

Food Security and Agriculture Working Group

FSA WG Monthly Meeting Minutes



18 December 2018

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

Hosted by: FAO and WFP

Participants: Aysenur Ozcan (WFP), Omar Atik (Shafak), Almuthanna Saffan (Watan), Fedel Mansour (WFP-Crossboarder), Chris Bender (UNHCR), Keiso Obara (FAO), Osama Alkhalaf (Ihsan RO), Gul Hazal Erman (3 Million Trees), Aybike Ceylanlar (3 Million Trees), Onur Ozdemir (TRC), Burak Guresinli (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry), Izdiyar Omer (AAR Japan), Takefinumi Yoshikama (AAR Japan)

Agenda:

1. Welcome and review action points from the last meeting.
2. Presentation of AAR on nutrition training
3. Presentation of 3 Million Syrian, 3 million trees - (3 Milyon Suriyeli 3 Milyon Fidan) project.
4. FSA 2018 work plan: achievements and lessons learnt and see what we achieved and what should be done next year. (each agency should come up with concrete examples)
5. Update on 11th National Plan Process (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)
6. AOB
 - Environmental mainstreaming workshop
 - Training on FS Indicators (Jan/Feb 2019)

Summary of Action Points 27 November 2018

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

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. Presentation of FAO on Food Security and Nutrition among Syrian Refugees in Turkey

- FAO started the presentation by indicating that the food availability in Turkey was high. The July 2018 data which was obtained from PDM3 report of WFP showed that over 80% of Syrians in Turkey had acceptable food consumption score, which is a proxy for access to food.
- It was indicated that, although access to food was easy, all refugees did not always have easy and enough access to food. The main reasons are stated as, high market prices due to depreciation of Turkish Lira, seasonality of livelihoods and irregular income due to involvement in informal employment.
- To cope with such difficulties, it was observed that they tend to keep the quantity, but reduce the quality of the foods they consume.
- Therefore, 28% of the Syrian refugees in Turkey were found out to be obese. The main reasons for this were that they are consuming more starch, sugar and flour products. It was concluded that the quality of the food that the refugees consume should be increased.

3. Presentation on the nutrition training of AAR Japan

- ARR in collaboration with FAO are conducting training on Nutrition, Healthy Diet and Nutrition-Related Chronic Diseases and Problems, with objective to share proper nutrition-related information with the beneficiaries from both Syrian refugees and host communities to help them make informed decisions about their food-related behaviours.
- 200 trainees have been attending the training in Kilis and Sanliurfa, on what a healthy diet looks like, and how to put into practice daily those habits, in addition information on nutrition-related disease/problems, particularly diabetes, hypertension/cardiovascular diseases, and overweight and obesity;
- It was mentioned that ARR is organizing an event on healthy diet which includes cooking demonstration, presentation of training results, and interactive and participatory discussions on important nutrients.
- ARR is planning to implement a micro garden project in supporting Syrian refugee and hosting communities to improve their diet.
- The presentation was followed by discussion about the wrong food habits of Syrian refugees and hosting communities, which are relying on a big amount of sugars and carbohydrates on their daily diet. In addition, it was underlined the social dimension of this training, through participatory nutrition activities to promote coexistence between refugee and host communities.

4. Presentation on the livelihoods project of 3 Million Syrians, 3 Million Trees

- The project has started in 2016 in Istanbul, however moved to Gaziantep for logistics purposes. The project first started as an idea when many trees were cut due to the construction of the third bridge in Istanbul.
- Three million Syrians, three million trees' is financed by the German Government with GIZ as the main implementing organisation, in close cooperation with the Turkish General Directorate of Forestry and the municipality of Istanbul and Gaziantep.
- The aim is to provide income opportunities for the most vulnerable Syrian refugees and Turkish community in Istanbul and Gaziantep, while rehabilitating public infrastructure and contributing to the city's green environment.
- The projects address both communities (Syrian refugees and host communities) to foster social cohesion in the refugee hosting communities.
- For the sake of integration, it was realized that the language was a barrier for integration. Therefore, A1, A2 and B1 Level Turkish lessons were given to refugees.

