Meeting Minutes: Food and Agriculture Sector (FAS) Monthly Meeting (December 2021)

Location: Online MS. TEAMS Meeting, Damascus, Syria

Date: 08/12/2021

Time: 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM

Agenda

1. Update on HPC (2022 HNO and 2022-2023 Multi-Year Planning) [Download]: ............... 2
2. Discussion on draft 2 - year response strategy and priorities / targets: .......................... 2
3. GBV mainstreaming action plan for FAS and way forward [Download]: ....................... 4
4. AOB: .......................................................................................................................... 5

Participants:

i. AKDN - INGO  ix. OCHA - UN Agency
ii. AVSI - INGO  x. Oxfam - INGO
iii. COOPI - INGO xi. PUI - INGO
iv. ECHO - INGO xii. UNHCR - UN Agency
v. EPDC - INGO xiii. UNRWA - UN Agency
vi. FAO - UN Agency xiv. USAID - INGO
vii. ICRC - INGO xv. WFP - UN Agency
viii. IFRC - INGO

Name of coordinators chairing meeting:

1. Mohie Alwahsh – FAS Coordinator (WFP) - Chairperson.
3. Ruba Khanji - FAS IMO& Gender Focal Point - Presenter.
1. **Update on HPC (2022 HNO and 2022-2023 Multi-Year Planning)** [Download]:

- HNO FSA 2022 chapter: After doing a round of consultation with FSS partners; the narrative first chapter HNO 2022 with partners feedback were submitted to OCHA. Comments shared by OCHA and the Food Security Sector is addressing them.
- The final draft will be shared with partners before the final submission for another review.
- Moreover, the sector awaits the completion of Food Security and Livelihood Assessments (FSLA and FSA) and analysis outcomes by late January 2022 then it will be reflected into the HNO sector chapter as agreed with OCHA.
- Key changes:
  - HNO: 1st draft circulation to ISG date has been moved up from 15 Dec to 12 Dec to allow more time for ISG comments (with CLA approval);
  - HRP: slightly extended the timeline for the Project Module training and review process, as well as preparation time for the sector defense.
- Key milestones:
  - HNO: initial draft to ISG (12 Dec) and to the strategic level review (9 Jan), with expected publication on 20 January.
  - HRP: initial draft to ISG (27 Jan) and to the strategic level review (9 Feb); final HRP with final figures (targets, budget) to ISG for technical review (early March, on figures ONLY) upon the completion of the HPC Project Module and finalization of sector defense.

2. **Discussion on draft 2 - year response strategy and priorities / targets:**

- The 2022/23 HRP will remain strictly humanitarian in nature, with an emphasis on addressing life-threatening and life-sustaining humanitarian needs,
- The FSS submitted the chapter with the initial needs final draft will be finalized after the assessments are completed. In this meeting the sector team would like to discuss with partners multiyear HRP the first time in Syria as it used to be always a yearly respond to plan. So how do we tackle around the sector objectives. Also, we will be following that with more comments and feedback from the partners.
- Jalal, (FAO), highlighted that there are other inputs feeding into the findings on FSS chapter like the agriculture production, climate condition and chokes and NDVI which is integrated with other indicators to analyze the situation.
- Early recovery and Resilience building activities with humanitarian objectives were the sector reached out to partners few weeks before the meeting to mainstream early recovery through the FAS activities.
- Support to Sustainable Return and other paths towards durable solutions enabling people affected by the Syria crisis to live in safety and dignity and rebuild their lives,
- Early Recovery activities will be resolutely linked to the humanitarian principles, objectives and outcomes of the HRP,
- Quality programming approach’ that supports efforts to increase Self-reliance and address recovery needs,
- Light Rehabilitation maybe included but conducted at household and/or community-level (i.e. benefiting affected people),
- Any support for Capacity Building and Training must be humanitarian in scope.
- For 2021 HRP sector objectives, Pillar 1 & 2 and their breakdown are in the presentation of the MoM.
- Partners are encouraged to contribute to improve or add/change within the scope of the strategic objectives and flag any recommendations regarding the multiyear HRP.
- Jameson highlighted that the sector should welcome these developments because we will have better predictability and, realistic and appropriate planning as we try to expand the early recovery and resilience building activities.
- The current sector objectives 2&3 is mainly framed around supporting self-reliant. And also protecting and building productive assets and basically to unlock this sector objective looking at various priority activities, which mainly focused on providing affected families with the required amenities in terms of agricultural inputs with the relevant training and not only provide them with agricultural inputs, then we try to explore our integration strategy. That’s where you then find an activity 1a, which is now looking at providing protection food rations (PFR) to the most vulnerable funding households sequenced with the inputs that are then distributed. So, the PFR’s would then help the farmers within the four to six months period prior to the harvest.
- Same for the small-scale food production, this was sequenced with Activity 2a which was then providing protection food rations supporting crisis affected farmers. Followed by the asset building and asset protection looking at the current prevailing challenges, both economic and climate induced.
- The previous season was not so good and, the water scarcity, the high cost of inputs including livestock feed. So, the asset building and asset protection dimension within the HRP mainly focuses on feed distribution and also supports in terms of the production targeting vulnerable small scale livestock breeders.
- In addition, livestock treatment considering animal health is important in terms of assets protection. So, it was endeavoring to support a recovery of the agriculture-related livelihoods.
- For SO3 activities we had three activities. The first one looking at the light rehabilitation of bakeries and flour mills and silos also support the value chain segments around the processing and light rehabilitation of economic productive infrastructure. This was also a priority activity for the sector for this year.
- The sector also looking at validation for irrigation canals, water systems to enhance access to water. As it is very fundamental for agriculture-based livelihoods and particularly around ensuring food availability. Then we
also looked at establishing strengthening the capacity for the provision of this central services. Local communities including also some focused around early warning and disaster risk reduction (DRR).

