



Terms of Reference

Regional Food Security and Agriculture Sector Working Group

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. (World Food Summit, 1996)

Background

After 8 years since the onset of the Syrian Crisis Lebanon’s government and communities are still facing a test of stability. The Government of Lebanon (GoL), the United Nations (UN), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other humanitarian partners are coordinating closely under the umbrella of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) 2017-2020.¹ The plan reiterates previous commitments stressing on the importance to continue working together to reinforce stability and build resilience. By bridging humanitarian needs to development goals (Humanitarian Development nexus), humanitarian needs will be met while addressing national and local service delivery systems.

The LCRP 2017-2020 is based on ten sector strategies (including the strategic direction of the Child Protection and Sexual and Gender Based Violence task forces), which are implemented and coordinated by the GoL, the UN and NGOs. The Ministry of Social Affairs, UNHCR and UNDP assume the responsibility to coordinate the existing sectors in all field locations and in Beirut, and draws on UN agencies’ and NGOs comparative expertise, supported by an integrated information management system. Each sector has a working group which is led by government, UN and NGO agency according to these terms of reference.

Objective

The aim of the Food Security sector (FSS) is to effectively coordinate interventions and build strong partnerships to support sustainable, comprehensive, food availability, access, utilizations and stability initiatives in Lebanon, drawing on both humanitarian and development funding streams.

The sector focuses on the widely accepted 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;

¹ The Government of Lebanon (GoL), the United Nations (UN), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other humanitarian partners jointly launched the first Lebanon Crisis Response Plan in December 2014

- 4- **Stability:** To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. They should not risk 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.

The sector strategy is detailed in the LCRP and in the sector's results framework and situation analysis. It aims at reducing food insecurity by 2020 and to improve the resilience of the agricultural sector. Food assistance is combined progressively with food production and/or rural livelihood opportunities as a model of the humanitarian and development nexus.

Structure of the working group

- **National Working Group**

At the national level, the Food Security & Agriculture Sector Working Group (FSSWG) is open to all humanitarian and stabilization operational partners intervening in the Food Security sector, be they Government, UN/inter-governmental organisations, or non-governmental organisations (both national and international) that are abiding by established humanitarian principles in the delivery of their humanitarian and stabilization interventions.

The WG is led by the Core Group, which is composed of MoSA, MoA, FAO and WFP and one INGO/NGO/academic institution representative where each agency is conveying their respective technical specific expertise and ensure Information Management focal point responsibilities. WFP and FAO will represent the FSS as co-leads and, through the National Coordinator, coordinate the WG as co-chairs and manage secretarial work of the sector. MoA is the government lead for the sector.

The INGO/NGO/academic institution representative is selected through a participatory and transparent process, and by wide agreement of the WG partners. The NGO co-lead is from an organization with (a) recognised technical expertise in the sector, (b) operational capacity in the sector in the geographic area covered by the WG, and (c) the willingness and capacity to commit time and resources to the co-lead responsibilities. The INGO/NGO/academic institution co-leads on a yearly basis and would have the following responsibilities:

- Co-chair the FSSWG meetings by leading discussions of the agenda items;
- In collaboration with the sector leads, set the agenda for the monthly meetings;
- Bring in a 'balanced' perspective in sector coordination leadership, by representing NGO views in sector direction;
- Review minutes for the group;
- Facilitate and improve information sharing within the FSSWG.

Technical sub-groups will be formed based on identified needs and agreed upon with the sector members. The technical sub-groups will meet on ad hoc basis, in Beirut or in the field, and during non-defined period to work on specific technical issues and report to the sector.

The national working group will meet every first Tuesday of the month in Beirut.

- **Regional Working Groups**

The FSS sector wishes to establish regional working groups in the North (T5 and Akkar), Bekaa, South and Mount Lebanon. Regional WG will benefit from WFP, one of the sector co-leads, field presence in Qobayat (North), Zahle (Beeka) and Beirut (South and Mount Lebanon).

Regional working groups should be attended by relevant Agencies, International and local organizations working in the area of interest, and government representatives.

The regional coordinators will be appointed at WFP level, typically at a Programme Associate Level.

