

**FSS WORKING GROUP Monthly Virtual MEETING  
10 February 2021**

**FSS COORDINATION TEAM:** Carla De Gregorio; Elie Choueiri, Amal Salibi, Hussein Nasrallah(MoA).

**PARTNERS ATTENDING:** UNDP, FAO, WFP, CARE, IOM, MOA, ECHO, French Embassy, UNHCR, Caritas, MCC, MERATH, SCI, LPC, UNIFIL, CESVI, RI, MCC, Tabitha, Camaleon, EU, ACT, Berytech, AGrytech, NUSANED, GVC, Armadilla, ILO, WVI, AVSI, ACTED, UK FCDO, AUB, Intersector, SSSE,

	<b>Agenda item</b>	<b>Main discussion points</b>	<b>Takeaways/action points</b>
1	<b>WFP/VAM – Situation Analysis updates / Monitoring Results</b>	<p><b>Exchange Rate development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Black market rate heavily affected by developments on the political scene. Rate near the LBP 9,000 level</li> <li>-Parallel market rate inactive following central bank decision on August 6 to resume paying incoming money transfer in US dollar notes for non-financial institutes</li> <li>-Rate for withdrawal from non-fresh money dollar account in LBP currently set at LBP 3,900 by the central bank currency exchange platform</li> </ul> <p><b>Supply Chain and WFP contracted shops situation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-A decrease of 16% in the unloaded imports weight of Food is registered in 2020 compared to 2019</li> <li>-A decrease of 24% is noticed when comparing Aug 2020 - Jan 2021 figures against the same period the previous year.</li> <li>-A decrease of 33% is registered when comparing Jan 2021 figures to Jan 2020 figures</li> </ul>	<p>Given the lack of recent data on domestic agriculture production, partners that have information from their own surveys are invited to share them with the sector coordination team.</p> <p>Also, please let us know if you are planning for any assessments on agriculture</p> <p>Link to VAM reports and assessment to be shared with partners: <a href="https://dataviz.vam.wfp.org/reports_explorer#">https://dataviz.vam.wfp.org/reports_explorer#</a></p> <p>Please select Lebanon</p> <p>VAM will also in the next monitoring include a stronger focus on food security including food availability through agriculture production</p> <p>Question on scarcity of food in shops: in the short term linked to the lockdown.</p>

	<p>-Between January 2020 and October 2020, and in comparison, to the same period in 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total imports decreased by 35%.</li> <li>• Food Imports (excluding cereals) decreased by 15%.</li> <li>• Food imports decreased by 6%.</li> <li>• Cereal imports increased by 6%.</li> </ul> <p><b>Demand: food &amp; non-food price developments and exchange rate fluctuations</b></p> <p>-Exchange rates applied by suppliers of contracted shops continue to follow the informal market developments, albeit at a slower pace</p> <p>-In the first week of January 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>77%</b> of WFP-contracted shops <b>were</b> using an exchange rate between <b>LBP 8,000 – 9,000,</b></li> <li>• <b>23%</b> reported being charged an exchange rate higher than <b>LBP 9,000.</b></li> </ul> <p>-The cost of the revised food SMEB in January 2021 is higher than August 2020, the date the basket was initially set, by 17%.</p> <p>-Between August 2020 and January 2021, an increase of 16% was registered.</p> <p>-Between December 2020 and January 2021, a 5% increase was registered.</p> <p><b>Subsidies Latest Updates</b></p> <p>-Through circular 561, the Central Bank organized the subsidization mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheat imports are partially subsidized (85% of their cost)</li> <li>• Combustible fuel imports are partially subsidized (90% of their cost)</li> <li>• Medicine, medical equipment, and infant milk are partially subsidized (85% of their cost)</li> <li>• The central bank, in coordination with the Ministry of Economy, also subsidizes a basket of nearly 300 items Food and agricultural items, at the rate of LBP 3,900</li> </ul>	<p>Need to monitor it in the longer terms to assess.</p>
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2	<p><b>FSS sector updates</b></p>	<p><b>1. AI sector</b></p> <p>-For AI indicators update please refer to the presentation in attachment</p> <p>WFP Basic Needs Outcome Monitoring (BNOM) For Vulnerable Syrian Refugees (February 2020 and July 2020/December 2020)</p> <p>Shows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A deterioration in the food security, food consumption and use of coping strategies among assisted households</li> <li>• Drastic decrease in acceptable food consumption score (FCS) for households receiving cash for food assistance (from 75 to 46%)</li> <li>• Food e-card households recipients recorded a 15 percent decrease in acceptable FCS</li> <li>• All households are increasingly resorting to negative coping strategies to cover for their basic needs</li> <li>• Assisted families experience a deduction in living standards but the assistance</li> </ul>	<p>Please remember to update regularly the service mapping on ActivityInfo</p> <p>Beirut Blast Emergency Response: for partners with ongoing interventions please update the dedicated AI database</p>

