Meeting Minutes

Location: Four Season Hotel, Zenobia Venue, Damascus, Syria

Date: 15/12/2019

Agenda

1. Humanitarian updates.
2. NES Response updates.
3. FSS 2020 HNO updates
4. 2020 HRP updates and timelines
5. SHF NES Reserve Allocation 2019
6. Actual response (October) HRP SO 1, 2& 3 and partners update.
7. AOB

Participants
Aga Khan Foundation, TDH Italy, ADRA, Rescate, ICRC, UNHCR, AlTamyez NGO, UNRWA, UNHCR, FAO, OCHA

Chair: Joseph Oneka and Kenneth Anyanzo; Sector Coordinators

1. Humanitarian Situation Updates:

North East Syria

- NES Displacement movements reached 234,310 however only 73,000 remain in camp to-date.
- 91 active collective shelters hosting 14,113 individuals in NES and 38 currently empty.
- 2,500 individuals returned to places of origin in Hasakeh.
- Heavy rains caused flooding and some damages in 16 camps in NES and NWS.

North West Syria

- Response plan for 3,000 return movements from Idleb developed by Hama and Homs AHCTs.

High food prices and fuel shortages

- High food, commodity and fuel prices noticed due to depreciation of Syrian pounds affecting the crisis affected people.

2. NES Response Updates:

- The sector provided response updates for food assistance component of food security, which reached 530,130 beneficiaries as of November 2019 both from within Syria and NES forum operational partners.
- For agricultural input livelihoods component of food security- an analysis of planned responses was presented for planned response especially cereal input distribution with focus on NES and other governorates as outlined in the presentation (attached).
- Overall, 40,335 households being targeted by 3 partners for distribution of cereal seeds (wheat and barley) during the winter season of 2019/20.
**Action point:** Hamra and Tal Hamis sub-districts in Hama and Hasakeh governorates will require further coordination at the community level for complementarity (see attached presentation).

### 3. FSS 2020 HNO updates:

- **Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)-** Coordinated and systematic process for assessing and prioritizing the needs of the affected people during an emergency as a basis for a coherent, efficient and effective response. HNO components include determination of People in Need (PiN), severity rankings of geographical locations and key drivers of needs.
- **HNO process-** 4 stages process of:- assessments (primary and secondary data collection); data analysis by technical team from sector lead agencies and sector coordination team; validation of the analysis by sector operational partners including technical team/sector coordination team/partners and drafting of HNO by sector teams and partners.
- **FSS HNO methodology:**
  - PIN:- Household Survey (21,916 HH); CARI methodology used for analysis of prevalence of food insecurity (Food Consumption Score); LCSI (Livelihoods Coping Strategies) and Food Share Expenditure Share.
  - Severity rankings indicators included CARI (FSA/FSLA); Reliance on Humanitarian Assistance (Food Security Sector); Intensity of Conflict (OCHA); Accessibility (Food Security Sector); % of IDPs and Returnees (OCHA); Market prices (WFP); NDVI/Precipitation (FAO); and Agriculture production (FAO) Note: Severity of Scale of 1-6 (least to highest used).
  - Contextual analysis:- Inflation; Currency Trends; Access to services; Nutrition and health information; Poverty trends; Employment and livelihood opportunities and food security shocks
- **Key findings and messages:**
  - **Key Message 1:**
    - 7.9 million people are thought to be food insecure with an additional 1.9 million at risk of food insecurity: At least 568,928 people estimated to be severely food.
    - Slow pace of improvement in food security.
    - Persistent civil insecurity & displacement; poor macro economic conditions (inflation, currency depreciation; high poverty levels; massive disruption of services & dilapidation of infrastructure; high cost of goods and services and consequently production costs and seasonal shocks in particular crop fires, crop diseases and water shortages are key drivers of food insecurity.
    - All population groups have been affected by the protracted crisis evident with only 15% of the sub-districts facing minor food insecurity. Women and children comprise a substantial proportion of households experiencing food insecurity estimated at 49% and 32% respectively.
    - In particular children and pregnant and/ or lactating women face the highest risk in terms of a deterioration of physical and mental well-being as a result of inadequate food consumption.
    - In South and Central Syria, access to areas that have changed control as the crisis continues remain difficult to reach regularly with assistance.
  - **Key Message 2:**
    - High food expenditures with over 57% of the assessed population adopting stress, emergency or crisis coping strategies.
    - High unemployment and poverty rates persist in most parts of the country
    - At least 438,000 Palestinian refugees living in the country remain vulnerable to food insecurity.
    - The FSS is drawing attention to a further 1.2 million people in North East Syria who could be affected because of the creation of the 32km buffer zone, through large-scale displacement.
    - Addressing food insecurity in a sustainable manner will require overall improvement in infrastructure and services and greater investment in livelihood programmes at scale targeting all affected populations.
  - **Key Message 3:**
    - Overall improvement in cereal production in 2019. However, wheat production at 2.2 million tones still below pre-crisis levels of 4.1 million tones (2002-2011) and that of domestic requirements (food use) of 3.4 million tones.
    - Observed impact of shocks on crop production e.g. fires, yellow rust wheat disease, water shortages although not significant at national level has had significant impact on affected communities.
    - The operation peace spring/32km zone likely to threaten longer-term food insecurity in adequate measures are not put in place to compensate for the loss in production in the affected areas.
• FSS stresses the need to combine medium term approaches through enhancing primary production capacity and incomes in order to improve local availability of food (supply) with short term measures through food assistance and imports which remain key to addressing food insecurity in the country in a holistic manner and hence physical and mental wellbeing as well as the living standards of crisis affected people.

