

Food security and agriculture sector

1. Overall Sector Strategy

Emerging new challenges (for a full analysis please refer to the Chapeau of the LCRP)

In the past years Lebanon has been facing a wave of multiple unprecedented shocks – the impact of the Syrian conflict, the acceleration of the financial and economic crisis, the ensuing political crisis and civil unrest, the outbreak of COVID-19 and the port explosion in Beirut– that have taken the toll on the purchasing power and livelihoods of the vast refugee population and poor Lebanese households. They have changed the face of poverty and food insecurity in Lebanon, making them significantly more acute and widespread.

Vulnerable and disadvantaged populations¹ have been affected by the rapid depreciation of the Lebanese Lira that lost nearly 80 per cent of its value since October 2019;² and the spike in the cost of the national food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB).³ Compounded by job losses, underemployment and reduced incomes, these crises have severely impacted access to adequate food. The planned removal of import subsidies is expected to add an unbearable strain on households' purchasing power, with the price of bread potentially multiplied by 1.5 to 3 and that of fuel by 4.5.

In June 2020, according to WFP web survey, 50 per cent of Lebanese and 75 per cent of Syrian refugees reported feeling worried about not having enough food to eat in the last month, as a result of income and job losses.ⁱ An UNRWA socio-economic survey of Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) in March 2020 indicated that even before COVID-19 related lockdowns started, 83.3 per cent of respondents worried about not being able to provide their families with the daily basic necessities or about losing their source of income.

In August 2020, a WFP/WB phone survey found that 40 per cent of households across the country had financial difficulties accessing markets to cover their food needs and other basic needs. Deteriorated purchasing power is the main reason why their food security is at risk.

Food availability in Lebanon is also at peril. Lebanon's low foreign currency reserves will hinder food imports, with direct implications on the replenishment of supplies, as the country depends on imports for 80 per cent of its food needs. From January to June 2020 the total imports volume decreased by 41 per cent compared to the first half of 2019, while total food imports volume (excluding cereals) decreased by 17.6 per cent. However, the volume of imported cereals slightly increased, at an approximate total of 660,000 tons in the first half of 2020.

In the absence of efficient social safety nets system, food needs of the most vulnerable will go unmet. It is now estimated that 23 per cent of Lebanese populations live in extreme poverty and that 1 out of 5 Lebanese are food consuming inadequate diets. The percentage of displaced Syrians living under the extreme poverty line⁴ is estimated to have jumped in 2020 to 88 per cent (1,320,000 affected individuals), almost the entire refugee population.ⁱⁱ The UNRWA socio-economic survey 2020 indicated that 87 per cent of PRS are living in poverty.

Even before the COVID-19 outbreak and the deepening of the economic and financial crisis during the summer of 2020, in January 2020, the "Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes Agricoles Libanais" (CREAL) estimated that, on average,

¹ The response plan focuses on vulnerable communities including persons displaced from Syria, vulnerable Lebanese and Palestine refugees. Refugees from other nationalities can also be covered under the "one-refugee" approach.

² assuming an average informal exchange rate of 8,000 LBP/1USD– while the official rate remains at LBP 1505/USD.

³ The food SMEB increased by 177 per cent since October 2019. WFP/VAM (October 2020) Lebanon VAM Update on Food Price Trends, August 2020. Period covered until August 2020.

⁴ Revision of SMEB/MEB threshold based on increase in prices of food and non food items, in 2020.

the value of the 2020 agricultural production would decrease by about 38 per cent: a 47 per cent decline in plant production and 26 per cent in animal production.

In fact, Lebanese farmers, mainly small-scale, are seriously affected by these cumulative crises, in particular the increase in costs of imported agricultural inputs and the lack of financial resources to purchase them in cash and in foreign currency (USD). The agricultural sector has moved to a low input system, which will likely result in a decline in yields and marketable production.

The context for food security and agriculture in Lebanon has therefore radically changed in the past year, exacerbating structural problems in the economy, including for the agriculture and agri-food sectors, and putting at risk the food security, especially of most vulnerable group and across all population cohorts. The economic outlook for 2021 does not warrant an improvement of the food security situation in Lebanon, but rather a worrying future prospect with increased needs and instability in the coming months.

In this context of emerging new challenges, issues and needs related to food security and agriculture, the two main overarching objectives of the Food Security and Agriculture Sector - **i) to reduce food insecurity and ii) to improve the resilience of the agricultural sector to the impact of the Syria crisis, compounded with other crises - remain relevant and valid.**

Achieving these objectives addresses the two main challenges that the Sector has been facing regarding the impact of the Syria crisis and replies to the degraded economic situation. **The first challenge to address is to reduce the rising worrying food insecurity levels among vulnerable communities and households**, and ensure that at all times they have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. **The second challenge, closely linked to the first one, relates to the impact of the Syria crisis on the Lebanese food system/agricultural sector and how to support the government in enhancing agricultural production, productivity and profitability as well as agricultural livelihoods.** The sector strategy will adopt a dual track approach to the above mentioned-challenges through a humanitarian-stabilization continuum as multiple actions are needed to ensure that all four pillars of food security are adequately addressed. *For a definition of the pillars see box below.*

Four pillars of Food Security:

- 1- **Food availability:** the availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through sustainable agricultural domestic production, food value chain and marketing or imports, including food assistance targeting vulnerable households impacted by the Syrian crisis
- 2- **Food access:** Access by individuals to adequate resources (entitlements) for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Entitlements are defined as the set of all commodities bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic and social arrangements of the community in which they live
- 3- **Utilization:** utilization of food through adequate diet and clean water by promoting diversified and quality foods to improve food safety and nutritional practices;
- 4- **Stability:** To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. They should not risk of losing access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks or cyclical events. The concept of stability requires enhancing information on food security, coordination of agriculture activities and supporting national policy formulations.

Objective 1: Reducing rising food insecurity levels in a context of multiple crises

The first challenge to address for the sector is to reduce the rising worrying food insecurity levels among vulnerable communities and households, and ensure that at all times, communities have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Nine out of ten displaced Syrians households live below the SMEB (extreme poverty) and are not capable of covering expenses⁵ through employment.ⁱⁱⁱ While the LCRP 2021 Chapeau provides a situation analysis from a food security perspective, it is important to reiterate here that **half of the total Syrian refugee population is now food insecure, with moderately or severely food insecure households increasing from a combined 29 per cent in 2019 to 49 per cent in 2020.**

An unprecedented 20 per cent of Lebanese households, consume inadequate diets and are considered food insecure, compared with 10 per cent of households deemed to be vulnerable to food insecurity in 2015.^{iv} The vast majority (9 out of 10) are relying on less expensive and less preferred food and almost every second household are reducing their portion sizes (less diverse diet, cheaper options, smaller portions, skipping meals), with a potential negative impact on their nutritional and health status. As a result, 19 per cent of the Lebanese have an inadequate diet,^v and displaced Syrian are also at increasing risk of malnutrition, based on the negative coping strategies explained below.

Syrian households are increasingly resorting to a variety of food and livelihoods coping strategies⁷: this shows that households have reached a point where their assets have been already depleted and now have a much lower capacity to cope with future shocks. Such coping strategies are not only damaging and unsustainable but, once exhausted, have great impact on the population, mainly on women, girls and boys, and increase exposure to more harmful practices such as child labour, including in its worst forms such as early marriage and other exploitative practices.

In 2015, a total of 94.5 per cent of Palestinian refugees from Syria reported to be food insecure, out of which 63.2 per cent reported to be severely food insecure.^{vi} According to UNRWA's post-distribution monitoring exercise conducted in April 2019, the overwhelming majority (92%) of Palestinian refugees from Syria rely heavily on assistance provided by UNRWA as a main source of income and are also heavily indebted as their access to formal employment is limited. Palestinian refugees are relying on negative food-related coping strategies, such as relying on less preferred and less expensive food of lower quality, reducing the number of meals and limiting the portion size of meals.^{vii}

Referrals and requests for food assistance by refugees have therefore increased exponentially, compared with 2019: since March 2020 the WFP/UNHCR call center has been receiving a very high unprecedented number of calls from non-beneficiaries refugees requesting assistance for food, non-food or both, reaching 26, 277 calls only in the month of July.^{viii} A similar trend is expected for vulnerable Lebanese households.

The Sector's strategic approach to the first challenge – given the sharp rise in food insecurity of vulnerable communities and households - will be to increase the level of humanitarian assistance to ensure availability and access to nutritious and adequate food for the most vulnerable, including women, children and persons with specific needs, through the provision of in-kind or cash-based food assistance, as also recommended by the mid-term review of the LCRP.

The protracted nature of the Syria crisis, the increased socio-economic vulnerability and widespread food insecurity across all populations cohorts, the unabating COVID-19 outbreak and the uncertainties related to the lifting of food subsidies, make it an imperative and more relevant than ever for the sector to continue to provide life-saving food assistance to the most vulnerable populations to reduce their food insecurity by 2021. The provision of humanitarian assistance to the most vulnerable populations will remain the pre-requisite "sine qua non" for sector interventions as

⁵ Namely their Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB)

⁶ According to Lebanese laws and regulations, displaced Syrians can only work in the agriculture, construction and waste management sectors.

⁷ relying on reduced portion size of meals, reduced number of meals eaten per day, especially used by women, borrowed food or relied on help from friends or relatives, and restrict consumption of female head of households.⁷ In general livelihoods coping strategy, also known as assets depletion copying strategy, have seen a decrease in the adoption of crisis and emergencies coping strategies⁷ despite the worsening food consumption scores:

well an enabler of stability in the country, mitigating rising violence, insecurity and social tensions. By providing assistance to those families and removing the uncertainty of where the next meal will come from, sector activities will allow for a minimum standard of living, and satisfy basic food needs and adoption of a healthy and nutritious diet, which might ultimately also free up resources for families to access health and education services and instill a sense of hope in the midst of continuing multiple crises.

