



FOOD SECURITY SECTOR WORKING GROUP



MINUTES OF MEETING – 11th June 2016

Micro-garden Technical Working Group

When: 11th June 2016

Where: Intersos office - Jemmayze

Who: 13 participants from FAO, UNHCR, IMC, ACTED, Soils Lebanon, Solidarités, Intersos

Minutes prepared by: Pardie Karamanoukian and Firas Abi Ghanem

Meeting Minutes

Link to the meeting presentation: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=11156>

Introduction

- The meeting was opened by FAO Food Security Sector Coordinator that introduced:
 - The background of micro-gardens in Lebanon
 - The legal restrictions
 - Government regulations of 1) use of off-soil planting techniques and 2) 50-50 target population of displaced Syrians and vulnerable Lebanese

Presentations by:

1. FAO - Mohammad Hashisho Mohamad.Hachicho@fao.org
2. UNHCR – Sendralahatra Rakontondradalo RAKONTON@unhcr.org
3. SOILS Lebanon – Rita contact.soilslebanon@gmail.com
4. ACTED - Angeliki Parasyraki angeliki.parasyraki@acted.org
5. INTERSOS – Firas Abi Ghanem programme.support.lebanon@intersos.org

Discussion points:

- Timeframe: Most organizations starting projects on Micro Gardening are starting late, mainly due to tardiness in funding approval.
Recommendation of FAO: Start in September, and use the Sep-Oct-Nov, three months cycle
- Prototypes: Different organizations are using different prototypes, each with pros and cons. The average cost for most modals is relatively quite high.



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Recommendation: Use simple methods, and focus more on implementation rather than design

- Beneficiaries can be tempted to use pesticides, or to alter or completely change the planned modality.
Recommendation: Ensure that planned project activities do not result in harm to beneficiaries. Promote IPM. Use organic pest control remedies <http://www.cityfarmer.org/HomeGardeningPoster2.pdf>
- Crops: Produce from Micro Gardens is meant to supplement food/nutritional intake, specifically with easy-to-grow herbs.
Recommendation: Focus more on herbs rather than vegetables, due to the fact that vegetables take a lot longer to grow, and are problematic in terms of attracting pests
- The first two weeks of planting a crop are vital, and several crops do not survive beyond these two weeks
Recommendation: Visit the sites as often as possible (at least twice a week), especially at the beginning of the project
- The Ministry of Agriculture specifies that the percentage of Lebanese and Syrians being targeted by Micro Gardening projects be 50:50.
Recommendation: Since it can be difficult to apply the same activities to both communities, ensure that projects have activities that are designed specifically for Lebanese, and through which the Lebanese targets can be reached. More importantly, organizations need to have the approval of the Ministry before starting any project related to Agriculture.

Suggestions:

- Soils to give an in-house training on permaculture methods that can help with planned crops, such as beneficial relationships between different kinds of plants
- Developments to be shared continuously between organizations implementing Micro Gardening projects. Given that Micro Gardening is still in a pilot phase in the country, sharing information and lessons learned is extremely valuable.
- Sharing already produced publications, or planned publications, so as to maximize value
- Recommendation to coordinate all publications with the Ministry of Agriculture for technical clearance and greater visibility.

AOB

- Partners engaged in any activity under Food Security and specifically in micro-gardens to report their progress on Activity Info
- A discussion on the frequency of the meetings, and was decided to have them at ad-hoc basis, with the next one planned for the next month, as most of the projects are in their planning phase.