



Terms of Reference

Food Security & Agriculture Sector | Core Group

(Update 2022)

Background

Since the onset of the Syrian crisis, the government of Lebanon, humanitarian and development partners have coordinated closely under the umbrella of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) to ensure the protection of displaced Syrians, vulnerable Lebanese and Palestinian refugees; provide immediate assistance to vulnerable populations; support service provision through national systems; and reinforce Lebanon's economic, social and environmental stability.

The LCRP is based on the strategies of ten sectors - Basic Assistance, Education, Energy, Food Security & Agriculture, Health, Livelihoods, Protection, Shelter, Social Stability, Water - and reinforced by task forces (SGBV, Child Protection etc.). The LCRP uses a needs-based approach which adapts to changes in experiences and context. The yearly appeal is developed based on an annual review of needs. The Ministry of Social Affairs, UNHCR and UNDP assume the responsibility to coordinate the existing sectors and draw on the comparative expertise of UN agencies and NGOs, supported by an integrated information management system.

Objectives of the Food Security & Agriculture Sector

The Food Security & Agriculture Sector (hereinafter referred to as "the Sector") is chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture and co-led by the World Food Programme (WFP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The Sector's work is coordinated through national and regional levels working groups, under the overall strategic guidance of a rotational Core Group of food security and agriculture experts. The Sector, in collaboration with other LCRP line ministries and sectors, coordinates humanitarian, recovery and development-oriented interventions that provide both immediate life-saving food assistance and medium- and long-term solutions in the face of Lebanon's protracted and mounting crisis. This is achieved by tackling all dimensions of food security – availability, access, utilization and stabilization – through gender-, conflict- and environmentally-sensitive strategies and actions at the individual, community and institutional levels that account for the differential needs of women, men, girls and boys of all ages, abilities and diversities. The four outcomes under which the Sector operates are:

Outcome 1

Improve food availability through in kind food assistance and sustainable food and agriculture value chain.

Outcome 2

Improve food access through cash-based food assistance and support to sustainable agricultural livelihoods.

Outcome 3

Improve food utilization through food safety and nutrition practices (promotion of consumption of diversified/quality food and IYCF practices).

Outcome 4

Promote and stabilize food security through support/ capacity building and strengthening of national public institutions and their decentralized services.

The Core Group

The Food Security & Agriculture Sector Core Group has been established for in-depth review and guidance on matters of concern to the Sector, and to enhance strategic direction, planning and inclusive decision-making. Responsibilities include:

- Attend meetings once a month, and other ad-hoc thematic discussions;

- Provide strategic guidance on issues raised by the Sector’s coordinators that need resolution and support including technical and operational aspects of programme implementation, assessments, modalities of assistance, transfer values, monitoring, development of emergency and preparedness plans and other contingencies;
- Lead on the development of the Sector strategy, including with respect to setting priority interventions, targets and indicators;
- Provide strategic oversight on advocacy initiatives and, where relevant, develop and align messaging on specific topics;
- Provide strategic direction on the prioritization of resources within the Sector and on the division of labour amongst the Sector’s partners;
- Provide support and introduce common procedures for assessing and identifying the most appropriate modality (i.e., cash, in-kind or voucher) for the delivery of food assistance;
- Monitor implementation of the Sector’s objectives against the LCRP and assist in the identification of significant gaps;
- Provide strategic guidance to ensure that LCRP activities are implemented and coordinated with those of other frameworks, such as the Emergency Response Plan, and in align with other coordination bodies (e.g. Strategic Task Force on Cash);
- Validate common processes related to the Sector’s response, such as contingency planning, transition in interventions’ modalities; transfer value development; beneficiary identification and prioritization (targeting); agreement of common standards and approaches; or use of common data collection and information management tools (monitoring);
- Provide support and participation in other Sectors, focusing on mainstreaming of conflict sensitivity and identification of vulnerable persons of concern;
- Support internal and external evaluation of the Sector and sharing of lessons learned;
- Support the development or harmonization of technical guidance for the Sector’s response.

Structure of the Core Group

The Core Group comprises food security and agriculture experts. It is chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture, and co-chaired jointly by WFP and FAO (permanent membership). It also includes four representatives (one per agency – a representative or alternate) from I/NGOs and/or other relevant food security and agriculture actors, who are selected on a rotational basis. The Core Group membership is for 12 months and its composition is reviewed on a yearly basis. New members are identified through an election process, guided by the following criteria:

- Significant engagement in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (operational, geographical and financial) and a minimum of 5 years of experience in project implementation
- Expertise in the work of the Sector (food security (including cash and in-kind) and/or agriculture)
- Active representation, participation and engagement in the Sector’s National and/or Regional Working Groups
- Capacity and resources to effectively engage in, and to advance the work of the Core Group

The election process is as follows:

- Organization interested in becoming part of the Core Group submit an Expression of Interest to the National Coordinators;
- Expression of Interest are collected and disseminated among members of the Sector’s working groups for their review;
- A survey is launched with the list of organization applying to the Core Group;
- Through the survey, members of the working group cast their vote;
- Voting is limited to one person per organization;

- Each organization needs to select a maximum of 2 national NGOs and 2 international NGOs (including their own, if they have applied);
- The four organizations (2 NGOs and 2 INGOs) that receive the highest number of votes are onboarded onto the Core Group;
- If 2 or more organizations score the same number of votes, the existing Core Group members will finalise the selection based on established criteria;
- Once the election process is complete, each agency must nominate a representative to attend Core Group meetings/discussions (one per agency), and appoint an alternate.