		<p>protected them from slipping into extreme poverty.</p> <p><b>Sector funding 2020</b></p> <p>Appeal: USD 510.5 M Received: USD 391 M</p> <p><b>2. Requests for food assistance received under lockdown 22 Jan- 5 Feb (UNHCR-WFP call center)</b></p> <p>North: 1,239 South: 957 ML: 1,188 Bekaa: 875 Beirut: 894 <b>Total : 5,153</b></p> <p><b>3. Lockdown exceptions OCHA update</b></p> <p>Additional unexpected modifications on the IMPACT platform in relation to the information to be filled by NGOs when requesting movement authorizations.</p> <p>Link to AI to input weekly plans</p>	<p>Partners highlighted that the current situation on granting exceptions for humanitarian actors is quite confusing and reached a dead end. Partners are getting very few access permissions through IMPACT, while the new MOIM system requests that NGOs share beneficiary details <u>which is a humanitarian redline</u> which cannot be crossed.</p> <p>Partners pointed out that there remains little clarity over access processes, engagement of GoL at all levels or a clear framework for humanitarian organisations.</p>
3	LED program - GVC	<p><b>Promoting the local economy in North East Bekaa</b></p> <p>Project partners are Nawaya and John Paul   </p> <p>Project Objectives:</p> <p>1- Regional agricultural products are competitive in price and quality 2- Business opportunities are seized to support and connect Value Chains (vegetables/fruit trees/ aromed plants) with the local economy</p>	<p>GVC will reach out to partners working in the Bekaa through the FSS field coordination WG during this inception phase lasting 6 months.</p> <p>ACTED will also reach out given their ongoing project</p>

		<p>3- Products are commercialized and sold in national and international markets  4- Public and private institutions collaborate for regional economic development</p> <p><b>Localities:</b> Aرسال-Laboue-Nabi Osmane-Bejjeji/Jabbouli-El-Ain EL-Qaa Ras-Baalbek – Fekha/Jdeide</p> <p>Target Groups:  -Farmer, producers and their organizations  -Trader, wholesalers and buyers  -Students receiving job orientation  -Public institutions receive capacity building</p> <p>WP0: Coordination, monitoring and evaluation, dissemination</p> <p>WP1 - Farmers and producers diversify production and increase quality along fruit and aro-med value chains, using resources efficiently and sustainably</p> <p>WP2 - Farmer and producer organizations enable economies of scale, commercialization, increased collaboration and access to information for better marketing and sale of products at domestic and international level</p> <p>WP3: Income and job opportunities through business creation and matching of qualification with needs, along agricultural value chains</p> <p>WP4: Capacities of public institutions are increased and joint strategies are developed to play an active role in local and regional development planning while ensuring social cohesion</p>	
4	<b>Agrytech - Berytech</b>	<p><b>The Agrytech Program by Berytech</b></p> <p>A three phases program under the ACT Smart Funded by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands</p> <p>Nurturing and growing ideas, and prototypes that has an Innovative scientific, technological, or business model solution with a focus on any of the agri-food sectors</p> <p>Agrytech program aims to fund startups, give them access to the prototyping and to the</p>	<p>Partners can refer to the link below where they can find the start-ups supported to create technology solutions to answer to previous challenges on crop/animal and food production</p> <p><a href="https://berytch.org/programs/agrytech/startups/">https://berytch.org/programs/agrytech/startups/</a></p>

		<p>national and international market. In addition of creating linkages to agri-food community and pool of dedicated experts</p> <p>The Program Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating jobs</li> <li>• Advancing the ecosystem</li> <li>• Developing the sector</li> <li>• Contributing to SDGs</li> </ul> <p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crop production</li> <li>• Animal production</li> <li>• Food Production</li> </ul>	<p>On February 19 Agrytech will select the projects for the next batch</p>
5	AOB	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introducing the new sector IMO Kazem El Seblani</li> <li>2. Two trainings on FSS AI 2021 for old and new partners took place on Feb 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup></li> <li>3. Follow up daily wages discussion on 3/2</li> </ol>	<p>Follow up daily wages discussion on 3/2:</p> <p>ACTION 1: need to bring the issue of increasing daily wages to the attention of the Intersector senior coordination of the LCRP during the planning workshop on 4 February as this is a cross sectoral issue that affects the credibility of partners and the implementation of programmes on the ground and joint cross-sectoral multiagency advocacy is necessary</p> <p>ACTION 2: Bring together at a common table line ministries including the MoA, MoSA, MOET, MOL, sector coordinators, donor representatives and key UN and NGOs partners to discuss a flexible mechanism that allow to adjust the daily wage to the cost of living or transfer values based on SMEB and ensure buy-in of common approach, to also address geographical dimension and the gender disparities</p> <p>Complementary advocacy from NGOs from the bottom up to donors should be envisioned and from sectors to OCHA and HCT</p> <p>A rethinking of CFW Programmes proposing for the future a blended approach complementing CFW with other forms of assistance including linkages with existing safety nets</p>