As the Sector may not have sufficient fund to cover all the needs, it is important to reach people assessed as food insecure through a harmonized selection and targeting criteria by the different partners, to meet monthly food and nutritional needs through the most feasible and contextually appropriate modality. Integrating a context analysis based on the location of the interventions, especially the ones that have any degree of conflict and tension, might also be useful.

Furthermore, the partners of the FSSWG will aim for food insecure households receiving a meaningful assistance through which they can access a proper food basket as per the latest SMEB review.

The Sector's food assistance will continue to be provided through **in-kind and cash-based modalities**, preferably through cash assistance. As the increase in food coping strategies could lead to micronutrient deficiencies and in the long run to widespread malnutrition, assistance to vulnerable households will need to be expanded to consider the nutrition needs of newly food insecure households and ensure better nutrition practices.

In 2020, sector partners increased the **provision of in-kind assistance** (food parcels, hot meals and community kitchens, school feeding) during the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Beirut Port explosions, because the measures taken to prevent COVID-19 transmission (lockdowns, isolation and quarantines in case of positive or suspected cases) and the destruction to residential buildings caused by the port blast triggered a need for urgent provision of immediately available food for vulnerable populations. Regular food parcels, food vouchers programmes under the LCRP also continued; however, school meals modality switched to take home food parcels to the families of the students that could not be in school due to the closures related to COVID-19.

In 2021, the in-kind modality will continue to be adopted to improve the availability of food to individuals and communities in a predictable and safe way. As a strategy to better improve the health and prevent malnutrition of recipient, the sector will specifically focus on women, households with pregnant and lactating women, children, elderly and people with specific needs, who are more at risk of food insecurity and micronutrient deficiencies.⁸ Coordination with other sectors and/or community-based structures is suggested for partners to reach out to vulnerable people affected by lockdown/restriction of movement, especially in "hard-to-reach" areas.

However, the in-kind modality will be intended in the context of contingency planning to specifically address time-bound emergencies (i.e. winter storms,⁹ COVID-19) and to be provided on a punctual basis, such as during the Holy month of Ramadan, as a number of partners have traditionally done to supplement vulnerable families' needs. The reason for the above rests on the fact that market functionality in Lebanon still allows the implementation of cash-based transfers programmes, that inject much needed cash in the local economy and do not disrupt local markets.

For 2021, the Sector strategy aims to enhance local production through the procurement of locally produced/sourced food parcels with the objective to increase the percentage of locally produced food parcels contents and hot meals; although there are some limitations due to the limited range of food products produced in Lebanon, the high prices, and issues related to ensuring food safety. Where conditions are in place the Sector will promote linkages between cooperatives, MSMEs and local producers and the partners implementing in-kind programmes to encourage and improve local sourcing of some food items in the Sector's food parcel suggested composition. This would allow support to local producers and the sustainability of in-kind interventions, without disrupting local markets, while at the same time facilitating the adoption of good agricultural and sustainable practices by local producers.

⁸ Coordination with other sectors and/or community-based structures to outreach vulnerable people in light of lockdown/restriction of movement especially in the "hard-to-reach" areas to ensure that the in-kind assistance is reaching them

⁹ Lebanon is vulnerable to a number of seasonal shocks, such as flooding, snowstorms and storms that in combination with the current refugee crisis have compounded effects on vulnerable populations. For example, because of floods and snowstorms in early 2019, refugees in Aarsal and Bekaa struggled to access basic services including food. The sector will therefore coordinate the responses from partners, in consultation with the inter sector systems in place namely the extreme weather and emergencies tools, to provide for seasonal/one-off assistance to address temporary needs in such small and medium emergencies.⁹ Given the seasonal and one-off type of interventions, they are not reflected in the target for regular in-kind assistance.

In a similar spirit to support local livelihoods, the Sector will collaborate with the Livelihoods and Basic Assistance sectors to create effective referral pathways and encourage linkages between cash for work initiatives involving vulnerable population, especially youth, and the implementation and delivery of in-kind modalities.

Sector partners will be encouraged to adopt the sector guidelines on the composition of the food parcel,¹⁰ the SOPs on the dissemination of food parcels and to abide by the Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) SOPs,¹¹ adding IYCF messaging when possible to go along with in-kind donations.

The Sector will encourage partners in their monitoring exercises to assess women, men, girls, boys and people with disabilities' access to food and their control over resources and assets.

The sector guidelines on the composition of the food parcel ensures that the quantity and quality of the food provided by different organizations and individuals respond to the recommended nutritional needs, and that household members have access to a minimum and balanced nutritional content, including culturally acceptable foods. It covers most of the energy/caloric needs for a family of five for one month (73 per cent of the full daily requirement of 2,100 kcal/person/day with minimum macronutrient and micronutrient requirements). It is therefore recommended that the dry food ration distribution is accompanied with fresh food baskets whenever possible, including vegetables that have a long shelf-life. Similarly, the composition of school snacks follows nutritional standards and include fresh fruits.

Cash-based food assistance, which represents the bulk of sector food assistance, improves refugee families' access to food in an innovative way through the provision of cash redeemable at contracted shops and ATM. Cash transfers allow the most vulnerable households to acquire much-needed essential food items and meet their basic needs in a dignified manner by allowing them to prioritize their purchases according to their needs, with greater purchasing power and the possibility to buy fresher and more healthy food items. They can help prevent negative coping strategies, such as sending children to work and earn an income.

The changed context and increased needs would require increases in targeted vulnerable population number and transfer value of cash-based transfers for both refugees and Lebanese (under the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP)), to catch up with the loss of purchasing power and loss of income. In the course of 2020, partners have already increased the number of people assisted, accompanied by revisions of the transfer value up to 100,000 LBP per person per month starting in October 2020,¹² and will continue to support the NPTP, Lebanon's only national social assistance programme, and complementing MOSA's efforts by supporting additional households in 2021.

In 2020, an increase in aid perception bias related to cash, in-kind assistance and targeting was witnessed resulting in increased tensions. In some cases, these tensions materialized in incidents related to aid distribution and withdrawal of cash assistance, in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, the North and the Bekaa. This concerning development highlights the need for partners to ensure conflict sensitivity and do no harm in their programme design and adopt mitigation measures, including modifications to the modality of distribution, having a more inclusive approach and communication as well as adopting measures that account to the tension drivers and community specific dynamics (please see section 3).

Objective 2: Improve the resilience of the agricultural sector to the impact of the Syria crisis in a context of multiple crisis

Until 2019, the second sector challenge, closely linked to the first one, was mainly related to the impact of the Syria crisis on the Lebanese food system/agricultural sector and how to support the farmers, associations/cooperatives and the government in enhancing agricultural production, productivity and profitability as well as agricultural livelihoods.

¹⁰ <https://fscluster.org/lebanon/document/fss-guidance-food-parcels-composition>

¹¹ <https://fscluster.org/lebanon/document/sop-infant-and-young-child-feeding>

¹² For NPTP beneficiaries of food ecard; in November 2020 for Syrian refugees. The market price of the SMEB food component was measured in 2014 and adjusted in 2015 to determine the transfer value (TV) for food assistance: USD 27 equivalent to LBP 40,500 at the official exchange.

This challenge is structural in nature as, since the end of the Civil War in 1990, the agricultural sector has operated with no financial or enabling policy support from the Government.

During the past year, the multiple crisis have highly affected the agriculture and agri-food sectors. The estimated cost of agricultural production increased by more than 50 per cent for various agricultural systems and the cost of basic agriculture inputs rose by 400 per cent. This was coupled with difficulties accessing traditional forms of credit and the reduction of sales due to lower purchasing power. Farmers now face high input costs and low output prices.

As many farmers lack liquidity to purchase inputs they have started to substitute, where possible, various inputs: using lower quality inputs such as manure or compost for compound fertilizer and their own seeds for certified ones, changing crops and, the reduction of cultivated areas by 20-80 per cent. As a consequence, the **agricultural sector has moved to a low input system, which will likely result in a decline in yields and marketable production.**^{ix} This is also likely to result in further employment losses for Syrian refugees, for whom agriculture remains a critical livelihood and of one the few sectors where they are allowed to work, according to Lebanese laws and regulations.

Challenges for the agriculture sector and food production are also likely to be exacerbated by the impact of climate change on natural resources, intensifying water scarcity, loss of pasture lands, and shifts in production zones.^x Analysis suggests that higher temperatures and fluctuating rainfall patterns will likely decrease agricultural productivity,^{xi} which could then negatively impact food security outcomes.

At the same time, the changing context has also drawn attention to agriculture as a productive sector that – with the much needed reforms and funding – could open up the door to new opportunities for farmers domestically and abroad, and can play a positive contribution to Lebanon’s socio-economic stability.

Support to resuming food production is important for Lebanon’s food security, to overcome some of the critical limitations of overwhelming import dependency. It should be a priority not only for saving lives but also to make possible recovery and development. Under Objective 2, **the Sector is therefore proposing a twin track approach that: i) addresses immediate agriculture recovery needs and ii) builds agriculture longer term resilience.** Both require increasing financial resources to be invested in primary food production, food transformation and food utilization.

i. Address immediate agriculture recovery needs

Supporting farmers in need will ensure that they will not miss the sowing seasons and will be able to supply their communities and domestic markets with more affordable produce than imported food. The Sector will therefore focus part of the response in 2021 on emergency/short term agriculture support interventions, aiming at restoring the livelihoods and productive capacities of farmers and producers.

