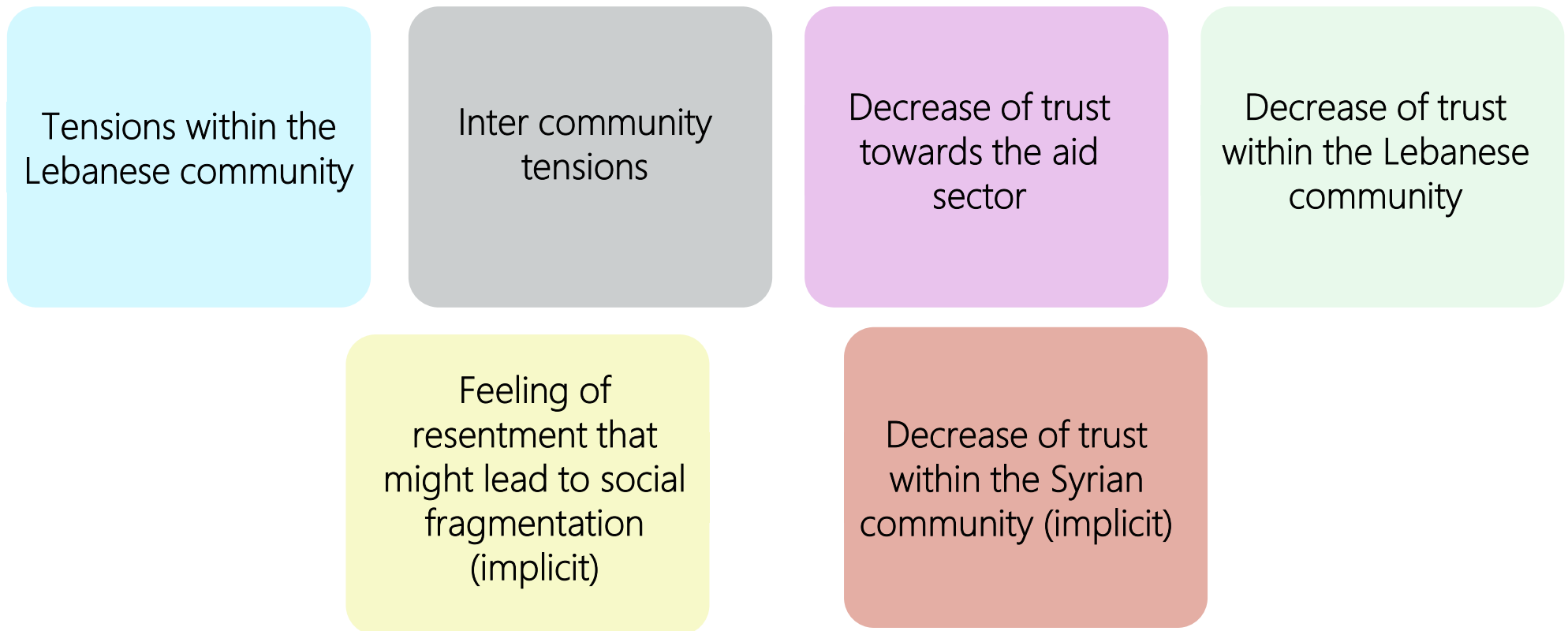
#### Coping Strategies

- Misrepresenting living conditions to appear more eligible for aid assistance
- Syrian communities acting out of fear on the streets

#### Behavioural patterns

- Violence: violent incidents between Lebanese and Syrian communities, political violence; hate speech on social media
- Tendency of both aid recipients and non-recipients to verify circulating (mis)information.
- Syrian communities requesting agencies to disseminate accurate information about aid targeting due to fear

RQ 3 – IMPACTS OF (MIS)INFORMATION & (MIS)PERCEPTIONS ON SOCIAL COHESION  
ACROSS RELEVANT PIECES OF INFORMATION



## PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS

To whom?	What?
<b>Implementing partners</b> (at organisational level versus as common initiatives)	<b>Increasing transparency:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly communicate targeting criteria while considering complexity and protection risks.</li> </ul>
	<b>Develop a Communication Plan:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allocate budget for communication (e.g., under AAP).</li> <li>Shift from reactive to anticipatory communication to debunk misinformation and promote a positive perception of CVA for both communities.</li> </ul>
	<b>Enhance Collaboration</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen partnerships between alternative media and implementing partners.</li> </ul>
	<b>Programmatic Improvements:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement pre-bunking strategies, such as a common AI Chatbot for Syrians and Lebanese to address misinformation</li> <li>Enhance staff capacity to effectively debunk misinformation.</li> <li>Complement UNDP Arc surveys with questions about CVA and misinformation to monitor it</li> <li>Tackle lack of neutrality of potential aid workers</li> </ul>
<b>Policy and decision making actors</b>	<b>Promote Healing and Social Cohesion:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop programs to foster healing between Syrian and Lebanese communities.</li> <li>Implement social cohesion initiatives:                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer psychosocial support services to affected populations.</li> <li>Conduct role-playing exercises to complement the UNDP Arc program.</li> <li>Develop a toolbox for handling misperceptions, similar to those used for gender-based violence and children protection</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

# Participatory Exercise

## In breakout rooms

- ✓ Discuss the recommendations and share your opinions and feedback  
Which ones should be added, dropped, adapted?
- ✓ Designate a presenter for each group to summarize and present your group's discussion in plenary

# Recommendations Prioritisation: Impact and Feasibility



Go to [www.menti.com](https://www.menti.com)  
Code will be sent in the chat

# CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

