

# Food Security and Agriculture Working Group

FSA WG Monthly Meeting Minutes – 27 November, 2018



**Chaired by:** Ahmed Ekzayez (FAO) Line Rindebaek (WFP)

**Location:** UNHCR office - Gaziantep

**Participants:** Meryem Ay Kesgin (WFP), Aysenur Ozcan (WFP), Saban Gultekin (WHH), Mohammed Albasheer Aboullaban (Tekamul organization), Omer Atik (Shafak organization), Abdul Rahim Allus (International Organization for Migration), Safwan Alhaiek (ISWA), Sedat Gökoğlu (Gaziantep PDoAF), Yücel Subaşı (Gaziantep PDoAF), Hazal Erman (3 Milyon Suriyeli 3 Milyon Fidan), Elif tugce Taymur (3 Milyon Suriyeli 3 Milyon Fidan), Osama Khalef (Ihsan organization), Tarek Al Ikhwan (IYD organization), Ozlem Cavus(UNDP), Raed Al Refai (Tekamul organization), Mustafa Sharfo (Tekamul organization), Rawaa alshummari (Alresala Foundation), (Muhammed Eyad Tarrab (FAO).

## Agenda:

1. Welcome and action points from the last meeting.
2. WFP VAM Presentation: Current Situation of the Turkish Economy & Post Distribution Monitoring Findings.
3. TEKAMUL organization's presentation: lessons learned from implementing Agriculture projects in Turkey.
4. Update: 3RP High-Level Stakeholders Roundtable meeting.
5. AOB
  - Collection of 3RP Impact stories

## Action Points:

- ✓ SWG coordinators to share the final version of FSA sector strategy for 3RP 2019-2020. **Deadline: 7<sup>th</sup> Dec. Done**
- ✓ Ministry of Agriculture and forestry to prepare presentation about the national priority in Agriculture sector. **Deadline: 18<sup>th</sup> Dec. Done**
- ✓ Partners to share their inputs to the 3RP Impact stories. **Deadline: 30<sup>th</sup> November. Done**
- ✓ 3 Milyon Suriyeli 3 Milyon Fidan organization to prepare presentation about their Agriculture activities for Syrian refugees in Turkey. **Deadline: Next FSA meeting. Done**

## 1. Introduction and welcome:

The meeting Co-chairs, FAO and WFP opened the meeting by welcoming all the participants and sharing a brief explanation of the agenda. This was followed by a brief tour de table.

## 2. Review of the action points of the previous meeting and partner updates:

FAO shared a brief update on action points from the previous meeting as follows:

- ✓ Creating account for all FSA partners on the Services Advisor Platform by requesting the organizations to send their logo (in strip PNG format under 20 KB), full and alias name of organization and focal point contact information. Deadline: 20th November. **Done**
- ✓ SWG Coordinators to prepare and circulate to sector partners a Q3 Dashboard for FSA sector. Deadline: 15th November. **Done**
- ✓ SWG coordinators to share the final version of FSA sector strategy for 3RP 2019-2020. Deadline: 23th November. **Not completed**
- ✓ Ministry of Agriculture and forestry to prepare presentation about the national priority in Agriculture sector. Deadline: 25th November. **Not completed**
- ✓ Partners to share their responses to the participation in the Workshop on mainstreaming environment into refugee response. Deadline: 15th November. **Done**
- ✓ Tekamul organization to prepare presentation about their Agriculture activities for Syrian refugees in Turkey. Deadline: Next FSA meeting. **Done.**

Gaziantep Directorate of Provincial Agriculture and Forestry (PDoAF) was invited to attend the November meeting of FSA WG, Mr. Sedat Gökoğlu, the project coordinator, represented Gaziantep PDoAF in this meeting, shared a brief information of Gaziantep PDoAF vocational training project in partnership with FAO, the which aimed at improving participants' skills and knowledge in high-demand areas of the local agricultural sector.

The project helped participants – both Syrian refugees and members of their host communities who work or have experience in agriculture – acquire life skills important for self-reliance, such as those related to language, and social support. The training topics were on Grape, olive, pomegranate & pistachio crops management; and cattle care & herd management. 175 trainees from both Syrian refugees and host communities have attended the training.

A shortage of skilled, agricultural labour in Gaziantep means trainees have a realistic shot at finding work after they finish their training. The availability of skilled workers is good news for farms in the area, who struggle to find experienced help during harvest and other key moments in the annual cycle.

Mr. Sedat has emphasized that PDoAF will be ready to support all actors who are implementing agriculture projects in Gaziantep.