Emergency/short term agriculture support interventions include cash and vouchers programme schemes for farmers, particularly small farmers, that have limited access to imported quality agricultural inputs, livestock feed and essential items for the production due to sharp currency devaluation and drastically reduced liquidity. Therefore, one strategy is to improve smallholders’ access to these inputs. Voucher schemes provide poor, vulnerable and food insecure farmers with a voucher that they can redeem to purchase inputs from selected suppliers who have agreed to honor the vouchers. The schemes support farmers to maintain their production but also enhance their productivity by facilitating access to improved seeds, fertilizers, hand-tools, etc. Partners can rely on the sector guidance note developed by FAO on agricultural inputs vouchers scheme.^{xii} Interventions supporting immediate recovery of the agricultural sector and to enhance food production for home consumption, should be nutrition sensitive and foster the cultivation of different varieties of produce which provides a diverse and adequate diet.

ii Build longer term agriculture resilience

More than ever there is a need to strengthen domestic food production and enhance its quality and safety in order for Lebanese farmers to have a greater share of the domestic food market as well as improved access to export

markets. The agriculture sector, although employing only 8 per cent of Lebanon’s total labour force, is a primary source of income and employment in rural areas where it might reach up to 25 percent of the labour force and 80 percent of the local GDP.^{xiii}

In keeping with previous year strategy, the Sector adopts a “**food system**” approach,¹³ that in a comprehensive, inclusive framework encompasses food production, transformation and consumption.¹⁴ Improving the performance of the food systems can improve access to food and spur productivity and income. The food system approach to stabilization intends to guide partners to intervene at different intersections of the food system be it in food production, food transformation or food consumption, identifying synergies among partners and facilitating the coordination needed to achieve them.^{xiv}

Food production: Investments need to support small-scale farmers to increase local production capacities and food availability, boost productivity and incomes and ultimately expand employment opportunities for both displaced Syrians and vulnerable population living in Lebanon, with a particular attention to the youth. In the context of the devaluation of the local currency, there is an opportunity for Lebanese farmers to better compete with imported products and to expand their share of the domestic market as well as to enhance their competitiveness in external markets.

Given the impact of the Syria crisis on the environment¹⁵ and the increasing climate risks faced by the Lebanese agriculture sector, the Food Security and Agriculture Sector will support investments into climate smart agricultural production,¹⁶ climate adaptation and the rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure and assets, such as small-scale irrigation canals, ponds, land reclamation, water reservoirs, roads linking farms to markets, as well as sustainable management of land and water resources to improve soil and water conservation and as to avoid soil and surface water contamination.

The rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure mentioned above strengthens agricultural production and mitigate climate risk and shocks, fosters temporary/seasonal job creation, in compliance with Lebanese laws and regulations, and contributes to long-term livelihood and environmental benefits.¹⁷

Forestry projects remain as well relevant because they support government efforts in reforestation and sustainable forest management and provide stable environmental conditions on which sustainable food production depends.¹⁸ This is also relevant in the context of the recent forest fires spreading in Lebanon.¹⁹

Investments in the agriculture sector need to be accompanied by building skills and competencies that target youth, individual farmers, producers’ associations and displaced people, according to Lebanese laws and regulations, and paying attention to women,. Trainings on food production - Integrated Crop and Pest Management (IPM), good

¹³ Food systems are networks of relationships that encompass the functions and activities involved in producing, processing, marketing, consuming and disposing of goods from agriculture, forestry or fisheries. Performing food systems deliver sufficient, safe and nutrition food to consumers ; however food systems do not always function in a way that meet the needs of the vulnerable section of the society

¹⁴ Functions covering land preparation, inputs, planting and harvesting under food production; transport, storage, handling, processing, wholesaling and retailing under food transformation; and, on purchasing, consumption and utilization under food consumption

¹⁵ In 2014, the Ministry of Environment (MoE) assessed the environmental impact of the Syria crisis which showed an increase in water and soil contamination directly affecting the quality of agricultural produce.

¹⁶ Through assessments of resilient crops and plants and provision of seasonally appropriate agricultural inputs.

¹⁷ The assets and infrastructure rehabilitated or built are handed over to the municipalities, which own or co-own the assets.

¹⁸ Lebanon is among the countries where FAO is supporting the Forest and Landscape Restoration mechanism aiming at seeking a balance between restoring ecosystem services (soil, water conservation) and the productive functions of agriculture lands that provide food, energy and other products for sustainable livelihoods. This is done through restoration of areas vulnerable to climate change and enhancing communities’ adaptation to the negative impact of climate change.

¹⁹ The number of forest fires occurring during October and November seems to be increasing during the past 2 years. While the effect of climate change is leading to longer and dryer summers, extending until the end of October, all forest fires are of human origin (either accidental or arson). The increasing number of fires in rural areas coincides with traditional agricultural practices, mainly in olive groves, that consist of cleaning the lands then burning the biomass in order to have a clean orchard and make the olive harvest operations easier. Remote sensing images and field visits confirm the fact that many fires are starting on the interface between orchards and woodlands. With the drought and the strong winds, the fire runs fast and becomes quickly uncontrollable. Awareness should be raised on the importance of avoiding any form of fire during the risky periods.

agricultural practices (GAP) and conservation techniques and on other functions of the food system - remain crucial to equip vulnerable farmers and youth with much needed skills that can open up the door to new employment opportunities and profitable farm business, including those skills that refugees might need to re-build their livelihoods once they return to Syria and their countries.

Given the constraints faced with organizing face to face training sessions while the COVID-19 outbreak is ongoing, agricultural technical education and vocational training have adopted online remote learning modality. Though not always effective, this modality has allowed some activities to continue. In 2021, the Sector will support partners to develop an online learning and TVET harmonised approach for the agricultural sector

The implementation of assets building projects and/or provision of trainings/capacity building will ensure that work arrangements and norms are mindful of women's and men's needs and constraints and that the content and delivery of education and training sessions are tailored to the particular needs of women and men, for example by providing participating women with childcare options.

When it is possible to have similar trainings for both displaced Syrians and vulnerable population in Lebanon,²⁰ the sector will encourage organising joint trainings as evidence from other contexts show that joint trainings are a means of reducing social tensions and that decreasing interactions is usually negative.^{xv}

Food transformation: Investments in agricultural value chains development lend themselves very well to interventions along a humanitarian stabilisation continuum for the value addition they provide in the production, transformation and marketing of Lebanese agricultural products. In the current context there is an opportunity to revitalise the agriculture sector because of the production possibilities. The sector strategy will seek to sow the seeds to improve in the long run the value chains building blocks and increase their value added. It will be done by promoting quality, adopting innovative approaches, postharvest management practices to reduce food wastages and losses²¹ and enhancing agri-food processing, packaging and marketing. To this end, sector partners will work to improve the capacities of key actors, such as cooperatives, in particular those whose members are women, and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to make value chains in agriculture and food production more competitive and profitable. The sector will in particular promote market linkages to generate sustainable growth and employment and enhance competitiveness of the Lebanese agricultural products, as those are considered as key for agriculture cooperatives sustainability and to respond to the current challenges, phrased in terms of access to markets and marketing of products (strategies, quality controls, marketing and labelling) by recent partners' assessments.

The Sector will continue to promote seasonal and casual agricultural job opportunities in support of Lebanese private agriculture investment, in consideration of demand by local agricultural businesses and cooperatives and, in the case of displaced refugees, as temporary agricultural workers, in accordance with Lebanese laws and regulations. Short-term opportunities can provide a cushion for rural population in the current unemployment and underemployment crisis and a means to partially fill existing food gaps, through food assistance for assets and food assistance for trainings programmes.

Food consumption: Promoting and protecting nutritional well-being in a protracted crisis requires targeted interventions taking into account increasing needs, including nutrition needs of newly food insecure households, and expanding assistance to promote better nutrition practices.

Food-based coping strategies have increased as highlighted in VASyR 2020 results – including meal skipping and portion reduction. Partners' assessment of vulnerable families showed that in addition to adopting food-based

²⁰ That it will not be always possible given the difference in needs and training focus for different population cohorts

²¹ It seems that there are no comprehensive figure available to show the magnitude of food wastage at the national scale. In 2016 academic research showed that Lebanese households throw away at least 250 grams of still consumable food each week, equivalent to about US\$6 per month (Journal of Food Security (2016), "Preliminary Insights on Household Food Wastage in Lebanon," in <http://pubs.sciepub.com/jfs/4/6/2/>)

negative coping strategies, they had significantly reduced their consumption of meat, dairy and fresh vegetables and fruits.^{xvi}

As stated above, 19 per cent of Lebanese have an inadequate diet. The diet of a quarter of Syrian refugee households was inadequate in 2019 (VASYR 2019) and it is particularly the case of young children (VASYR 2019). Targeted interventions are particularly needed in favour of women-headed households, of which only 24 per cent consumes 6.5 or more food groups per day (such as dairy products, meat, fish, eggs, and vegetables).^{xvii} Micronutrients intake, in particular of iron, remains problematic.^{xviii}

Infant and young child feeding practices are poor - exclusive breastfeeding for infants less than 6 months, was recorded as 14.8 per cent, one of the lowest in the world and more than 72 per cent of children do not breastfeed anymore in Lebanon when they celebrate their 1st birthday. Women are particularly in need: a recent UNFPA report highlights that 45 per cent of pregnant and lactating women need nutrition support. Among vulnerable families, more than 20 per cent of the mothers of children under 2 need immediate referral for nutrition.^{xix}

All these changes in food consumption are bound to have a negative impact on the nutritional status of the population and to impact the most vulnerable the hardest. However, there is no recent nutrition survey allowing to know the scale of acute malnutrition, chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies such as anemia. A nutrition survey, advocated under the health sector, is urgently needed to detect and monitor malnutrition, and to be ready to scale up nutrition and IYCF awareness under the food security and agriculture sector.

