Debrief from the session on lessons learned/good practice for vegetable/backyard/micro-gardening
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt

• This lessons learnt session followed an action point from the Agricultural & Livelihoods Working Group Meeting

• The discussion on 18 September 2019 brought together experiences from 4 partners: FAO, AAH, ICRC and SCI

• The lessons learnt session covered Household consumption/Nutrition, Markets Access/ Household Income Generation, Access to Land, Water Sources, and other inputs (Seed, fertilizer, and other materials, etc). Other Key issues covered included targeting, government policy, shocks, etc)

• The session covered What worked well, What did not work well and Key Recommendations, as reported by the partners.
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt – What Worked Well?

Access to Land

• **Sacks** and **1 metre square wooden raised bed technology** worked in urban areas where land access for agriculture is scarce

Access to Water Sources

• Converting waste/flood water in trenches into irrigation use

• Partners coordinated WASH and FSL especially in the camp areas to ensure efficient use of water.
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt – What Worked Well?

Access to other inputs (Seed, fertilizer, and other materials, etc)
• Grouping beneficiaries supports in making mobilizing and trainings easier.

• Complementing the inputs such as seeds, etc with trainings and monitoring of farmers is key in ensuring productivity.

• Grouping farmers supported in sharing some tools that allowed more reach to several other households.

• Emphasis on locally available and usable material is key and contributes to efficiency. This includes compost materials, broken buckets, tyres, etc.

• Access to seeds is available in the urban markets
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt – What Worked Well?

Household consumption/Nutrition

• Some partners provided cooking demonstrations to the beneficiaries.

• Beneficiaries incorporated vegetables obtained from their gardens in meals.

• Targeting special groups such as the mother-to-mother support groups is since they already have complementary trainings/other support on nutrition.
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt – What Worked Well?

Markets Access/ Household Income Generation

- Vouchers have been used by a variety of partners especially in the urban areas.

- Vegetables with short maturity cycles raised more incomes, maximizing the rain season.

- Linking farmers to savings through Savings Groups is important.

- Partner reported beneficiaries’ made savings and income from vegetables
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt – What Worked Well?

Other Key issues (Targeting, government policy, shocks, etc)

- Targeted included vulnerable people. eg mother-to-mother support groups
- Volunteers who backed-up group leaders also supported in training follow-up.
- Geographical targeting, cultural-sensitivity, preferences and needs analysis with the community were during selection of inputs including seed.
- Continuous technical support monitoring and PDM for inputs is important
- Registered farmers with respective government bodies for sustainability
- Group approach for beneficiaries worked well in some areas, whereas it in other areas it didn’t due to individual differences.
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt – What Did Not Work Well?

Access to Land

- Some community members are not used to the container, bags methods of vegetable growing.
- New displacements and influxes destroyed demo gardens especially in camps.
- Reduced land access

Access to Water Sources

- Competition for water for domestic use and irrigation in some areas.
- Scarcity of water especially in the dry season.
Kitchen/Backyard/Vegetable Garden Lessons Learnt – What Did Not Work Well?

**Access to other inputs (Seed, fertilizer, and other materials, etc)**

- Some households sold inputs. In locations such as Dikwa, 75% reported selling inputs to due lack of food mainly due to lack of or delayed food distribution.

- Some of the households shared the vegetable seeds and/or surplus harvest with relatives and neighbours. This could also be considered a positive as part of community-based social protection support which is key in saving other lives/protecting livelihoods. However, seed/harvest-sharing reduced production/income for target beneficiary households.

- Some households couldn’t afford seed the following season due to the limited production the previous season.

- Some households did not use the tools for the right purpose. For instance, watering cans were used for water storage for household use instead of watering vegetables.

- High prevalence of pest in some locations.
Household consumption/Nutrition

- Vegetables get bitter, especially those grown in the hard conditions (drier conditions). Some people were not used to the taste of the vegetables.

- Some partners provided seed varieties that are not normally consumed by the households in the North East.
Markets Access/ Household Income Generation

• Markets were affected in some areas; hence farmers could not access inputs through the markets.

• Majority of the areas were reached with in-kind support. Where feasible, scale-up Cash and/or Voucher Assistance for inputs.

Other Key issues (Targeting, government policy, shocks, etc)

• Some partners lacked technically qualified staff support to farmers, etc
Key Recommendations

1. Agreements on land can also be signed with land owners to protect the vegetables gardens.

2. Sensitization on new technologies including 1 metre square technology, growing vegetables in bags, etc especially in the urban areas.

3. Continued cooperation between WASH and FSS partners to Water to ensure water is efficiently used.

4. Early distributions to ensure the full rain reason water is maximized.

5. Training on water harvesting is key

6. Twin-track approach by ensuring targeted households have access to food as well, to protect the seed and other inputs.
Key Recommendations

7. Emphasis on locally available and usable material.

8. Use of nets (green houses) to reduce heat and water evaporation (by 60%) is efficient in the dry season

9. Affordable and locally available materials should be used for fencing

10. Sensitization should be done so that beneficiaries can use all the kits including seeds as required.

11. Farmers can also be trained to grow/save seed for the subsequent season

12. Farmers are encouraged to continue using organic inputs since they are also healthy especially when eaten raw.
Key Recommendations

13. There is need to ensure that the gardening hand tools get to the hands of the beneficiaries undamaged.

14. Sensitization should be done on the nutritional value of vegetables and also on planting different varieties of vegetables.

15. Creating awareness to beneficiaries on selling surplus harvests in the nearby market for sale.

16. Sensitization on group coexistence and dynamics among individuals in a group.

17. Community participation in the needs assessment to ensure cultural, preferences, acceptability.

18. To ensure success of groups, trainings on group dynamics should be delivered to beneficiaries.
For more information partners sector can connected to any of the 4 partners.