



FOOD SECURITY

Lead agencies: Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), WFP and FAO

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SECTOR OUTCOME

OUTCOME	INDICATORS	Value
OUTCOME 1: Sustainable stabilization of food consumption over the assistance period for vulnerable households impacted by the Syrian crisis	% of targeted households with acceptable food consumption score over assistance period	 \$411.1 m
OUTCOME 2: Promote food availability and support sustainable production	# of most vulnerable targeted households who received food assistance disaggregated population, sex and age	 \$27.5 m
OUTCOME 3: Promote utilization of diversified and quality food.	# of farmers (men/women) supported to improve agriculture production	 \$6.8 m
OUTCOME 4: Enhance effective and coordinated Food Security response	# of Food Security analysis reports/briefings generated & disseminated	 \$1.6 m



PRIORITY INTERVENTIONS

- 1: Ensure adequate food consumption and improved nutrition practices among the most vulnerable population.
- 2: Increase farming production and productivity among vulnerable small scale family farms in areas impacted the most by the Syria crisis.
- 3: Ensure adequate protection and sustainable use of natural resources in farming systems in areas most impacted by displaced Syrian mass influx
- 4: Improve food security and agriculture activity coordination with increased ownership and responsibility by local institutions



FUNDING STATUS

Funding already received for 2015:	\$ 5.9 m
Estimated sector needs for 2016:	\$ 343.7 m

1. Situation Analysis and context

In Lebanon, the level of food security at both the household and national level has been undermined by the Syrian crisis. Households that rely on agricultural production and seasonal or regular employment in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) for their main source of income were highly affected by the interaction of climate extremes, violent conflicts, demographic pressure and economic deterioration.

Food security is built on three core pillars; availability, access and utilization. On that basis, the Food security sector in Lebanon will support national food security policy formulation and implementation and enhance coordination and provision of necessary technical support to agriculture interventions.

Food Access

Vulnerable communities in Lebanon (including persons displaced from Syria and Lebanese) continue to face limited opportunities for livelihoods or regular sources of income in Lebanon.

Vulnerable Lebanese are increasingly in need of food assistance, in order to cope with growing economic hardships. Results from the OCHA/REACH Host Community Vulnerability Assessment indicate that they are increasingly applying a range of both food and asset-based coping strategies¹. Whilst the extremely poor Lebanese are receiving assistance for basic services under the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP), it is increasingly becoming necessary to include food assistance to mitigate decline in food security².

Exacerbated by depleted savings and assets, displaced Syrian households continue to struggle to access adequate food to meet their needs. According to the Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VaSyR) 2014, 75 per cent of displaced Syrian households were classified as food insecure, with 13 per cent categorised as moderate or severely food insecure. Food Consumption Scores (FCS) and diet diversity amongst Syrian *de facto* refes was not uniform across Lebanon³.

The June 2014 joint UNRWA/WFP PRS needs assessment revealed poor food consumption patterns among the PRS⁴. PRS households spent nearly half of their income on food alone which has led to high food insecurity. Around 12 per cent of households⁵ were moderately or severely food insecure. The situation of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon (PRL) was quite comparable to the situation of poor Lebanese.

Food Availability

The findings from the 2014 VASyR showed that markets are the main source of the food consumed by most Syrian *de facto* refugees⁶. Results from WFP's post distribution and price monitoring activities showed no market distortions or significant fluctuations in food prices.

The agriculture sector is an important source of livelihoods for the majority of communities hosting vulnerable populations. Syria used to be a major trading partner and transit route for Lebanon's agriculture sector. The statistics on agricultural trade flows in Lebanon between 2011 and 2012 show (i) a decline in total agricultural trade; (ii) a considerable decline in bilateral agricultural trade with Syria and in transit trade through Syria; (iii) a significant change in trading routes in the region; and (iv) an increase in informal trade across the borders with Syria⁷.

Achievements in 2014

In 2014 food assistance was crucial to food access for over 929,600 vulnerable individuals*, including some 53,000 Palestine refugees from Syria (PRS) and over 2,000 Lebanese returnees (LR). Food vouchers (e-cards and paper-based vouchers), ATM cash cards and various forms of food parcels were used. Monitoring showed that by the end of the second quarter of 2014, only 49 per cent of displaced Syrian households (pre-assistance baseline) had acceptable Food Consumption Score (FCS), compared to between 73 and 79 per cent of the post assisted displaced Syrian households who had been in the country for 6 months and 12 months respectively (post-distribution monitoring).

A joint project between the GoL (through MoSA and Presidency of Council of Ministers(PCM), UNHCR and World Bank, with technical assistance from WFP was launched to provide food to the most vulnerable Lebanese under a scaled up emergency National Poverty Targeted Programme.