The Sector will continue to advocate for a nutrition survey, to scale up the ability to prevent malnutrition, to improve communities and households' availability and access to nutritious food through micro-gardening, school-gardens, fresh food vouchers, and nutritional education/awareness including adequate infant and young child feeding practices, along with food preservation, particularly targeted at women, which would promote dietary diversity as well as increase nutritional intake.

Food safety remains a major issue, which affects the ability among consumers to eat safe and nutritious food and affect the competitiveness among exporters.^{xx22} Efficient functioning of the food safety sector is vital for Lebanese agriculture exporters' ability to market in countries where stringent food safety practices, including rigorous residue traceability standards, are in place.^{xxi}

A strategy for stabilization

A strategy for stabilization sets the stage for transitioning towards enhancement of national and local service delivery, which is one of the LCRP impact statements. Although the current multiple crisis do not warrant an improvement in local service delivery in 2021, close collaboration with and support to Lebanese public services and institutions (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Energy and Water and the Ministry of Environment) remains critical to recuperate the LCRP gains lost in the past year, and contribute towards achieving the overarching objectives of the Food Security and Agriculture Sector, as recommended by the mid-term review of the LCRP. Across the strategy, national institutions are supported in their efforts to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the services they provide and to increase the number of vulnerable host communities having access to basic services through national systems. This response objective aims to strengthen national and local capacities to meet the increasingly overwhelming service-related needs.

Key priorities of the Sector remain to strengthen national and local institutions capacities in food security/agriculture and social safety nets through support to service delivery, system strengthening, capacity strengthening and building and policy development.

To this end, the Sector, through the interventions of its partners, aims to strengthen the capacities of national and local service delivery of agricultural institutions such as the Directorate General of Agriculture, the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI), the Green Plan, the Directorate General of Cooperatives (DGC), technical

²² In terms of food safety, the institution of the farm-to-fork principle will be essential towards ensuring that local agricultural products can be safely consumed and marketed, both at home and abroad. ESCWA, (2016), *Strategic Review of Food and Nutrition Security in Lebanon*,

agricultural schools, decentralized agricultural centres and agricultural cooperatives, etc.^{xxii} Examples from previous support include upgrading the Baccalauréat technique (BT) programme, water quality labs, performance and capacity in planning and management, M&E, MIS etc.

Outreach service centers systems at governorate and caza level in particular have been highlighted in need of support given their role in delivering to small-scale producers simplified farm business concepts and climate-smart agriculture information on sustainable management of natural resources and agroecosystems.

With an increasing number of Lebanese falling under extreme poverty and one out of 5 estimated to be food insecure, and with a limited social protection system for the most vulnerable, the Sector will continue to provide support to the Social Development Centres (SDC) and the NPTP under the Ministry of Social Affairs, the first national safety net in the country, through technical assistance programmes, with the goal to further **complement national social safety nets** and social protection programmes.

The Sector will support the NPTP and the Ministry of Social Affairs to strengthen the provision of social assistance in response to the rising socioeconomic vulnerability and food insecurity in hosting communities. WFP will continue and scale up the provision of food assistance to the most vulnerable Lebanese through the NPTP Food e-card that uses WFP's electronic food voucher, increasing the caseload to 50,000 households with the goal of helping 300,000 people get through the triple shock caused by economic crisis, the COVID-19 lockdown and the longer term impact of the Beirut Port explosions.²³

WFP supports the NPTP Food e-card through: (i) appeals for donor support to fund the monetary value of the food assistance; (ii) delivery of the food assistance using WFP's e-card delivery system and network of locally contracted shops nationwide; and, (iii) technical support to Ministry of Social Affairs and SDC on enhancing the implementation and monitoring of the NPTP Food e-card.

Moreover, sector partners will contribute towards expanding social protection coverage to rural farmers in Lebanon and support the Ministry of Agriculture in developing a legal and institutional framework required for the establishment of a register for farmers.

School Meals programmes, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, also support the agriculture sector and farmers through the provision of school snacks during the school year. Snacks, including fresh fruits and milk, are locally produced and constitute a predictable and stable outlet for farmers' products, contributing to enhancing their incomes. Furthermore, to mitigate the impact of COVID 19- related school closures on children's food intake, the school meal programme will continue to deliver food parcels for the families of the children attending schools where a school snack programme is run. To note that in 2021 these activities will be reported under the LCRP Education Sector.

National priorities

The sector strategy will be implemented in line with the recently issued **National Agriculture Strategy 2020-2025 (NAS)**,²⁴ developed by the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) with technical support from FAO, that reflects both the immediate and long-term priorities of the agri-food sector in Lebanon. The NAS long-term vision is to make the agri-food system a main contributor to the achievement of food security and a key driver of resilience and transformation of the Lebanese economy into a productive economy.

The NAS suggests a comprehensive national approach in various sub sectors of agriculture and agri-food in production, trade, social protection, environmental sustainability, adaptation and mitigation to climate change and rural development. Its core structure is built around five strategic axes (pillars), structured in programmatic areas of interventions. The Food Security and Agriculture sector strategy mirrors the five pillars of the NAS, presented below.

²³ Beneficiaries can redeem their food assistance by purchasing food commodities at any WFP-contracted shops across Lebanon.

²⁴ <http://www.agriculture.gov.lb/getattachment/Ministry/Ministry-Strategy/strategy-2020-2025/NAS-web-Eng-7Sep2020.pdf?lang=ar-LB> As the country's economic outlook remains highly uncertain, the NAS is purposely considered as a living document, subject to regular monitoring and open to continuous dialogue and updates to ensure relevance and responsiveness to the needs emerging in the rapidly evolving Lebanon context.

Pillar 1: Restoring the livelihoods and productive capacities of farmers and producers

Pillar 2: Increasing agricultural production and productivity

Pillar 3: Enhancing efficiency and competitiveness of agri-food value chains

Pillar 4: Improving climate change adaptation and sustainable management of agri-food systems and natural resources

Pillar 5: Strengthening the enabling institutional environment

The renewed focus on agriculture as a key productive sector, as highlighted by the McKinsey report^{xxiii} and by the new NAS 2020-2025, needs to be accompanied by adequate support by donors to allow sector partners to provide emergency assistance to farmers and increase access to sustainable agricultural livelihoods and employment opportunities in the agricultural sector.

2. Sector Results: LCRP impacts, Sector Outcomes and Outputs

The sector strategy contributes to the achievement of LCRP impacts and overall strategic objectives by linking humanitarian and stabilization interventions as follows:

LCRP Strategic objective 1: Ensure protection of vulnerable populations – sector outcomes 2 and 4 (in section 2.1 below) will contribute to the achievement of a safe protective environment for vulnerable populations through the systems put in place by partners on **accountability to affected populations (AAP)**, grievance redress mechanisms, complaint feedback mechanisms and referrals to ensure the safe, dignified delivery of assistance and do not harm approach, using the Complaint and Feedback Mechanisms Minimum Standards as a guidance.²⁵

At the same time, the sector's support to national institutions and specific interventions on child labour and decent working conditions in agriculture will contribute to the achievement of Impact 1 of the LCRP: Displaced persons from Syria and vulnerable populations live in a safe, protective environment

LCRP Strategic objective 2: Provide immediate assistance to vulnerable populations – sector outcomes 1, 2 and 3 will contribute to the achieving of LCRP Impact 2: Immediate humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable populations are met. Needs were exacerbated by the current multiple crises and their impact on the food security and nutrition will be met by increasing food access through cash-based food assistance and promotion of agricultural livelihoods that together improve access to markets for vulnerable populations and reduce their exposure to hunger, by promoting food availability through in-kind food assistance and sustainable food agricultural value chains, and by promoting adequate infant and young child feeding practices. The Food Security and Agriculture Sector and the Basic Assistance Sector complement their respective work on provision of cash assistance by harmonizing the targeting process, developing common referral systems, exchanging information on household profiles and collaborating towards the harmonization of impact monitoring tools. To identify eligible households for cash-based assistance, the two Sectors rank vulnerabilities to capture the most vulnerable based on the VASyR economic vulnerability. The Sectors will coordinate assistance for emergency humanitarian needs during Ramadan and winterization through immediate and temporary food assistance interventions. The Sectors will coordinate preparedness activities through the assessment of contingency stocks and emergency capacity in line with the central coordination and management arrangements currently in place (SOPs and Rapid Needs Assessment Geosplits).

LCRP Strategic objective 3: Support service provision through national systems – sector outcomes 4 will contribute to the achievement of Impact 3: Vulnerable populations have equitable access to basic services (health, education, water, energy, solid waste, shelter and social protection) through national (public and private) systems. As mentioned above, service provision through national systems will be enhanced through improving support to national institutions' capacities to promote climate-smart agriculture and GAP, food safety and quality and support to national institutions

²⁵ Link of the document: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/79144>

through strengthening existing national programme for social protection, i.e. NPTP, including by ensuring social protection policies and frameworks are nutrition sensitive.

LCRP Strategic objective 4: Reinforce Lebanon's economic, social and environmental stability - sector outcomes 1, 2 and 4 will contribute to the achievement of Impact 4: Mitigated deterioration in the economic condition of vulnerable populations, and Impact 6: Mitigated environmental impact of the Syrian crisis, to avoid further degradation of the natural eco-system and ensure its long-term sustainability. The objective will be supported by mitigating the deterioration of the economic conditions of vulnerable populations through cash-based food assistance and cash injections in the local economy. The promotion of emergency/short term agriculture support interventions to the economic crisis and COVID-19 outbreak will support vulnerable smallscale farmers and together with greater access to casual work and employment opportunities in the agricultural sector will generate income for local economies and support to agricultural livelihoods. Furthermore, the mitigation of the environmental impact of the Syria crisis will be framed along national strategies through the support to sustainable and climate-smart food production and conservation of natural resources.

