Food Security Sector Working Group
Minutes of Meeting

Location: Ministry of Agriculture, Beirut- Lebanon

Date: 10/10/2019

Participants: ACF, ACTED, FAO, LOST, MCC, MoA, SDAid, SHEILD, Tabitha-Dorcas, Tres Amis, UNDP, WFP.

Discussion

The meeting was co-chaired between the FSS coordination team and the MoA focal point. After a welcoming opening from Ms. Majida Mcheick on behalf of MoA, the FSS Coordinator. Ms. De Gregorio presented the Agenda of the meeting, tackling the following topics:

1. Presentation on LCRP updates
2. Presentation on Mainstreaming Conflict Sensitivity in the FSS strategy (Mr. Tom , Social Protection Sector Coordinator)
3. Partners’ tour de table on 2020 estimated/planned targets
4. Revised Theory of Change for the FSS
5. 2019/2020 Winter emergency food assistance support
6. AOB

1. Presentation on LCRP updates

A brief was done by the FSS Coordinator to update the partners on the main LCRP activities conducted during September 2019.

In this context, Ms. De Gregorio informed the participants that several FSS consultations were held as part of the 2020 LCRP planning process at field level in the following governorates: South, Beirut and Mount Lebanon, Bekaa and the North.

Focus during the discussions was made on the situation analysis and the planned needs for each region, on the main elements to be tackled when preparing the FSS paper strategy such as: outcomes, theory of change, working modality in each region and suggested issues for the 2020 strategy update such as cross-sectoral themes etc.
Afterwards, the FSS Coordinator explained the objectives of two multi-stakeholders workshops organized by the Inter Sector on: (i) situational analysis and (ii) theory of change.

It is to be noted that for the LCRP update for 2020, the situation analysis context will be reflected in the Chapeau across the sectors rather than in each of the sector’s paper strategy.

In addition, seven cross-sector issues to be addressed have been identified, namely: child labour, gender, wastewater management, out of school children, local economic development, municipal and local capacity support, environment and tension mitigation.

As for the FS situation analysis, despite a slight improvement in some of the food security indicators observed by VASyr results, still the situation is mixed as there has been a five percent increase in the number of vulnerable refugees living under the extreme poverty line (the SMEB), showing that socio-economic vulnerability is on the rise.

Other topics tackled include: dismantlement within the settlements, legal residency and the new policy on works permit particularly for livelihoods activities.

It is worth mentioning that the country’s economic downturn should be looked into especially its impact on the responses’ programming and types of interventions to be implemented.

As for the Theory of Change multi-stakeholders’ workshop, it is to be noted that the structure and format of the chapters’ strategy have been revised with more focus given to the strategy itself including the linkages between sectors which should be more integrated in addition to testing the results chains from sector outputs to outcomes to LCRP impacts.

The paper strategy focuses as well on the assumptions and risks which may block interventions and the mitigation measures to address these risks and mainstreaming of accountability to affected populations, protection, conflict sensitivity, age and gender, youth, persons with specific needs and environment.

From the FSS side, all these topics will be taken into consideration when drafting the strategy and once finalized will be shared among partners for comments.

2. Presentation on Mainstreaming Conflict Sensitivity in the FSS strategy

Mr. Tom Lambert, the social protection sector coordinator, explained briefly on how to enhance the conflict sensitivity approach within the FSS sector strategy and in programming with the aim at identifying risks, mitigating them in a do-no-harm context.

It has been brought to the attention of participants that a survey has been circulated among partners regarding conflict sensitivity. For the strategy, the conflict sensitivity mainstreaming initiative will concentrate on three main sectors: food security sector, livelihoods and WASH.

The main concern is to reduce social tension between displaced people and Lebanese local communities as the tensions result from competition for jobs (main source of tensions according to
60% of respondents), from the impact of cash-based modalities and the decrease of social interactions which is considered not appropriate for social protection issue.

In addition, Mr. Lambert explained briefly what would be interesting to incorporate in the FSS strategy and future actions in terms of conflict sensitivity and tension reduction and it includes among other topics:

1. **Conflict sensitivity and Do No Harm Tool Kits**: these documents are a good starting point for partners to run their own Do No Harm checks on their programming.
2. **Data on decreasing interactions ‘at work’**: this is for ‘daily’ and ‘regular’ responses by Lebanese and Syrians (representative samples of both).
3. **Evidence from other contexts that decreasing interactions is usually negative and bringing people together to reduce tensions should be prioritized**.