The regional coordinators will lead the process of selecting a NGO/UN Agency representative as co-lead. The NGO/UN representative must be selected through a participatory and transparent process, and by wide agreement of the WG partners. The NGO/UN co-lead should be from an organization with (a) recognised technical expertise in the sector, (b) operational capacity in the sector in the geographic area covered by the WG, and (c) the willingness and capacity to commit time and resources to the co-lead responsibilities. Co-leads selection should happen once per year. Its responsibilities are similar to the national WG NGO co-chair. The NGO will support coordination tasks and facilitate NGOs engagement.

The regional WG will convene every two months on a set day according to partners' preference.

Responsibilities²

Regional Sector leads, under the coordination and supervision of the National FSS Coordinator, share the following responsibilities:

Establishment and Maintenance of Appropriate Sectoral Coordination Mechanisms

- Ensure appropriate coordination with all humanitarian and stabilization partners through regularly scheduled working group meetings; use of inter-agency portal and mailing list to disseminate information;
- Ensure minutes of meetings are shared with all regional sector members;
- Secure commitments from partners in responding to needs and filling gaps in the response, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities within the sectoral working group, with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary;
- Ensure the complementarity of different humanitarian and stabilization actors' actions;
- Ensure that sectoral coordination mechanisms are adapted over time to reflect the capacities of local actors and the engagement of development partners;
- Ensure linkages with other sectors are strengthened and maintain constant communication with other UN agencies and non-LCRP stakeholders

Planning, Assessments and Strategy Development

- Encourage the use of common needs assessment and monitoring tools, and ensure timely and accurate reporting by all partners, and advise accordingly;
- Identify and share information about gaps in order to ensure that the sector targets are met without gaps and overlaps;
- Provide inputs into the development of national and regional planning and reporting documents;
- Ensure that the operational framework of the sector is updated regularly according to evolving needs;
- Support/ promote training of staff and capacity building of FS sector partners based on identified gaps by the technical working groups or by the FS coordination.

Attention to cross-sectoral priorities including gender

- Participate in monthly inter-sectoral meetings and other relevant inter-agency processes to ensure that appropriate linkages are made with other sectors' objectives and strategies;

² The responsibilities are overall similar at national and regional levels with some specificities for the regional structure

- Reach out to other sectors (i.e. attending meetings of other sectors or engage Core Group members to represent if needed) to ensure effective cross sectoral links for an improved cross sectoral coordination;
- Ensure cross-cutting dimensions including AAP, centrality of protection, gender and age are regularly mainstreamed into the sector plans and activities by ensuring collection and analysis of disaggregated data, quality programming and related capacity building and awareness for partners;
- Identify and address cross-sectoral priorities; together with sector partners, undertake capacity mapping and gap identification exercises to develop a capacity-development strategy for the sector.

Monitoring and Reporting

- Use and promote Activity Info as the inter-sectoral reporting tool by regularly following up with partners in order to ensure a timely and qualitative data collection on the implementation of their activities;
- Comment on the draft dashboard produced by the coordination team mid-year and end of the year.

Communication, Advocacy and Resource Mobilization

- Represent the interests of the sector in discussions with partners on priorities, resource mobilization and advocacy in coordination with the National Coordinator;
- Identify core advocacy concerns, including resource requirements, and communicate them to the National Coordinator;
- Together with cluster partners, identify core advocacy concerns for the sector and contribute key messages to the broader advocacy initiatives of the country team, the Lead Agency and other relevant actors;
- Participate actively on development, revision, dissemination and application of technical standard, guidelines, tools and best practices through Technical Working Groups.

Emergency preparedness

- Ensure contingency planning, preparedness, and capacity building for new/seasonal emergencies;
- Participate in contingency planning and preparedness processes at regional level
- Take the lead on advocating for needs- based responses to emerging crises
- Facilitate the use of the AI contingency database by regional partners.

Inclusion of key stabilization and humanitarian partners

- Ensure inclusion of key stabilization and humanitarian partners for the sector respecting their respective mandates and programme priorities. Special focus will be given to the inclusion of Lebanese institutions and organizations.