

**FSS WORKING GROUP Monthly Virtual MEETING
8 June 2021**

FSS COORDINATION TEAM: Carla De Gregorio, Elie Choueiri, Kazem El Seblani, Amal Salibi, Hussein Nasrallah (MoA).

PARTNERS ATTENDING:

ACF, ADRA, Alawite Islamic Charity Association, ANERA, Anera, Arcenciel, AVSI, CAMEALEON, CAMEALEON/Oxfam, CARE International in Lebanon, Caritas Lebanon, Caritas Switzerland, CCP Japan, CESVI, CISP, Dorcas, FCDO, ICRC, IRL, Lebanese Red Cross, Lebrelief, MDSF, Mennonite Central Committee, MERATH/LSESD, Mercy Corps, Mercy-USA, MOA, NUSANED, PARCIC, PU-AMI Lebanon, Relief International, Sawa for development and aid, ShareQ, SHEILD, UNHCR, UNHCR/ Inter-Agency, UNICEF, UNIFIL, URDA, Welfare Association, WFP, WHH, WW-GVC.

	Agenda item	Main discussion points/highlights from presentation. For the full presentation please refer to the links provided	Takeaways/action points
1	WFP/RAM situation analysis	<p>Port of Beirut Good Movement from January 2019 till May 2021 (in mt)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A decrease of 21% is noticed when comparing August 2020 -May 2021 figures against the same period the previous year. ➤ A decrease of 20% is registered when comparing January to May 2021 figures to the same period in 2020. ➤ A decrease of 49% is registered when comparing May 2021 figures to May 2020 figures. <p>Lebanese Customs Imports Statistics Periods Comparison –Net Weight (mt)</p> <p>In 2020, and in comparison, to 2019:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Total imports decreased by 31%. ➤ Food Imports (excluding cereals) decreased by 11%. ➤ Food imports decreased by 2%. 	<p>Link to VAM reports and assessment to be shared with partners:</p> <p>https://dataviz.vam.wfp.org/reports_explorer#</p> <p>Please select Lebanon</p> <p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. do you have information in terms of food insecurity situation in the country? 2. About the government support card that is planned, the assistance amount will be provided in USD or exchanged in LBP?