The Sector participation in the Environment Task Force, led by the Ministry of Environment, will help to guide the partners to mainstream environmental concerns in agriculture. The sector is supporting the Environment Task Force in applying environmental safeguards to agricultural activities by ensuring that sector partners adopt environmental markers when planning their projects.

Farmers, community groups and members of agricultural cooperatives will be targeted to ensure management of soil and water resources, application of integrated pest and crop management, protection of agro-biodiversity, and agro-ecosystems.

As mentioned above, agriculture is the primary livelihood source for vulnerable populations affected by the Syria crisis in rural areas and holds a potential to help the recovery of productive sectors in Lebanon. The Sector will therefore work closely **with the Livelihoods Sector** to minimize duplication and/or underreporting and coordinate the support from the two sectors to agricultural livelihoods through the sectors work plans. Partners will appeal for funding under the Sector that is representing the most relevant objective of the activity they plan to implement under the LCRP in 2021. The Food Security and Agriculture Sector will coordinate agriculture-related activities that aim at improving agricultural livelihoods through agricultural production, increase in income and opportunities to finding employment; the Livelihoods Sector, on the other hand, will give prominence to employment creation and economic/business development initiatives related to the agriculture sector. The coordinators of the two sectors share information and results on agricultural value-chains development, labour-intensive projects. They jointly coordinate support to agricultural cooperatives through regular joint national sector working groups thematic meetings. The establishment of a common thematic group on support to agriculture cooperatives and the revitalization of the technical working group on agricultural value chains will also support better coordinated interventions by the two sectors and other key institutional partners such Ministry of Agriculture, Directorate General of Cooperatives, Ministry of Economy and Trade, Ministry of Industry, LIBNOR, IDAL.

2.1 Expected results

The Food Security and Agriculture Sector will continue and expand its humanitarian role in providing lifesaving food assistance to sustain/improve the Food Consumption for targeted groups and to stabilize food security and nutrition for an additional number of Syrians and hosting communities, whose food security has deteriorated in the past year. In parallel and in alignment with the 5 pillars of the Lebanon NAS 2020-2025, the Sector will expand its role in addressing immediate recovery needs in the agriculture sector and contribute towards longer-term stabilization in the country, adopting a food system approach and remaining anchored to the four dimensions of food security: availability, access, utilization and stabilization.

The Sector will prioritize emergency interventions in support to farmers, at the same time providing support to the agriculture sector and to the rural local economy to counter the economic crisis through the interventions highlighted below.

Please note bold text reflects the logframe results.

Outcome 1 - Improve FOOD AVAILABILITY, using in-kind food assistance modality and sustainable food/agricultural value chain

The outcome will be achieved if the following outputs are achieved.

Output 1.1 - The most vulnerable individuals have access to locally produced and nutritionally balanced in-kind food assistance, as part as contingency planning as mentioned above, through food parcels, ready-to-eat foods, hot meals and community kitchens, allowing to meet nutrition needs, supplementing with fresh food (fruits and vegetables) when possible, and provided in compliance with Lebanese law 47/2008 and the IYCF SOPs. Preference should be given to food parcels or hot meals that are locally sourced.

Output 1.2 - Lebanese smallscale farmers have strengthened agricultural production capacities along the value chain and adopt sustainable and climate smart agriculture practices and conservation of natural resources. Strengthened capacities of Lebanese smallscale farmers will be achieved through tailored training programmes and inputs for sustainable agriculture and livestock production (with inputs seasonally appropriate; for natural resources conservation (water use efficiency and conservation, efficient irrigation practices); climate smart sustainable agriculture and energy saving farming practices (Tolerant cultivars, organic farming, conservation agriculture, mixed farming, crop rotation); management of soil resources and pest management, including management of fertilizers and pesticides.

Output 1.3 – Lebanese smallscale farmers have strengthened capacities along the value chain on processing, marketing, access to markets and reduction of food waste and food losses through promotion of food transformation and preservation, the creation and reinforcement of linkages between small-scale producers and retailers, exporters, domestic traders, and market-based diversification/contract farming. Post-harvest trainings on marketing (labelling, packaging, etc) and post-harvest and storage management and valorisation of organic waste will be prioritised. Increasing capacities to reduce food wastage along the perishable food supply will also improve affordability of food to the most vulnerable.

Output 1.4 – Smallscale farmers have access to prevention and control measures for transboundary animal diseases and plant pests (DRR), through the support to the monitoring and early warning systems for animal diseases and plant pests, capacity building and interventions to control the spread of transboundary animal diseases and plant pests during emergencies.

Outcome 2 - Improve FOOD ACCESS through cash-based food assistance and support to sustainable agricultural livelihoods.

This will be achieved through the following outputs:

Output 2.1 – Vulnerable populations have access to meaningful cash-based food assistance²⁶ and improve their access to food. They will also have access to adequate nutrition and IYCF education.

Output 2.2 - Farmers associations, cooperatives, agricultural MSMEs have increased capacities in production, transformation, governance along the value chain and improve agricultural livelihoods through a holistic approach, for cooperatives in particular, aimed at building their capacity to be more business-oriented. Through the adoption of farmer field and business schools, cooperatives or groups receive financial, technical and material support and capacity building that ultimately improve agricultural livelihoods. Support will also focus on adding value in production and transformation, including marketing and access to markets. The Sector, in collaboration with the

²⁶ Sector members are encouraged to provide direct food assistance through the Common Card platform (LOUISE), which allows for better coordination of assistance and ease of use by beneficiaries as assistance from various actors is provided through the same e-card.

livelihoods sector will enhance coordination among all partners and institutions working/supporting agricultural cooperatives.

Output 2.3 – Lebanese smallscale farmers have access to emergency and/or long-term support (in kind/inputs, financial, technical) that promote agricultural investment. Lebanese smallscale farmers, men and women, will receive emergency short-term support through for example cash and voucher schemes to resume production, while facing the constraints described above. In the longer term financial and technical support, on for example land reclamation, efficient irrigation/water management and/or agricultural inputs such as seeds, livestock and equipment, will enhance private agriculture investment which will ultimately improve incomes and agricultural livelihoods.

Output 2.4 –Youth aged 15-25 years and other age group (25 and above) have access to improved agricultural technical education and vocational training. Both groups will receive agricultural technical trainings in agricultural schools, agricultural vocational skills training (internship, on job training /apprenticeship) and literacy and numeracy skills training (non-and agriculture related skills) to enhance employability in the labour market and ultimately improve agricultural livelihoods and access to food. Particular attention needs to be paid to the digitalisation of learning and online modalities to adapt to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Output 2.5 – Vulnerable individuals have improved opportunities to access temporary and casual labour in agriculture, in exchange for cash-based food assistance to increase their access to food and to agricultural infrastructure and assets. They can participate in programmes that rehabilitate/build agricultural productive infrastructure and communal assets (agricultural roads, irrigation networks, forests, hill lakes, water reservoirs²⁷) and have more opportunities to access temporary and casual labour in agriculture and related sectors²⁸, in exchange for cash-based food assistance that increases their access to food.

Output 2.6 - Vulnerable individuals have strengthened technical and operational capacities to access temporary and casual labour, in exchange for cash-based assistance that increases their access to food. They receive trainings and inputs that develop their skills and competencies and have more opportunities to access temporary, and casual labour, in exchange for cash-based assistance that increases their access to food (food assistance for training modality).

Outcome 3 - Improve FOOD UTILIZATION through food safety and nutrition practices (promotion of consumption of diversified/quality food and IYCF practices). This will be achieved through the following outputs:

Output 3.1 – Households more vulnerable to food insecurity (women-headed households, households with pregnant and lactating women and children under five, households with individuals over 65 years old) adopt optimal nutrition practices through the promotion of the consumption of diversified/quality food and IYCF practices, of nutrition awareness and of small-scale production of diversified nutritious food. Trainings, awareness and behaviour change activities, micro-gardens and promotion of food preservation/transformation technologies at the household level ultimately improve food utilisation.

Output 3.2 – Households and individuals have improved capacity on food safety and quality to improve their food consumption and nutrition practices through trainings on good practices and promotion of policies supporting the local production of high value nutritious foods.²⁹

Outcome 4 – Promote and stabilize food security through support/capacity building and strengthening of national public institutions and their decentralised services

The outputs to achieve this outcome will include the following:

²⁷ in line with MoE's environmental safeguards,

²⁸ As in previous years, such projects will be implemented in compliance with Lebanese laws and regulations. They will therefore primarily be implemented using an indirect modality, channeling investments through local third parties, such as private sector contractors and municipalities that will be responsible for project delivery and workforce management. In addition, the sector will increase engagement of its partners with the Ministry of Labour to establish a mechanism to provide guidance and follow-up on these projects as per the legal framework.

²⁹ Training will also include how to budget to purchase nutritious foods with limited resources.

Output 4.1 – National institutions working in food security/agriculture, disaster reduction and social protection have strengthened capacities to improve service delivery for vulnerable population. Targeted national institutions receive technical assistance and have strengthened capacities in areas such as vulnerability analysis, targeting, beneficiary management, communication, monitoring and evaluation and climate smart agriculture, GAP and Standards (management of soil resources, pest management and efficient use of water resources) and food safety and quality. This will strengthen national institutions’ capacities and ultimately support the provision of basic services through national services.