FAO worked with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) to improve the resilience of affected Lebanese farmers: over 900 vulnerable Lebanese farmers were assisted with veterinary inputs and concentrated animal feed. They together strengthened control of Trans-boundary Animal Diseases (TADs) by vaccinating over 95 per cent of livestock in Lebanon. 37 dairy cooperatives (serving 3,500 farmers) were given technical training and an estimated 1,500 Lebanese farmers will be provided small intensive poultry production units.

* The Food security sector reached some 898,269 Syrian refugees with food assistance in September 2014.

2. Overview of 2015 Response

In 2015, the food security sector will aim to complement food assistance for *de facto* refugees with broader stabilisation interventions such as e-vouchers through the National Poverty Targeting Programme for vulnerable Lebanese households. In addition there will be activities focusing on improving food production capacities and incomes through agricultural livelihoods. It will encompass a broader focus on the three pillars of food security programming: accessibility, availability and utilization. The FAO and WFP are now co-leading the sector. The response strategy will:

- Ensure food availability for vulnerable *de facto* refugees from Syria, PRS and PRL
- Target food assistance to the most vulnerable through the e-card modality. The WFP food basket for vulnerable *de facto* refugees will be revised to a value of USD27 per person per month. This food basket will provide 2,075 kcal per person per day in the form of basic, affordable and readily available commodities. Food security sector partners will maintain capacity to respond to emergencies through a one-off in-kind/e-card voucher programme.
- Promote opportunities for leveraging the e-card programme and the network of contracted shops for vulnerable local farmers to access retail markets based on local value chain analysis.
- Scale up the Government's NPTP programme to include and upscale critically needed food assistance, through the e-card programme, to the most vulnerable Lebanese households. The support to government will include strengthening the capacity of the MoSA to manage and monitor food assistance for the Lebanese;
- Promote the move towards a "OneCard" platform that delivers cost effective humanitarian food assistance and minimises duplications and resources associated with parallel systems.
- Promote sustainable family farming so as to increase productivity whilst prudently managing available natural resources such as water and land;
- Restore and maintaining agricultural livelihoods, essential assets and developing income generating activities in agriculture.
- Continue providing support to MoA to monitor and control Trans-boundary Animal Diseases (TADs) and plant diseases that threaten livelihoods and food safety in Lebanon.

Food assistance: Prioritisation of food assistance will be based on cost effectiveness of activities through using the e-card/OneCard platform to ensure continuation and expansion of proven cost efficiencies in delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Broader food security activities: In the agriculture sector, food security partners have identified the following priorities:

- Support to the Ministries of Agriculture and of Social Affairs in the strategic co-ordination of agricultural assistance provided by all stakeholders;
- Technical advice in sustainable agricultural early recovery;
- Material and financial support to the crops, livestock, forestry and fisheries sub-sectors;
- Capacity-building of stakeholders (in particular the Ministry of Agriculture and smallholder farmers' organisations) to address the consequences of the Syrian crisis (and any future crises in the region) in rural areas.

Agriculture interventions will be prioritised based on identified government priorities and the degree of leverage or mutual reinforcement to already existing food assistance interventions.

The sector will facilitate market access for the vulnerable small-scale farmers in areas worst affected by the crisis. This shall be done by ensuring that the farmers are capacitated to negotiate contracts for the supply of fresh food products with contracted food assistance shops. The sector will expand private sector engagement and collaboration through initiatives such as joint farmer training on food safety and quality standards so that small-scale farmers can access better markets. Such engagements will also include studies on local food value chains linked to humanitarian food assistance and, more importantly, exploring mobilization of resources from corporate entities through corporate social responsibility.

In the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan the Government has appealed for funds to train small scale farmers on the use of different food preservation technologies and to establish packaging facilities dedicated for olive oil producers in selected regions. This will improve income generation of the most vulnerable households in the country who have exhausted their already limited resources while hosting Syrian *de facto* refugees. The interventions will have a positive impact on the related agricultural activities as well as on the provision of quality food for vulnerable populations. While boosting the agricultural production in the country, the interventions will also provide opportunities for informal, seasonal income generating opportunities to vulnerable populations.

3. Overall Sector Target Caseload

In 2014, the caseload of persons displaced from Syria for food assistance was determined by applying multi-sectoral vulnerability criteria to the socio-economic profile of the displaced Syrian population based on the VASyR of 2013. The *de facto* refugees from Syria were selected for food assistance according to the burden score index. This score estimates household vulnerability based on the information available in UNHCR's ProGRESS database. A multi-sectoral questionnaire administered at the household level was used to verify vulnerability status. Throughout 2014, the caseload for food assistance included the moderate and severely food insecure and economically vulnerable households, and/or those with moderate or severe risk of becoming moderately or severely food insecure due to their high level of vulnerability in other sectors. In households that did not qualify for general food assistance individual e-cards were provided to vulnerable family members⁸.

