



Giulio Origlia/WFP

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN – ERP

JULY 2021 – JUNE 2022



PEOPLE IN NEED

1,466,000

1,375,700
90,300



PEOPLE TARGETED

490,300

400,000
90,300



REQUIREMENTS
(US\$)

115.4 M

104.7 M
10.6 M

LEBANESE
MIGRANTS

APPEALING PARTNERS

WFP, IOM, ACTED, Food Security Sectors partners receiving funding from the 1st round of allocation under the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund - LHF (ACF, ANERA, CARE, CW, DPNA, FOH, GVC, MCC, NABAA, PCPM, TABITHA), and additional sector partners to be added by end of August 2021.

An updated list of appealing organizations will be shared after the project review process.

Sectoral Analysis

The situation in Lebanon has changed dramatically in 2020 when rising prices and the economic crisis, compounded by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, affected all population groups in Lebanon, with the most marginalized hit the hardest. The alarming pace of currency devaluation and inflation since October 2019 has impoverished well over half the Lebanese population and almost the entire Syrian refugee population and led around half of the migrant population to be vulnerable to food insecurity. As root causes of the crisis remain unaddressed, the further deterioration of the situation threatens to push many more into poverty and food insecurity.

Food access and availability have become major issues, with food prices out of reach for most, and retailers facing serious challenges to restock and keep their businesses afloat. As affordable food items become scarce, competition for basic resources and social tensions are on the rise too. The steady deterioration of all basic economic instruments is threatening the ability of markets to function and the delivery of social assistance and services, including relief assistance, while the discontinuation of subsidies, already initiated, is expected to further aggravate social indicators especially for the most vulnerable.

Using the March 2020 World Bank estimates and CAS/ILO population figures, 1.7 million Lebanese were estimated to have fallen into poverty and 850,000 into extreme poverty in 2020. In March 2021, factoring in the impact from inflation, changes in income, and other macroeconomic factors, the estimated prevalence of poverty was revised at 78 percent (3 million people) and the estimated prevalence of extreme poverty at 36 percent (1.38 million) amongst Lebanese. Estimates for extreme poverty, also known as “food poverty,” are complemented by recent data on food insecurity amongst the Lebanese population. While a comparison with pre-crisis levels is difficult, an unpublished rapid poverty assessment conducted in 2016 found that 2.5 percent of the Lebanese were food insecure at that time. In sharp contrast, food insecurity affected 22 percent of Lebanese households in March/April 2021, with the highest prevalence found in the North governorate (27 percent) and the lowest in Mount Lebanon governorate (16 percent). Multiple shocks, including extreme inflation, are affecting all populations in Lebanon – Lebanese, refugee, and migrant men, women, girls, and boys alike. Food prices increased by 400 percent between January and December 2020, with food expenditures representing on average close to 50

percent of expenditures for the poorest households in 2021. Lebanese families are resorting to negative coping strategies such as consuming less food and food of lower quality. Fifty-seven percent of households have been reducing expenditures on health and education to meet their food needs. Lebanese families have also been purchasing food on credit (44 percent), borrowing cash (41 percent) and selling domestic assets (24 percent) to preserve their livelihoods. Food insecurity is significantly more prevalent amongst the unemployed than amongst those with a job (30 percent vs. 9 percent), it affects women more than men (27 percent vs. 21 percent) and households with a member with a chronic disease more than others (23 percent vs. 20 percent).

Women, girls, and female-headed households are more prone to food insecurity due to patriarchal norms and gender roles. Out of the estimated 210,000 migrants currently living in Lebanon, of which 75 percent are women, 43 percent (90,300) are vulnerable to food insecurity, adopting negative coping strategies due to lack of food or money to buy food. This includes purchasing of alternative and often non-nutritious food, relying on food provision from friends and relatives, limiting meal portions, and reducing the number of meals per day. Some respondents, predominantly women, stated that they had no other choice but to resort to exploitative, dangerous, or illegal work to cover their basic needs and of their families. While migrants’ return intentions remain high, as the economic situation deteriorates further and employment opportunities remain limited, migrants are stranded in Lebanon, increasingly exposed to exploitation, and in need of covering their basic needs for the period during which they will continue to live in Lebanon.