## 3. WFP VAM Presentation: Current Situation of the Turkish Economy & Post Distribution Monitoring Findings.

- WFP presented recent surveys on the current situation of the Turkish economy as well as the latest round of post distribution monitoring findings.
- Currency devaluation and high inflation are eroding the purchasing power of refugees. The growth rate of the Turkish economy is expected slow down considerably in the second half of the year; unemployment rate is on the rise. One of the highest levels of shrinkage was seen in the agriculture sector with -1.5% in Q2 when compared to Q1 of 2018.
- Employment share change in Agriculture Sector also dropped by -1.3% in August 2018

when compared to August 2017. Worst impacts are expected to be felt in 2019 by economists. In line with the deterioration in Turkey's economy, July 2018 survey results show an increase in the use of coping strategies and debt levels as well as a slight deterioration in food consumption scores for the first time since the beginning of the programme. On the other hand, the improvement for beneficiaries with respect to the baseline data collected between February – May 2017 is discernibly higher than those of non-beneficiaries. Moving forward, we might see an increase in the more severe crisis and emergency livelihoods coping strategies, without an upward revision in the ESSN transfer value.

- The Key Messages for Post-Distribution Monitoring Round 3:
  - ✚ Significant improvements for beneficiaries in all indicators, when considering baseline results  
Female headed households continue to have worse outcomes
  - ✚ For South-East region, improvements are greater than Turkey averages
  - ✚ Some deterioration in consumption scores and increase in coping strategies  
Increase in debt after a downward trend
- There is an increase observed in both consumption coping strategies (e.g. reducing the size of the portions) and the stress level livelihood coping strategies (e.g. buying food on credit or borrowing money for food) in the last round.
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#### **ACTION POINTS:**

- ESSN Post-Distribution Monitoring to be disseminated periodically through the FSAWG mail list.
- Further research is needed regarding the importance of agriculture sector in the Turkish economy, and the role of this sector in reducing the unemployment rate within Syrian Refugees and host communities.

#### **4. TEKAMUL organization's presentation: lessons learned from implementing Agriculture projects in Turkey.**

TEKAMUL organization delivered a presentation about their agriculture project in Turkey (Hatay and Gaziantep provinces), emphasizing on the following points:

- The project outcomes:
  - Reduce unemployment rate among Syrian refugees in Hatay and Gaziantep.
  - Increase Syrian refugees' accessibility to the Turkish labour market.
  - Strengthen the capacity of Syrian farmers by exploring new methods and techniques in agriculture sector in Turkey.
- 10 donums are enough for one family of five persons to meet their monthly basic needs.
- Crops have been Identified based on the project's timeline, crop calendar, and local preferences (watermelon, pepper, peas, cucumber)
- 230 donums were planted during 2018, and 23 families from Syrian refugee have benefited from the project.
- The yield has been sold in the end of the season, and the total amounts has been distributed

equally with beneficiaries

- TEKAMUL is keen to achieve the sustainability in this project by saving some seeds and money to run the same project with more beneficiaries next year.
- Conducting training on agriculture marketing and value chain in order to maximise yields and reduce waste.
- Access to agricultural land brings huge benefits to refugees and provides the foundation for sustainable livelihoods for a significant number.

#### **ACTION POINTS:**

- Conducting advocacy and mobilizing support to allow refugees to move much beyond subsistence farming by having access to land.

### **5. Update: 3RP High-Level Stakeholders Roundtable meeting.**

On 22 November and with attendance of representatives of the Turkish government, 3RP High-Level Stakeholders Roundtable meeting has been conducted on development of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) 2019-2020.

The purpose of this meeting was to present the Turkey chapter of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) 2019-2020, for endorsement by the government institutions and 3RP partners in Turkey.

The following has been highlighted during the meeting:

- Changes required to make the international aid architecture fit for resilience; means
- Maintain stability and harmony in host communities while ensuring inclusiveness; effective private sector engagement in the response.
- 3RP partners needs to cooperate more with their directorate to include more religious services targeting Syrian Refugees.
- Integrate humanitarian and development components of the crisis response, strengthen existing collaboration and expand partnerships to include new critical actors, including the private sector.

#### **ACTION POINTS:**

- Circulate the final version of 3RP 2019-2020. Turkey chapter, once it's ready for publication.

### **5. AOB**

#### **▪ Collection of 3RP Impact stories**

All FSA partners are encouraged to submit good practices and impact stories of their projects related to social cohesion, support to municipalities, and livelihoods & job creation. FSA partners have a bunch of success stories, which are considered as a very effective tool for fundraising and visibility. partners are requested to collect the basic details of potential impact stories, where there has been a concerted effort by partners to achieve joint impact.

The exercise will focus on examples of two natures where evidence of impact (even at a very local level) is available:

1. Successful interventions/programmes by partners that showed signs of impact
2. Positive initiatives taken by local authorities (municipalities, provincial directorates, chamber

of commerce, schools etc...) without external support.

Initial input asked from partners should focus on the following information in this Google sheet:

- Who? Which partner/which local authority
- Where? Which province/district (if relevant municipality/village/neighbourhood)
- When? Year of the example (can go back to 2017 if relevant)
- What? Brief description of the evidence of impact. – 50 words
- How? Brief description of the interventions leading to impact – 50 words
- Why? Brief analysis of which factors contributed to the success of the interventions– 50 words

**ACTION POINTS:**

- To circulate reminder email with the template for all FSA partners to submit the impact stories of their projects before 30th November.

**Next meeting: 18<sup>th</sup> December.**