To ensure that the households receiving food assistance are the most vulnerable, the caseload for food assistance will be revised for 2015 based on updated information on population socio-economic profile from the 2014 VASyR. Food assistance targeting for persons displaced from Syria will be progressively tightened to some 55 per cent of the most vulnerable, excluding the better off amongst the moderately vulnerable, but not all of them. The most vulnerable of this group will remain targeted.

Targeting under the NPTP was based on the World Bank's proxy-means testing (PMT) targeting mechanism. WFP will work with MoSA and NPTP to improve food security analysis as a way of monitoring household food security.

Population cohorts

Category	Female	Male	Total
Syrians registered with UNHCR as refugees	608,947	513,863	1,122,811
Palestine refugees from Syria	22,857	22,143	45,000
Vulnerable Lebanese	57,591	124,039	181,630
Palestine refugees from Lebanon	508	292	800

Gateways for service delivery

Category	Number	Modality of implementation/ how the institution is engaged
Municipalities	n/a	Meetings
SDCs	n/a	Training venue, Distribution centre
Farm	n/a	Practical training, Distribution
Community Centres	n/a	Training venue, Distribution centre
Palestine Gathering	n/a	Distribution centre
Palestine Camps	n/a	Distribution centre
Informal Tented Settlements	n/a	Meetings
School	n/a	Distribution centre

4. Mainstreaming of protection, SGBV and social Stability issues

- Social Stability:** The proposed scaling up of the NPTP to include a food voucher will improve social stability by addressing the food needs of vulnerable Lebanese. Agriculture interventions with Lebanese farmers will also address perceptions that assistance was only meant for displaced persons.
- Child Protection and Education:** Child Protection and Education will benefit from reduced negative coping strategies such as child labour and early marriages. More children will attend school if households are better able to meet their food needs. . This will continue to require active monitoring in light of targeting limited resources.
- Protection and SGBV:** The sector will make gender mainstreaming and the achievement of equal opportunities for men and women a top priority. Gender equality will be an integral feature of all food security projects assessment at all stages of the project cycle. Prior to implementing the proposed the food security interventions, each implementing agency will be required to hold and report on and keep filed records of separate consultations held with women, girls, boys and men in the project areas. The sector will coordinate with Protection sector to ensure newcomers and households in need of in kind assistance are identified and supported in a timely and safe manner. Food assistance and agricultural inputs and processing equipment distributions will follow protection and gender guidelines and regular compliance field visits will be carried out by the sector coordinators and protection sector partners. Special attention will also be granted to the promotion and respect of the “Code of Conduct” prohibiting sexual abuses and other similar vices like soliciting for payment of any kind by staff from implementing partners, sub-contracted shops and target beneficiary groups.

5. Partnerships

This Sector is under the leadership of the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

List of Partner Agencies

ACF	FAO	PU-AMI	WVI
ACTED	IOCC	Save the Children	
CLMC	IR Lebanon	UNRWA	
DCA	Oxfam	WFP	

¹ These ranged considerably by region, and included reducing the number of meals, borrowing money for food, purchasing food on credit, and purchasing lower quality or cheaper food. Selling land or household assets, relying on remittances and depending on aid were also reported. OCHA/REACH Host Community Vulnerability Assessment, June 2014.

² Beneficiaries under NPTP were targeted using the World Bank's proxy-means testing (PMT) targeting mechanism. Information on specific food security vulnerability was not available for NPTP beneficiaries.

³ Refugees in South Lebanon had highest FCS and diet diversity, than those in Tripoli+5, Akkar and Beirut and Mount Lebanon, who reported more frequent border line and poor FCS and dietary diversity.

⁴ Almost all PRS children (91 per cent) did not meet the minimum acceptable meal frequency levels and the majority of children (86 per cent) did not have acceptable dietary diversity.

⁵ The population of PRS in Lebanon was projected to be 42,000 by end of 2014 (and increase to 45,000 by end of 2015).

⁶ Findings from VASyR 2014 show that 86 per cent of Syrian refugees relied on local markets for food. Food purchases were made with the refugees' own money (45 per cent) or using the food voucher (41 per cent).

⁷ At the same time, the food supply gaps in Syria have resulted in an increase of the Lebanese agricultural and food exports into Syria (wheat flour, citrus, other fruits). In 2012, flour exports increased to USD 7.2 million as compared to USD 1.3 million in 2011. While Lebanon was a net food importer from Syria, a surplus in agricultural trade with Syria has been recorded for the first time in 2012. There has been a sharp decrease in agricultural and food exports from Syria into Lebanon (USD 266 million in 2012; nearly 49 per cent decrease between 2010 and 2012) whereas agricultural imports into Syria increased by almost 12 per cent over the same period (FAO, November 2013).

⁸ Such individuals included children under 2 years old, pregnant or lactating women and other vulnerable groups such as People Living with Disabilities (PLWD) and elderly.