The drastic reduction in income-generating opportunities and hyperinflation are major drivers for the dramatically increased levels of extreme poverty and food insecurity, with Lebanese and migrant households unable to rely solely on social safety nets to cushion the impact of these shocks. Some **1.38 million Lebanese and 90,300 migrant men, women, boys, and girls** have been identified as in need for food and basic need assistance. This data on people in need will have to be reviewed on a continuing basis, especially since the upcoming removal of subsidies is expected to deepen and increase vulnerabilities and as uncertainty persists as to the exact timeline for the stepping up of Government-led social safety nets such as the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) and the Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN).

| | Population Estimate | Poverty - 2021 | Extreme Poverty - 2021 | Food Insecurity |
|-----------------|---------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Lebanese | 3,864,296 | 3,014,100 78% | 1,375,700 / 35.6% (M: 679,600; F: 696,100) | 850,145 / 22% |
| Migrants | 210,000 | n/a | n/a | 90,300 / 43% (M: 22,575; F: 67,725) |

Sectoral Objective and Activities

The overall sector objective is to address the unmet immediate basic needs, including food needs, of the most vulnerable Lebanese and migrant populations. The sector will respond through the provision of food through various modalities and basic needs assistance through cash to **490,300 Lebanese resident and migrant men, women, boys, and girls** not covered by ongoing and planned interventions until June 2022.

Response Plan Overview

Since the beginning of the crisis, the Government of Lebanon, sector partners and donors have taken measures to step up the coverage of social safety nets, mainly through scaling up the NPTP, response under the LCRP and the Beirut Blast appeal, and initiating an ESSN. These programmes, in addition to some ad-hoc interventions, still leave a significant gap to meet the current needs arising from the dramatic deterioration of Lebanon's economic situation.

The ERP objective is to respond to the needs of **490,300 most vulnerable Lebanese residents and migrants** with special focus on female headed households, households with people with disability, pregnant and lactating women and children under 5 and migrants by providing relief food and Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA) to cover other basic needs of individuals not covered by ongoing and planned interventions until June 2022. As such, the ERP is expected to target a total of **400,000 extremely poor Lebanese residents of which 12.4% boys, 11.7% girls, 36% men and 39.9% women** and **90,300 migrant individuals (of which 75% women)** vulnerable to food insecurity. The sector expects to target fully all members of the migrant community who are vulnerable to food insecurity through tailored outreach mechanisms and approaches and encourages its partners to scale-up their response to migrants given the limited anticipated resources. The total needs figure is the highest anticipated monthly target across the ERP period, with an average monthly target of 266,000 beneficiaries, accounting for the planned stepping up of other mechanisms such as the NPTP and the ESSN. To address the food and additional basic needs of the identified targeted population, the **ERP financial needs are USD 115.4 million** – including **USD 89.63 million for food assistance** and **USD 25.75 million for MPCA** to address other basic needs. Excluding confirmed and anticipated funding of USD 54.0 million, the actual required funding for the sector is USD 61.4 million.

While cash-based transfers (CBT) are amongst the preferred options for assistance, due to the prevailing economic situation, redemption through Money Transfer Operators (MTOs) instead of ATMs might also be considered, alongside electronic vouchers for restricted transfers (e.g. the food e-card currently used by NPTP beneficiaries). In-kind food transfers also remain a valid option, even after the access recently granted to the market exchange rate for USD contributions no longer makes this modality almost twice as cost-efficient as cash-based transfers. While in-kind food or hot meal distributions are a very common and effective modality for grassroots, niche-targeting and localized interventions by N/INGOs across the country, they also have advantages when used on a larger scale. In Lebanon's current unstable economic and financial context and unlike CBT, they are not as affected by food price inflation, exchange rate fluctuations, issues with ATM replenishment and overcrowding, shortage of liquidities, disruptions in commercial supply chains and food shortages, or retailers' closures.