Output 4.2: Regional/decentralised public institutions involved in agriculture, food security, disaster reduction and social protection have strengthened capacities to improve service delivery for vulnerable population. Targeted regional/decentralised public institutions, including Outreach service centers and SDC staff, receive equipment-material and build their capacities to provide delivery of services to vulnerable local populations.

2.3 Identification of sector needs and targets at the individual/HH, community and institutional/physical environment level

The proposed sector target population is flexible in order to take into account unexpected needs that may arise, and any supplementary needs identified by sector partners in the field. In light of the current multiple crises and uncertain economic outlook, the strategy will remain flexible to account for partners’ changing caseloads and operational capacities.

Escalating food and non-food prices inflation and the lack of job opportunities in Lebanon have driven a marked increase in the number of people living in extreme poverty and in need of assistance, to an estimated 2.3 million across all population cohorts (including displaced Syrians, PRL, PRS and other refugees, and host communities).³⁰ Out of estimated 2.3 million people in need, the Sector will target about 1,799,000 people prioritized as the most in need, with both humanitarian and stabilization support, to improve the four pillars of food security and agricultural livelihoods. Out of these, cash-based and in-kind assistance will target about 1,749,475 individuals from all population cohorts, including other refugees. It is recommended that this food assistance is also targeted to households with pregnant or lactating women or children <5. In 2021, the sector will target approximately 40,000 vulnerable Lebanese smallscale farmers with support to agricultural production and livelihoods (*see below*).

Displaced Syrians: For planning purposes, the sector will target approximately 1,320,000 displaced Syrians, currently living under the SMEB.³¹ Food insecure households will be identified based on the recalibration formula. Ranking variables are mostly demographic with a strong statistical correlation with the latest VASyR results on economic vulnerability and food insecurity, and relate to households’ characteristics, including but not limited to: arrival date, household size, gender, education level, and presence of members with disabilities, and age as well as working family members. The ranking methodology is regularly updated. New inclusions will be based on the ranking in combination with an appeal mechanism to minimize formula errors.

Displaced Syrians will be targeted through food access programmes (cash-based transfers for food).³² The Food Security and Agriculture sector will continue to advocate for cash-based interventions, given that favourable condition continues to exist for such modality. However, based on partners’ recommendations and interventions to promote food availability to individuals with limited access to food and according to strategy identified above, in-kind food assistance will continue to target 40,000 displaced Syrians.³³

³⁰ Sources: FSS working group WFP/VAM presentation April 2020 and World Bank FACTSHEET APRIL 21, 2020

³¹ The identification of the households eligible for direct assistance will be done by applying the ranking of vulnerability that captures households who are vulnerable according to the VASyR 2020 economic vulnerability categories.

³² WFP and partners provide LBP 120,000 per person per month, after the modification of the SMEB threshold in 2020.

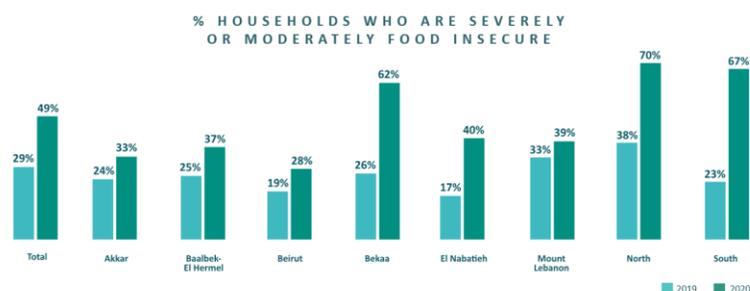
³³ Although the sector will target 40,000 displaced Syrians for regular in-kind assistance, it is understood that there will be variations to this target based on seasonal or one-off assistance addressing temporary needs. During winter and Ramadan, for example, the number of displaced Syrians receiving in-kind food assistance increases (with partners providing food parcels, hot meals, dates, and so forth). However, this is not reflected in the target for regular in-kind assistance.

In terms of operational capacity, the sector benefits from a wide range of national and international organisations involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and agricultural livelihoods support. The number of humanitarian partners has continued to increase since 2017 given the increased strategic focus on stabilization.

At governorate-level, food insecurity is most prominent in the North (70 per cent) and the South (67 per cent).^{xxiv}

FOOD SECURITY

COMPARISON BY GOVERNORATE (2019 VS 2020)



Palestinian refugees from Syria: The current number of people in need of food assistance is 27,700 and the LCRP 2021 will target about 27,700 people.

Palestinian refugees from Lebanon: It is estimated that there are about 180,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon,³⁴ and 117,000 are living below the poverty line and therefore eligible for partners' assistance.

Refugees of other nationalities: refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities are also seeking refuge in the country. This group of refugees face serious challenges securing their needs and continue to exhibit high levels of vulnerability. By the end of April 2019 there were just above 17,600 registered refugees and asylum seekers from countries other than Syria in Lebanon. This group is primarily comprised of Iraqis (83%) who have mostly arrived in 2014 and 2015. The second largest group are the Sudanese, who make up 9% of the population. In 2021 partners will reach out to 10,000 among them through cash transfers.

Vulnerable Lebanese: 23 per cent of Lebanese were estimated to be living below the extreme poverty line and not being able to satisfy their essential food and non-food needs.^{xxv} The post recertification caseload of the NPTP in 2019 amounted to 43,000 households (229,760 people).³⁵ In 2021 WFP is planning to mitigate the impact of the current multiple crises on vulnerable Lebanese by further expanding its support to 50,000 households.

Targeting of **Lebanese farmers** was initially done based on the Ministry of Agriculture 2010 census whereby vulnerable small-scale farmers represented 70.2 per cent of the farming community. Subsequently, the 2015 Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment (FSLA) of Lebanese communities reported that 73 per cent of farmers declared to be in need of assistance, representing 86,700 farmers across Lebanon.^{xxvi} With the multiple crises affecting the agriculture sector and the farmer community, FAO estimates that the number of vulnerable farmers might have increased.³⁶ The targeting of farmers at the output level is likely to shift as farmers have multiple needs that implementing partners need to address.

³⁴ Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, Central Administration of statistics, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (2018) *(The Population and Housing Census in Palestinian Camps and Gatherings - 2017, Key Findings Report (Population, Buildings and Housing Units)*, (Beirut, Lebanon) http://www.cas.gov.lb/images/PressRoom/censusper cent20findings_2017_en.pdf (LPDC & CAS 2017)

³⁵ The National Poverty Targeting Programme provides \$27 per person per month and this level of assistance is planned for 2020.

³⁶ Based on the Agriculture Census carried out by the MoA in 2010, a calculation has been made to estimate the number of "vulnerable" farmers taking into account agriculture farming being their main activity and considering their farm size as less than 5 dunums for all governorates except for Bekaa and Baalbeck-Hermel where the ceiling farm size is less than 10 dunums.

Population Cohort	Total population	Total population in need	Total population Targeted	Population Targeted by Sex and Age								
				# Women	# Men	% Men	# Children (0-19)	% Children	# Adolescent (12-17)	% Adolescent (12-17)	# Youth (19-24)	% Youth (19-24)
Lebanese	3,864,296	850,000	435,304	224,617	210,687.14	48.4%	135,815	31.2	53,977.7	12.4	39,613	9.1
Displaced Syrians	1,500,000	1,320,000	1,313,620	669,946	643,673.80	49.0%	697,532	53.1	176,025.1	13.4	109,030	8.3
PRS	27,700	27,700	27,057	14,016	13,041.47	48.2%	10,309	38.1	3,165.7	11.7	2,489	9.2
PRL	180,000	117,000	13,494	6,990	6,504.11	48.2%	5,141	38.1	1,678.8	11.7	1,241	9.2
Other Nationalities			10,000	5,000	5,000	50.0%	3,300	33.0	1,150.0	11.5	920	9.2
Grand Total	5,571,996	2,314,700	1,799,475	920,568	878,907	48.84%	852,097	47.4%	235,897	13.1%	153,294	8.5%

Institution Support		
Type of Institutions	Total	Targeted
Social Development Centers (SDCs)		120
Ministry of Agriculture (national level)		1
Ministry of Agriculture Regional Services		7
Agricultural centers of MoA		32
Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI)		1
Green Plan and decentralized offices		8
General Directorate of Cooperatives and decentralized offices		8
Agricultural technical Schools of MoA		7
Ministry of Agriculture Forest Centers		3
Ministry of Agriculture Nurseries		4
Ministry of Social Affairs (NPTP programme)		
National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS)		
Municipalities		10
Water Establishment		1
Schools	4001	
Other (Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture -CCIA)		2
Other (specify)	Community Kitchens	3000
	Education centers	2
	Agriculture centers rehabilitated in training centers	6
MSMEs (agriculture/agro-food)		127
Cooperatives (agriculture/agro-food)		330
CBOs		2
Churches		15

2.4 Assumptions and risks

The key assumptions to achieve sector's objectives are mainly contextual in nature and relate to the overall situation analysis and needs overview, as laid out in the LCRP chapeau.

The first assumption is that in 2021, food insecurity will increasingly be a concern for refugees and host communities. As such the strategy will remain supple to be able to adapt in response to the future possible threats to food security arising from currency devaluation, removal of food subsidies and/or limited functioning of the banking and financial sectors in 2021.

The second assumption is that there will be sufficient operational space for partners to operate and that the assumption will be that interventions and support can be properly delivered. However, it is recognized that the operational space is shrinking, as observed in 2020 in some regions. Issues to date have mainly been related to tensions around in-kind food distributions and the targeting modality. In some instances, this has resulted in physical confrontations. These trends remain isolated to certain areas, but a further deterioration in the overall situation in Lebanon may lead to accelerated trends.