- It was indicated that the project prioritizes women and disabled people to be selected as beneficiaries, as it is harder for them to find jobs. In addition, a day care center was opened in order to help women with children in participating with project activities.
- One of obligatory criteria to select beneficiaries was to undertake medical screening/test, to make sure that there are no serious infectious diseases within project beneficiaries. The insurance started.
- ‘Three million Syrians, three million trees’ has succeeded in providing 3,600 participants with a temporary income (Turkish minimum wage/month) for three months. Until now, 8 million saplings have been raised and 2.3 million trees been planted.

5. FSA 2018 Work Plan

- The six objectives of the work plan, achievements and lessons learnt were discussed together with what should be done next year.
- The six objectives are:
 - Objective 1: Strengthening coordination and coherence mechanisms among FSA actors
 - Objective 2: Promote a coherent sector approach to FSA
 - Objective 3: Strengthen information management in the sector
 - Objective 4: Capacity Development
 - Objective 5: Cross cutting and inter-sectoral issues
 - Objective 6: Enhance Food Security and Agriculture through assessments, and research studies in FSA sector
- It was recommended to fix date to all FSA WG monthly meetings during 2019, in order to insert that in FSA partners’ schedule in advance.

6. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Update on 11th National Plan Process.

- It was underlined that preparatory work for the Eleventh Development Plan which will cover 2019-2023, was launched in 2017 and progressed in 2018, Preparations were carried out in a participatory manner and in this context, in addition to the 75 Specialised Commission and Working Group meetings, consultation meetings were held with the Ministries, NGO’s, Academy and different stakeholders from each sectors. The 11th National Development Plan is anticipated to come into effect towards the end of first half of 2019. Therefore, recommendations or suggestions for agriculture and food security sector about the integration of 3RP 2019-2020 into the 11th National Development Plan could be shared with the Strategy and Budgetary Department through UN Agencies in Turkey.
- It was stressed that after 8 years of Syrian refugee crisis, more efforts should be done in terms of accessing the labor market through vocational including language trainings, which will be crucial to lessen their vulnerability.
- In this context, Agriculture is a key sector with regard to absorption of the labor force, due to the following facts:
 - Syrians come from a similar agricultural context and therefore engaging them in the agricultural sector here does not require a long introductory period.
 - The sector can provide both short term outputs and sustainable income generating opportunities without large capital investments.
 - Similarly, engagement in the agricultural sector in Turkey will benefit Syrians on their return to their country of origin.
- According to “Regulation on Work Permit of Refugees under Temporary Protection” Syrians under Temporary Protection who work in seasonal jobs (agriculture and animal husbandry) are exempt from applying for work permits. So that seasonal agricultural workers need to be made a priority.
- it was recommended to maintain the reasonable ratio between Syrians under temporary protection and host communities in the beneficiary selection process of all projects, in order to enhance the social cohesion between two communities.

- Ministry's representative emphasized the continues support of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to all FSA partners, who are implementing food and agriculture interventions, in supporting to refugees in Turkey.

7. AOB

○ Environmental mainstreaming workshop

- FAO shared information about the environment workshop, which was conducted on 21st of November, 2018 in Gaziantep, under title: "integrating environmental considerations into the ongoing refugee programming". The objective of the workshop was to increase capacity and motivation for mainstreaming environment into refugee and response programme and project activities. It was mentioned that recommendations has been prepared on mainstreaming environment in food security and agriculture to ensure that all food and agriculture interventions are environmentally sensitive.

○ FSA WG Output Indicator Training for 3RP 2019

- As a correction to the earlier communication on the food security training towards the end January/Early February, the FSA reporting focal points will be provided with an output indicator training for Activityinfo database currently being developed by UNHCR for the year 2019 on 3RP reporting.

○ Farewell

- From January 2019, FAO will be leading the FSA Sector. WFP clarified that as food assistance will be reported under the Basic Needs Sector from 2019, this was the last official meeting of WFP and FAO co-chairing the FSA WG meeting. WFP thanked all participants for their support of the WG and thanked FAO for the close coordination and working partnership.