- These are basically the priority activities as envisioned by the sector for HRP 2021. But now we want to see how best SO1, SO2&3 can be modified so that it fits into a multi-year planning to have better expansion of more self-reliant and in resilience and early recovery kind of outcomes, so we really want to see how the sector can promote better recovery and can also help families to engage in a journey towards self-reliance so to solicit your ideas in terms of the decision making around the activities wants to submit in our HRP then we can have a more robust and effective multi-year HRP.

- Isam (WFP), raised some questions if there would be a review for the multi-year HRP? And if so when would it be? Also, for SO1 if there are specific modalities that the sector recommends? Finally, for the SO2&3 there wasn’t any indication for community-based livelihoods with the scarcity of fund in the upcoming two years by which agencies are cooperating to have joint projects achieving better results and impact.

- Sector coordinators highlighted that after the first year there will be a review to maintain the multiyear HRP. PiN numbers for the chapter and reflect any changes to the HRP. That’s why we need to be very clear about the activities and our strategy that will drive our actions for the next two years. In terms of the modalities, partners could use the appropriate modalities informed by their market assessments and feasibility studies and also their risk analysis. In terms of the livelihoods, activity #5 in SO2 supports market driven income generating activities looking at agriculture-based livelihoods.

- In terms in livelihoods and early recovery interventions, the sector should make sure as much as possible that its and ERL sector work and interventions are functional to each other and there aren’t any overlaps as the sector will engage with relevant sectors ERL in particular and with the nutrition and also to identify windows of opportunities that can support in terms of achieving several multi sectoral objectives.

- Partners are encouraged to recommend any activity which is missing that needs to be incorporated for the SO1 pillar and SO2/SO3 or is there is an activity which misplaced which should not be part of the package.

- The sector team is going to share a PDF zero draft of the multi HRP for 2022 into 2023. This would then be complemented by a word document which have a table indicating the section that partners would want to comment on and the comment that would want to see addressed. There won’t be an online Google Drive document so that partners are involved in the decision making in packaging the sector strategy.

3. GBV mainstreaming action plan for FAS and way forward [Download]:

- The 16 day of activism against GBV started on 25th of November.
UNFPA is pleased to inform you that Food and Agriculture Sector has been nominated by GBV sub sector members to receive an honor award during the launch of the 16 days of activism against GBV-2021.

Many thanks to FAS partners’ critical efforts in ensuring that FAS response is safe for all.

Ruba started presentation on the Safety Monitoring survey outcomes and the results can be found in the presentation.

4. AOB:

- Isam gave a quick update about crossline operation that all preparations have been put in place and it’s expected to start the distribution next week.

- FAO will be sharing regular seasonal updates so that partners are also aware of the possible challenges that might lie ahead.

The meeting ended at 11:10 am and the date for the next meeting will be communicated in due course.