The third assumption is that funding levels of the sector will remain at a similar level to previous years or decrease and international financial support can be properly delivered. At the same time, needs will be increased. As such, continued international financial support is needed to achieve sector's objectives as sector partners' assistance is increasingly becoming the only source of income for persons displaced from Syria and provide the only food safety net for vulnerable Lebanese. To avoid further deterioration in the food security and nutrition situation for the increasing number of vulnerable people, additional funding is needed to fill existing and projected gaps in assistance.

The Food Security and Agriculture sector strategy foresees the following major risks, which could arise during the implementation of the 2021 sector plan and undermine the scope of its interventions:

There is a risk that the rapidly deteriorating economic and financial situation, the devaluation of the Lebanese pound and increasing inflation could have such a major negative impact on refugee and host community's food security. This could be coupled with known and unknown food security risks such as negative coping mechanisms and pressure in food supply and availability. The sector will aim to mitigate this risk to the extent possible through continuous data collection, monitoring, analysis and advocacy.

Additionally, with an increasing number of vulnerable people needing assistance, both persons displaced from Syria and vulnerable host communities, partners will be asked to increase assistance which could be challenging, considering their already limited financial and human resources. Furthermore, partners could be put under additional pressure by various stakeholders such as local communities and local authorities to increase assistance or shift targeting which risk having an impact on their operational space. The partners will mitigate these risks by advocacy for increased funding, community engagement and close collaboration with key stakeholders such as local authorities and the Social Stability sector.

The negative impact of the anticipated removal of food subsidies by the government is another major risk as it would amplify the impact of the multiple crisis on food security. The removal of subsidies will likely lead importers to cover the difference between exchanging the cost from dollars to LBP if they are using the informal exchange rate rather than the official exchange rate, a cost that they will most probably transfer to the end consumer. This is expected to put an unbearable strain on households' purchasing power, with the price of bread potentially multiplied by 1.5 to 3 and that of fuel by 4.5.

This risk requires higher level mitigation measures beyond the sector as it is crucial that the government moves into a more targeted subsidy system that allows to reach those who are the most affected and have a better utilisation of foreign currencies reserves. To this end, the sector will advocate to key stakeholders on the need for policy dialogue and high-level discussions, including regarding applying a unified exchange rate to be applied to available external funds. At the same time, sector partners will need to take mitigations actions such as adaptive programming, prioritization of resources, revising the market value of the basket under the SMEB and in consequence the transfer value, prepare contingency planning and consider alternative modalities for food assistance.

Another major risk are the rising social tensions. Inter-communal tensions are primarily being driven by three issues: competition over jobs, competition over access to services and perceptions of aid bias. Aid bias is particularly related to cash, in-kind assistance and targeting modalities. There is a perception that assistance to refugees is providing in

USD which is causing further tensions. There is a risk that this could result in antagonistic reactions both online and offline and in some instances, materialize into incidents of confrontation and escalations.^{xxvii} These tensions, exacerbated by the economic crisis and COVID-19, all represent a risk for partners' implementation of programs and for the safety of front liners, vulnerable groups and communities at large.

Mitigation measures for this risk include conflict sensitivity mainstreaming and do no harm trainings for partners and national institutions, the utilization of the conflict sensitivity guidance notes on matters related to 1) Procurement, Recruitment, and Individual Accountability 2) Programme Design Process, & 3) Outreach, Needs Assessment, & Beneficiary Criteria. It is also important to ensure enhanced communication, transparency, accountability and external oversight of the use of the available funds. The approach would also integrate community engagement and continue measures such as streamlined and coordination cash assistance, staggering loading of cards, increasing numbers of ATMs to avoid lines of refugees at redemption points; ensure that distribution points are located outside camps perimeters, and continue door to door distributions whilst accounting for the COVID-19 measures.

Another risk lies in the impact of climate stressors that affect agricultural production such as increased temperatures, seasonal shocks such as heavy or reduced rainfalls and snow cover, increased incidence of drought, more frequent heat waves, fewer frost days and rising sea levels.^{xxviii} To mitigate this risk, the sector promotes that partners adapt climate smart agricultural practices that should be able to prepare small-scale farmers to partially mitigate climate risks, in particular water scarcity, reduced productivity of land and decreased crop quality. Risk mitigation actions also include the adoption through farmers' field school of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and integrated pest management to reduce agrochemical pollution, increase water use efficiency and ensure sustainable withdrawals and capacity building on sustainable natural pasture management, including innovative pasture rehabilitation and grazing management.

2.5 Partnerships

The sector national and field working groups count on the presence of partners that appealed under the sector and local partners that attend to learn and share experiences. The joint meetings on selected themes with the Livelihoods sector also allow to enlarge the circle of practitioners and enrich the discussions. In 2021, the sector will aim at establishing community of practice among partners on selected themes, such as linking farmers to markets, support to agriculture cooperatives and value chains. Sector partners will continue pursuing partnerships and collaboration with a variety of actors, including private partners, chamber of commerce, professional associations, vocational and training centers, agricultural departments of Universities, and, in relation to exchange rate and cash based programmes, with the central bank and banking system.

The engagement with MoA will continue also in the context of the NAS 2020-2015 and in aligning the sector strategy and its implementation to the MoA flagship projects concept notes and raise nutrition issues for the strategy action plan. An enhanced coordination mechanism will be put in place to make sure that the Ministry provides guidance to projects implemented under the sector and ensure alignment with its strategy and policies. At this regards the sector will link up with the oncoming NAS M&E system that aims at collecting the relevant information on the agriculture sector and providing the evidence-based knowledge on the progress and sharing of lessons learned. At the regional level the sector coordination will pursue greater collaboration with the MoA Regional offices and outreach service centers at governorate and caza level in order to strengthen their role and relationship with farmers (distribution, use of pesticides) through in kind and capacity building support.

Better coordination with the Directorate General of Cooperatives will also be pursued work towards using common tools to identify cooperatives and report on the assistance to them.

The agriculture sector strategy addresses many SDGs including SDG1 and SDG2. The sector strategy and partners' programmes are working to further improve food security and sustainable agriculture under the SDG 1 and 2. However, access to food by many poor households has been severely curtailed in the past months and the sector through the support to the MoA and its institutions will work towards reaching Lebanon SDGs.

3. Mainstreaming of Accountability to affected populations, Protection, Conflict sensitivity, Age and Gender, Youth, Persons with Specific Needs and Environment

Conflict sensitivity

In light of the risks for the sector in terms of tensions identified above, overall, sector activities will be designed in consideration of concerns and rising tensions expressed by the host community and authorities, especially those related to perceived aid bias on food assistance and targeting as well as competition over jobs for both Lebanese and displaced refugees. Data on competition on 'lower skilled work', including manual and casual labour, is often quoted as the main source of inter-communal tension at 64 per cent of respondents, as of July 2020, an increase from 57 per cent in July 2019. In terms of aid perceptions bias, as of August 2020, 80 per cent of Lebanese agreed with the statement "vulnerable Lebanese have been neglected in international aid/assistance programmes."^{xxix}

The sector strategy promotes targeting of Syrian refugees based on the desk formula recalibration exercise. Sector partners in food assistance interventions will explain the results of the exclusion/inclusion exercise based on the recalibration of the desk formula in all regions to avoid tensions related to targeting, as well as increased communications around support to vulnerable Lebanese communities. This will be achieved through trainings on Targeting and Communications with refugees, Community Reference Groups, Facebook Group Administrators and Outreach Volunteers. Partners have enhanced the Q&A on targeting and eligibility, and introduced a Grievance Redress Mechanism, which is an alternative inclusion pathway for cash and food assistance based on a refugee-initiated process. These measures should mitigate the risk of instability potentially caused by grievances around the fairness of assistance among Syrian communities. Non-WFP partners will coordinate with WFP to meet needs and fill gaps.

To respond to the needs of the different population cohorts, it is crucial that the NPTP is strengthened and provides food assistance to vulnerable Lebanese and that support is provided to Lebanese farmers and agriculture workers, which can reduce tensions related to perceived unbalanced assistance, compounded by the current economic crisis. Enhanced communications around the support will mitigate the rising aid perception bias amongst host community members hence tensions. The massive increase in WFP support to reach 50,000 households in 2021, in line with the government request for more support to host communities, aims to complement the government efforts in provide a food safety net for the most vulnerable Lebanese families and redress the perceived unbalanced assistance.

In 2021, the Social Stability sector will carry out further trainings on Conflict Sensitivity and Do No Harm to increase the organizational capacities of partners/actors in operationalizing and integrating this approach. While these trainings ensure that staff involved in the response are able to identify conflict sensitivity concerns, the Social Stability sector and the Food Security and Agriculture sector will work together to further enhance conflict sensitivity mainstreaming across Food Security and Agriculture sector's partners. Also, the production of conflict sensitivity guidance notes on matters related to 1) Procurement, Recruitment, and Individual Accountability 2) Programme Design Process, & 3) Outreach, Needs Assessment, & Beneficiary Criteria will be provided for reference and guidance by partners. The Social Stability sector, through a dedicated focal point, will support the sector in identifying gaps in conflict sensitivity, assessing risks and mitigation measures, assess if conflict sensitivity is integrated at the design phase from all the partners and working closely with Core Group and regional coordinators to ensure that these gaps are addressed. Lastly, food security and agriculture partners are also encouraged to engage the Social Stability sector on their tension mapping to examine which areas are vulnerable to conflict as this will have impact on targeting and implementation decisions for partners. Similarly, sector field coordinators will engage and reach out to their social stability counterparts to flag perceived threats and risk to partners' operations.