	<p>➤ Cereal imports increased by 9%.</p> <p>Stock coverage evolution of WFP contracted shops</p> <p>➤ Further improvements in stock coverage, reaching same percentages prior to March disruption events</p> <p>➤ Shops with more than 2 weeks of stock coverage now at 82 percent (85 percent during week of March 8)</p> <p>Exchange rate development</p> <p>➤ Black market rate breached the LBP 13,000 again on May 26, 2021.</p> <p>➤ Central Bank providing USD dollars to commercial banks through “Sayrafa” platform at the rate of USD/LBP 12,000.</p> <p>➤ Total amount traded during week of May 31 reached USD 10 million.</p> <p>Change of Monthly revised food SMEB price in LPB (national average)</p> <p>➤ Revised Food SMEB recorded a 10% increase between April and May 2021, at LBP 234,316.</p> <p>➤ The cost of the revised food SMEB in May 2021 more than four times the cost of the basket back in October 2019 (340% increase).</p> <p>Subsidies Removal Latest Updates (as of beginning of June)</p> <p>➤ Ministerial consultations to draft subsidies removal and financial support plans on hold.</p> <p>➤ Latest media sources indicate that financial support card plan will cover 750,000 families. Amount average to be around USD 137 per family (exact amount varies with family size). Plan has been submitted to the parliament for review and approval. Funding still unclear.</p> <p>➤ Rationing “de-facto” happening. Electricity blackouts, medicine and fuel shortages main examples.</p> <p>➤ Increased electricity blackouts, reaching up to 20 hours in the capital alone, with possibility of full shutdown in coming few days. Private generators owners will start rationing up to 5 hours per day of electricity supply this week.</p> <p>➤ President & Caretaker Prime Minister provided exceptional approval on June 7 for an advance payment to purchase fuel oil for the public electricity company. Remains to be</p>	<p>3. There is any information around when the card might actually rolled out</p> <p>Answers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. based on the data collected in March and April we estimate approximately about 22% of Lebanese population are food insecure. Detailed report to be shared including the coping mechanism at the governorate level. 2. one of the plans is to disburse in USD, however there is no clarity from government side 3. regarding the date, unfortunately there is no indication on that
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	<p>seen if Central Bank will provide needed funds.</p> <p>Latest Financial/Central Banks Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Central Bank approved scheme to pay back USD 400 per month for USD accounts that were created before the end of October 2019, and as they became in March 2021. Payment scheme includes also paying another USD 400 in LBP, at the rate set by “Sayrafa” platform (currently at USD/LBP 12,000). Circular with more details expected this week. ➤ Central Bank lowered mandatory reserve from the current 15 percent to 14 percent. ➤ Parliament finance & budget committee approved capital control law on June 7. Exact numbers were not set in the current draft law, due to the lack of data from the Central Bank at this stage. ➤ Additional LBP withdrawal limits, as Central Bank try to decrease LBP amount in circulation (estimated at LBP 38.24 trillion in April 2021, a 423 percent increase from October 2019 level of LBP 7.31 trillion) <p>Latest Combustible Fuel Price Inflation& News</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fuel shortage across the country. Petrol stations rationing supplies. ➤ Rationing reached 50 percent of market needs and is expected to continue in the near future. ➤ Shortage due to delays in approving payments by the Central Bank. Shipments already at sea awaiting approval to offload. ➤ Gasoline price has increased by 68 percent, diesel by 77 percent, and cooking gas by 37 percent, between beginning of December 2020 and mid May 2021. 	
<p>2 FSS sector updates Partners’ updates, constraints, and gaps</p>	<p>AI Sector</p> <p>For AI indicators update please refer to the presentation in attachment and to the interactive dashboard. (click here to go to the dashboard)</p> <p>FSS assistance transfer value</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In-kind food parcel: on the basis of the FSS composition of the food parcel: retail value @USD 736,000 LBP/HH/m ➤ Cash-based food assistance (all modalities): LBP 100,000/p/m 	<p>Please remember to update regularly the service mapping on ActivityInfo</p> <p>Beirut Blast Emergency Response: for partners with ongoing interventions please update the dedicated AI database</p> <p>Partners are strongly encouraged to have their service information accurately entered and updated on the Inter-Sector Service Mapping tool (pls open hyperlink). This will ensure that all of services, contact information and</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cash for work: LBP 50,000/p/d unskilled workers ➤ FFA/FFT: monthly value aligned with WFP cash-based food assistance <p>Transfers currently in LBP</p> <p>Partners Update:</p> <p>WFP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The request raised to MoSA to increase the food transfer value to 220,000 LBP was not accepted ➤ New request will be initiated at the prime ministry level to increase the non-food transfer value from 400,000 LBP to 700,000 LBP ➤ Noting that the current 400,000 LBP /Person represents slightly more than 33% of the recommended food needs per person. <p>Dorcas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Will start new project to distribute 600 food parcels and hygiene kits in BML areas ➤ It will be targeting Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese ➤ No estimation to accept referrals as the waiting list is very long. <p>Nutrition Sector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The Nutrition status continue to deteriorate especially among the vulnerable individuals ➤ IYCF practices has been also been deteriorating ➤ Because no data available regarding the malnutrition among Syrian refugees and Lebanese population, smart survey will be conduct for this regard. <p>National IYCF hotline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is a hotline that support pregnant women and caregivers regarding breastfeeding and complementary feeding ➤ So far reaching more Syrians refugees that Lebanese ➤ The hotline encounters a steady increase of the phone calls <p>IYCF national campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Targeting pregnant women, caregivers, gynaecologists, paediatricians, midwives, nurses, etc .. ➤ Will be started in July for 3 months 	<p>information regarding complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFMs) (in particular hotline information, WhatsApp, etc.) are up to date</p> <p>Link to AWP 2021: click here</p>