➢ Population groups and areas to be prioritized
   o Households living in governorates facing moderate to severe food insecurity in particular Aleppo, Idleb, Hasakeh, Deir-ez-zor and Dara.
   o IDPs and Camp residents in particular Aleppo, Idleb, Rural Damascus, Damascus, Hasakeh and Deir-ez-zor.
   o Overburdened host communities in the country and in particular in NES hosting IDPs owing to the 32km zone impact.
   o Returnees in particular Dara, Aleppo and Deir-ez-zor.
   o Governorates in Southwest and central still facing the crisis aftermath.
   o Palestinian refugees.

➢ Challenges
   o Full access to some population groups is still a challenge due to a combination of insecurity and restrictions by local authorities.
   o Limited funding for livelihoods including in areas facing relative stability.
   o Harmonized targeting approach not yet rolled out across the board.

➢ Key asks from donors
   o Continued funding for food assistance to the most affected populations in particular IDPs, camp residents and populations in sub-districts facing the highest levels of food insecurity.
   o More support for agriculture and livelihoods related services.
   o Provide flexible funding to allow a shift in programing and relocation of funds during emergencies and use of either in-kind or cash depending on the feasibility of either modality.

**Action point:** Food security partners confirm that the HNO draft is a true reflection of the needs on the ground.

4. **2020 HRP Updates and Timelines:**
   ➢ Food security sector thanked partners for honoring the invitation to participate in the project module training which was conducted by OCHA/Sector coordination team on 11th December 2019 in preparation partners projects/appeals submission.
   ➢ OCHA updated partners on OPS system opening scheduled for 16-30th January 2020 as per revised 2020HRP time frame.

**Action point:** Operational partners were urged to ensure that response in terms of appeals that will be submitted is commensurate with coverage and needs from within Syria.
5. **SHF Reserve Allocation 2019 for NES:**

- 3rd Reserve SHF allocation of US 15million was approved and committed during November 2019 to respond to urgent needs in NES emergency.
- Food security sector was allocated USD 2million and priorities were emergency agricultural input distribution since NES responses analysis had indicated that first line response (food assistance) were adequately covered by resources available to partners (NES partners and WFP).
- The 3rd reserve SHF allocation was launched on 13-19th November and only 3 partners responded (Al Wassel, Syrian Society for Development and FAO).
- The sector technical review committee met on 20th November 2019 and approved FAO proposal.

**Action points:** Limited responses from food security partners. Sector urged operational partners to always response to any call for proposal and if in doubts consult with sector.

6. **Actual Response (October) HRP SO 1, 2 & 3 and Partners Update:**

*P.S. This part not presented on the last meeting. If you need further info please, don't hesitate to ask us*