Youth and children

The majority of working Lebanese and Syrian youth are either employees or casual workers, with half of them having achieved no more than a primary education. More than half of young displaced Syrians in the workforce are employed, of which around 45 per cent work as daily and/or seasonal workers in the sectors that have traditionally used Syrian labour, such as agriculture (both men and women). The youth unemployment rate is more than double the national average.

The sector will target youth, aged 15 to 24, through: a) supporting the enrolment of vulnerable youth in one of the seven technical agricultural schools of the Ministry of Agriculture; b) providing youth with short-term and medium-term skills trainings linked to market demands and those in agricultural fields; c) providing youth workers with basic literacy and numeracy life-skills; and, d) providing technical support to agricultural technical schools. This is in line with the Ministry of Agriculture's 2021-2025 NAS strategy, which clearly states that agricultural livelihoods should be promoted among youth and women.^{xiv} These interventions are considered a positive strategy to address child labour in agriculture for the age cohort 15-17.

Displaced youth will be supported in enrolling in vocational skill training and technical schools at the Ministries of Education and Higher Education, Agriculture and Labour or other centers to increase their vocational opportunities. By promoting the elaboration of innovative learning tools, these interventions will contribute to train a generation to transition towards agro-ecology and adopt alternatives to the use of hazardous pesticides.

Partners are reporting increases in child labour for all population groups, especially in agriculture (particularly in the North and Bekaa). In line with previous years, the sector will continue its efforts in collecting information and contribute to referrals in collaboration with the Protection sector (Child Protection sub-sector in particular) to better understand the underlying reasons, the market dynamics and the legal frameworks. Child labour in agriculture, which has been the object of recent studies by sector partners (FAO, UNICEF and ILO), affects children's education and is likely to harm their health, safety and mental health. It encompasses a number of hazards, including exposure to chemicals (pesticides and fertilizers) and hazardous working conditions with long hours working in the sun.^{xxx}

The sector will continue addressing child labour in agriculture by raising awareness on the Decent Work Standards with a special focus on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) related issues in agriculture in the Ministry of Agriculture and non-governmental organizations and will organize a new round of trainings on child labour in agriculture for local partners under the food security, protection and livelihoods sectors at the national and regional levels. The sector will try to document better what would be the cost for families to renounce sending their children to work and to formulate integrated programs to address the economic vulnerabilities of families through complementary actions such as cash interventions or productive cash transfers helping families to improve their food security and their livelihoods, school feeding and higher education opportunities.

In consultation with the Education sector, school feeding activities, aimed at enhancing school attendance and retention rates, addressing short-term hunger and nutritional intake and social protection of children enrolled in schools, will be reported under the Education sector ActivityInfo platform, but joint results will be reported also under in the food security and agriculture sector reports.

The Education and Food Security and Agriculture sectors will be working together to assess the type of snacks that partners working in the non-formal education sector provide to children attending their programmes. The provision of snacks is crucial at enhancing children attendance and, from a food security and nutrition perspective, it is important to know the type of food provided (ready to eat, hot meal).

Gender

As the crisis affect men and women differently, the sector will promote targeting interventions focusing on the different needs of affected populations. Assessments and monitoring surveys will collect data disaggregated by gender and age to the extent possible, promoting gender and age analysis and participation of all groups in programme design. Similarly, both groups will be involved in programme implementation and provision of support, focusing on the most

vulnerable groups such as women-headed households, women of reproductive age and pregnant and lactating women. Examples of similar gender-related sector interventions would be inclusion of women-headed households as a variable in determining vulnerable households to target for assistance and targeting women farmers equally as men.

These efforts will help to mainstream gender throughout all stages of the humanitarian programming cycle.

Particular attention should be devoted to the elderly given their specific needs and concurrent vulnerabilities. Inclusive service delivery and response and inclusive communication should be integrated in partners' programme in order to cater to the elderly's specific needs.

The agricultural livelihoods projects aim to target women and men equally as much as possible. Partners would need to continue working on improving social protection systems to foster sustainable and equitable rural development, poverty reduction, and food security, taking into consideration the specific needs of women headed households.

Food security is a critical sector for women's livelihoods, and the sector strategy recognizes specific vulnerabilities of men, women, boys and girls call for targeted measures. Understanding and addressing how men and women of different ages are affected by protracted crises is critical for effective and sustainable food and nutrition security interventions. Limited opportunities and less access to assets and resources leave many women and girls with untenable options for their own and their families' survival, resetting to negative coping mechanisms, such as transactional sex, early or forced marriages. Gender-based violence (GBV) is the most extreme manifestation of gender inequality and a fundamental human rights violation. Protracted crises can create and/or exacerbate many forms of GBV. GBV has a devastating impact on the agriculture sector and food security by reducing the capacity and productivity of survivors as a result of illness, injury, stigma and discrimination. The sector will further use the Global Food Security Cluster/sector guidelines on Protection and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee guidelines for integrating gender-based violence interventions in humanitarian action accordingly.

Agriculture is a critical sector for women's livelihoods, and the sector strategy recognizes this and is committed to strengthen women farmers capacity through trainings. However, support for women must go beyond just capacity development. Women are responsible for children's access to food in Lebanon, and thus women's weaker bargaining power in the household also reflects negatively on children's health.

The sector recommends to include food security measures which prioritize women's access to food, but also support to agricultural production, which have been interrupted due to COVID, as women smallscale farmers in particular are unable to continue production as their incomes plummet, due to lack of resources to purchase inputs.

Protection and accountability to affected populations (AAP)

Members of the affected population often face a wide range of issues beyond those that partners in the sector are able to address alone. In this regard, the sector will continue to work to strengthen the safe identification and referral of persons with specific needs, and individuals at risk. In 2020, with increasing food assistance needs linked first to the COVID pandemic, then to the deepening of the socioeconomic crisis and finally with the Beirut port explosion, the sector reviewed and adopted the Inter-agency minimum standards for referral; b. developed a sector service mapping for partners and those in other sectors to support timely and accurate referrals to the Food security and agriculture sector services; c. organized referral trainings for FSS WG partners on the AI service mapping and mapping and Inter-Agency Referral Monitoring system; and, d. improved its understanding and learning from referrals by adopting the Inter-agency reporting requirements, for partners to report on referrals in Activity info, developed an internal guidance for WFP related to referring non-beneficiaries calls to the UNHCR-WFP call center to sector partners and external guidance for sector partners on how to refer food assistance calls, with related trainings.

The work of the persons with specific needs (PWSN) sub-committee of the Protection sector will guide the sector to understand better access barriers and potential ways to reduce them and improve access for PWSN. In this vein, through a regional-led protection risk analysis exercise to be organized in 2021, sector partners will contribute to an

improved sector understanding of the barriers to safe and dignified meaningful access, accountability and participation in relation to food security and agriculture interventions, and mitigation measures will be suggested to strengthen these components through the sector. It is expected that inclusive programming models for persons with disabilities (PWD) may emerge as a gap, so particular attention will be given to promote best practices within the sector and explore avenues for further inclusion in 2021.

Accountability to affected populations will be part of partners' work over the coming year. Sector partners have different internal complaint and feedback mechanisms, including the UNHCR/WFP call center and helpdesks at distribution sites for refugees' cash assistance as well as independent agency hotlines. WFP set up a time-bound pilot Grievance Redress Mechanism representing a window of opportunity for cases that were discontinued from cash assistance to appeal. In 2019, more than 75,000 calls were captured through the call centres from families that were discontinued from assistance as a result of the recalibration of the desk formula.³⁷ In 2020, the sector reviewed and promoted the Inter-agency minimum standards on complaint and feedback to ensure alignment and that standards are met.

In addition, given the large number of women and adolescent girls working on agricultural sites across Lebanon, and the exploitation and protection risks for women and girls, linked to increased food assistance, the sector has a role to inform and raise awareness amongst this cohort and with employers of protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) in-country complaint mechanisms in Lebanon, how to access these mechanisms, and what response is expected. Similarly, as during 2020, in 2021 the sector will continue to encourage partners' participation to PSEA training and the dissemination of PSEA material and tip sheets during national and regional working group meetings as well as the budgeting for the production of leaflets to be disseminated at the time of food distributions.

Partners working on livelihoods projects are asked to report on main protection risks, incidents or patterns in relation to their activities and operations and to input referrals from WFP funded activities for both protection and non-protection referrals.

4. Logframe

Include your updated log frame here.

³⁷ In 2020 the recalibration exercise for assistance to Syrian refugees took place later than in 2019 due to the impact of the COVID-19 on implementation schedule of the VASyR 2020.

Endnotes

- ⁱ according to WFP's web-based survey <https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000116784/download/>
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- ^{iv} Lebanon, Ministry of Agriculture, FAO, REACH (June 2015), *Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment of Lebanese Host Communities: Assessment Report*.
- ^v WFP/WB (2020), mVAM Vulnerability and Food Security Assessment of Lebanese
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- ^{ix} FAO (2020), *Special report: FAO mission to assess the impact of the financial crisis on agriculture in the Republic of Lebanon 21 September 2020*
- ^x USAID. (2016). *Lebanon Climate Change Risk Profile*. USAID.
- ^{xi} Farajalla, N., Haddad, E., Camargo, M., Lopes, R., & Vieira, F. (2014). *Climate change in Lebanon: Higher order regional impacts on agriculture*. AUB.
- ^{xii} <https://fsccluster.org/lebanon/document/fao-guidance-note-agricultural-inputs>
- ^{xiii} FAO, Lebanon Country Brief
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- ^{xx} Lebanon, *Ministry of Agriculture (2014), Ministry of Agriculture Strategy: 2015 – 2019*.
- ^{xxi} ESCWA, (2016), *Strategic Review of Food and Nutrition Security in Lebanon*
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- ^{xxiv} UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP (2019), *Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon 2019*
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