The social protection sector team is ready to provide partners trainings on the conflict sensitivity and do-no-harm approach.

**Discussions**:

During discussion, it was highlighted that measures should be taken while formulating projects on the Conflict Sensitivity approach in programming and to have punctual activities and monitoring the needs for both Lebanese and displaced populations as they are not the same.

In addition, the share of 50% beneficiaries for Lebanese and 50% for Syrians was also raised to take into consideration if it would be relevant especially depending on the focused areas.

In addition, the importance of conveying messages to reduce tensions through communication tools was also highlighted but it was explained that this is indeed a challenge but not yet particularly addressed apart the UNHCR communication strategy.

**3. Partners’ tour de table on 2020 estimated/planned targets**

The FSS Coordinator, Ms. Degregorio, reiterated the importance of partners filling the targets matrix that has been already shared with them. This will allow to better incorporate these targets especially in the LCRP appeal- phase 1.

This will help as well identifying gaps for food assistance (in-kind and cash-based).

Afterwards, each participant representing his organization gave a brief on the main targets they are planning for 2020 according to the planned interventions and this will be reflected in the targets matrix.

It is to be noted that Ms. Kaori Ura, Head of WFP Programme Unit, informed attendees as well that Lebanese beneficiaries within the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) will be scaled-up for 2020 through a gradual process for an additional number of 5,000 households.
Discussions:

Ms. Degregorio informed the participants that more focus shall be made in the FSS log frame on institutional support and that once the strategy and the log frame drafted, they will be shared with all partners for comments.

4. Revised Theory of Change for the FSS

The FSS Coordinator explained briefly that the management team is in process of revising the FSS log frame in terms of rewording/rephrasing in order to be in-line with the new proposed theory of change. It will focus on outcomes, outputs and activities for 2020 to reflect all partners planned interventions.

In addition, this will be achieved in close collaboration with other LCRP sectors and more focus will be given to the “food system approach” so to better tackle the agriculture value chain interventions as well as to the institutional support as stated already before.

Besides, better risks and assumptions shall be developed in the Theory of Change and mitigation measures within the FSS.

5. 2019/2020 Winter emergency food assistance support

Ms. Degregorio explained the importance of each partner to provide updates on their winter emergency food assistance support in terms of types of assistance (one-off cash assistance in case of emergency), type of food assistance (in-kind assistance stocks and type of stock and quantity), logistics (warehouse location; existing distribution sites; existing facilities for the provision of hot meals (community kitchens); ability to switch programmes to emergency response in case the worst-case scenario unravels), timing in phases, human resources (field staff and contact details) as well as the identified major gaps.

She gave the example of the lack of coordination during last winter storms and flooding which affected vulnerable population and the recent readiness of partners to urgently assist in providing food parcels to children in a center in Arsal (North East Bekaa).

It is therefore very important to coordinate responses between partners for small interventions and to have a clearer picture of the partners willing to assist during an emergency mobilization.

At the end, participants were informed that a matrix on winter emergency assistance will be circulated to be filled by those partners willing to assist.

6. AOB
The FSS Coordinator concluded with the following statements:

- A common matrix on value chain interventions will be circulated and it is based on the livelihoods matrix as both sectors the FSS and the LH one are trying to have a common matrix on value chains to avoid duplication efforts and have better access to shared information;
- Participants are requested to fill in the matrix on their livelihood interventions during January till September 2019 as a mapping exercise will be done from the WFP team working on livelihoods;
- Regional FSS working group meetings will continue every two months basis.

At the end, the FSS Information Management Officer, informed the participants on the meeting held on 1st October 2019 for all sectors IMO’s where the following topics have been raised:

- A review of the 2019 reporting on Activity Info and what needs to be improved;
- Key facts: under reporting, no-reporting, difficulty of disaggregation for some indicators, long list of indicators in some cases;
- Come up with a common methodology and guidelines for reporting under the Activity Info for both the FS and the LH sectors and try to have a common understanding on how to report and under which sector (especially for common agricultural interventions such as value chains);
- Ensure that monthly reporting is done on time from all partners following the email reminders;
- The monthly statistical dashboard will be disseminated on the 25th of each month;
- Activity Info reporting for previous months shall be locked;
- Ensure that the two-phases appeal process (targets and budget) are submitted on time;
- A new version of the Activity Info is being finalized under which partners will have to report for 2020 and a mandatory training for all partners shall will be held during the first week of January 2020;
- The FSS log frame is being revised and once finalized will be shared with partners working group.

Next WG meeting will be on or around 12 November 2019.