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3	<p>Draft Emergency Response Plan @8 June</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In collaboration with the MOPH and the head of the women and children committee of the parliament ➤ Its aim to support and promote IYCF practices also to ensure that people are aware of the IYCF services through the national hotline. <p>FAO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Current projects implemented inclose collaboration with the MoA, are still on-going ➤ New cash and voucher program will be launched lately in June, targeting vulnerable small-scale farmers. ➤ The project is with the collaboration with the World Bank <p>Draft Emergency Response Plan @8 June: Food security and basic needs, alongside health and nutrition: priority areas for emergency relief assistance aimed at mitigating and preventing the life-threatening effects of the acute and protracted crisis on the poorest and most vulnerable among Lebanese and migrant populations. The framework will address the additional needs not covered by the LCRP as they arise from the dramatic deterioration of Lebanon’s economic situation and are unrelated to the Syrian refugee crisis. Limited sustained food assistance: outside of regular assistance through the NPTP and food vouchers, several one-offs in-kind food assistance under the LCRP and a number of ad-hoc initiatives</p> <p>Needs: 1,088,000 Lebanese and 146,000 migrant workers (tot.1,234,000)</p> <p>Estimated planned programmes beneficiaries (June-Dec): 1,137,400</p> <p>June 2021 gap in assistance: 572,600 Lebanese, including 400,000 already targeted for assistance under WFP’s emergency response; and 146,000 migrant workers</p> <p>Targets should be reviewed on a continuing basis, especially since the removal of subsidies is expected to deepen and increase vulnerabilities.</p> <p>The ERP objective is to address basic needs by providing immediate relief assistance. The</p>	
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4	<p>MoA National Agriculture Strategy flagship programmes</p>	<p>MoA: Lebanon National Agriculture Strategy</p> <p>NAS investments-rationale for prioritization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Feasibility: What is feasible within 5 years timeframe 	<p>Questions by partners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What was the impact of the Saudi Arabia ban on Lebanese exports? 2. What can be grown in Lebanon and what can be exported <p>Answers:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Impact: investments with highest expected impact for the Agri-food system ➤ Inclusiveness: social targeting ➤ Constraint removal: addressing the most important conduit mechanisms <p>FP1. Inclusive access to inputs / financial services for ag. Recovery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Objective: sustain agricultural production and improve agricultural producers’ resilience to the compound financial and COVID-19 crises ➤ Target: S/M farmers (access to inputs), existing/new SMEs (access to credit / matching grants) ➤ Budget: US\$45.0m / 3 to 5 yrs <p>FP3. Increased agrifood production and export</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Objective: increase domestic production and productivity of main agricultural products, and boost exports of potential value-chains ➤ Target: farmers and their groups, exporters, public institutions (infrastructure) ➤ Budget: ~US\$21m / 3 to 5 yrs <p>FP4. Digital access to agriculture knowledge and information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Objective: modernize the agriculture knowledge dissemination system ➤ Target: extension service ➤ Budget: US\$15m/3yrs <p>FP5. Evidence-based land use decision tool</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Objective: strengthen the evidence-based decision making at policy and strategic level on agrifood sector and food system ➤ Target: Government, national/international partners engaged in agrifood, food system actors and entrepreneurs ➤ Budget: US\$0.7m/2yrs <p>Opportunities consideration within MoA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strategic partnerships: FPs to stimulate partnerships with MoA and interests in financing NAS priorities ➤ Alignment opportunities: dialogue opportunity with development partners on strategic plans on the make ➤ National ownership: engaging with external stakeholders, private sector, civil society, and others for stronger advocacy 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MOA still working in an assessment to study the effect, and hopefully the ban will be lifted soon 2. the value chains that the ministry suggest to focus on for domestic markets: vegetables, legumes and the dairy sector. For export: grapes, avocado and cherries in addition to citrus, apple, potatoes, and olive oil
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5	<p>WFP: 2020/21 Grievance Redress Mechanism results</p>	<p>WFP: 2020/21 Grievance Redress Mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Aims to enhance accountability to refugees - discontinued or previously non-assisted. ➤ Founded on the principle of self-initiation - affected refugees initiate a review by placing claims through designated channels; ➤ Data-driven analysis based on UNHCR data; ➤ Complements the Targeting Formula; ➤ Reviewed by Development Analytics and enhanced accordingly; ➤ Designed through consultations with refugees. <p>Relevance of GRM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Addresses targeting exclusion errors of the socio-economic vulnerable households ➤ Enhances accountability to affected populations <p>Communications about GRM</p> <p>A variety of communication channels were adopted and found effective in reaching communities. They included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Info sessions with OVs. ➤ UNHCR website. ➤ Facebook. ➤ Counselling at UNHCR Reception Centre. ➤ Call centre responses to queries. <p>Good Practices and Lessons Learned</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Expansion of convenient channels to register grievances enhanced access to refugees despite the Covid19 restrictive measures ➤ The GRM process is the main channel of participation in the targeting process ➤ Continued efforts will be made to enhance the refugees consultation/participation by directly interviewing refugees in future ➤ Suggestions were made by actors from the protection sector to disseminate information through inter-agency coordination platform so as to reach special interest groups. 	
4	<p>AOB</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Contingency Planning: coordinated by OCHA; 2 consultations with core group; last week consultations with partners at regional level; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ deadline to submit to OCHA 11 June; Inter-sectoral workshop 16 or 17 June

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ LHF 2021 First allocation deadline: 11 June ➤ FSS Coordinator end of assignment: Carla De Gregorio's last working-group meeting before she departs the FSS as sector coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Joint FSS-LH sectors meetings agri-cooperatives: access to Finance 23 June
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