Specifically, for this ERP, cash-based transfers have been budgeted at LBP 300,000 per person per month for food needs and at LBP 400,000 (based on a family size of four), for as MPCA for non-food needs – see below. The food transfer value is based on the price of the food SMEB, which reached close to LBP 300,000 at the end of June 2021. The response to basic needs component is calculated based on the non-food SMEB¹ value of LBP 1,000,000 in May 2021 and excluding the self-reported income of very poor Lebanese households (LBP 640,000). The difference was rounded to LBP 400,000 due to rising inflation and stagnating wages. As such, the MPCA intends to cover 40% of an extremely poor household expenditure on non-food needs. The plan has been coordinated with other relevant ERP sectors to ensure that there is no duplication of efforts or caseload

The non-food transfer value was calculated by subtracting from the non-food SMEB value (LBP 1,000,000 in May 2021) the self-reported income of very poor Lebanese households (LBP 640,000). The difference of LBP 360,000 was therefore rounded to LBP

¹ The non-food SMEB is composed of: NFIs (toilet paper, toothbrush, toothpaste, laundry soap/detergent, sanitary napkins, individuals soap, shampoo, diapers, disinfectant, blanket, cooking gas &

mattress) and non-NFIs (clothes, communication, rent, water, transportation, electricity, health and education).

400,000, namely the recommended non-food transfer value. However, due to the rising inflation and stagnation of wages in LBP, it should be noted that fixing transfer values at this (minimum survival) level would likely lead to many households with a working member having less disposable income than a household benefiting from relief assistance. The basic need cash component is

expected to cover 40 percent of an extremely poor household expenditure on non-food needs.

The plan has been coordinated with other relevant ERP sectors to ensure that there is no duplication of efforts or caseload.

Description of gender-sensitive and inclusive planning

The Food Security Sector strategy under the ERP will utilize available tools and lessons learnt to ensure equal access to all men, women, boys, and girls. This is even more relevant to migrant households, where the gender and age composition may vary from the typical Lebanese household. The sector will continue coordinating with the other sectors impacted due to the economic crisis (Nutrition, WASH and Health) while increasing collaboration with IOM for specific response and targeting of migrant individuals.

Consulting affected population, including, and receiving their feedback will be key in this regard. Centralised feedback channels like call centres and hotlines will be used to open two-way feedback and complement face to face channels like helpdesks. Moreover, providing information to affected communities about their rights and entitlement to food assistance and services available will be done through multiple formats and relevant languages will be adopted to address age, gender, literacy, language, cultural and disability barriers. The sector will also ensure that all partners engaged in the response, specifically front-line workers engaging in distribution activities (equal number of male and female workers will be aimed for), are trained on PSEA standards of conduct and also sensitized on issues of gender-based violence. The specific dietary needs and labour capacity of certain groups such as the elderly, pregnant and lactating women, children under five and people with chronic illnesses will also be taken into consideration.

Exit Strategy & Linkages with Non - Humanitarian Frameworks and programmes

The ERP objective is to tackle the unmet immediate basic needs, including food needs, of the most vulnerable Lebanese and migrant populations. At the same time there is a need for building linkages with longer-term prospects, programmes and policies, and for complementary direct assistance and services targeting specific vulnerabilities, which could be integrated in this response plan at a later stage. This ERP is rooted in the imperative to work across the humanitarian-development nexus and should look at using and strengthening domestic systems whenever possible.

The ERP will hence contribute towards forging direct links between humanitarian cash, voucher and in-kind programming and national safety nets, and the programmes and activities will support the transition from delivering humanitarian assistance to reducing needs. As such, this ERP will attempt to bridge the gap until full implementation and possible further expansion of government assistance schemes, including the ESSN programme.

In order to facilitate transition, the Food Security Sector, its leads and partners will ensure the necessary linkages with the NPTP, the ESSN, and other social assistance programmes, including deduplication of beneficiary households between programmes, convergence (where possible) of outreach/sourcing and eligibility/verification instruments, and coordination of efforts to sustain assistance beyond June 2022.

CONTACT INFO

| NAME | EMAIL | POSITION |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Pardie Karamanoukian | pardie.karamanoukian@wfp.org | Interim Sector Coordinator |
| Joseph Nakhle | joseph.nakhle@acted.org | NGO Co-chair |
| Kazem El Seblani | kazem.elseblani@wfp.org | Information Management Officer |