Food Security Sector – Beirut Blast

Minutes of meeting
21 September 2020

Location: Teams meeting
Date: 21/09/2020
Chair: Carla (FSS) – Joseph (ACTEF co-chair)

Agenda

• Introduction
• Assessment Update – WFP VAM
• Response monitoring updates – IM
  o Update on AI reporting
  o 5w inputs
• Sub-sector feedback
  o Cash-based transfers
  o Nutrition
  o Discussion on possible task force on MSME
• Field Coordination update
  o Updates on the help desk
  o Feedback from LebRelief
• Partners Updates
• AOB

Assessment Updates: Simon – WFP/VAM

• Impact on the supply chain and WFP contracted shops:
  o 24% of shops reported scarcity in certain products
72% having government subsidized items
- Exchange rate: 100% of contracted shops using between LBP 7,000 - 8,000 (September 17 data)
- Increase of 97% in food basket between March 2020 and September 2020, highest rates in Beirut
- 177% increase in weekly food price (SMEB) between 14 October and 14 of September
- CPI witnessed 120% between August 2019 and August 2020, while FPI at 367%
- September 15, Ministry of Economy released its economic plan. 3 priorities:
  - Emergency assistance from international community
  - Right environment for investors
  - Develop highly educated human capital

Q&A:
- To look at Food Consumption: this will be done through the mVAM
- Voucher programme from Ministry of Economic & BDL: no clear information available, VAM will be looking into it.

Response monitoring updates – IM
- Friday reminder was sent regarding reporting under Activity Info for the Beirut Blast response, covering the period of August and first 2 weeks of September. Deadline extended till Monday 21st COB. Only 3 partners have reported.
- A reminder to report on AI for both periods.

Reporting plan:
- Partners to continue reporting in the 5W for the period of 3rd and 4th weeks of September (14 – 26 September). This will be used to create the sector dashboard and the OCHA weekly sitreps
- 5w is accessible through: https://wfp.sharepoint.com/:x:/s/fsc_global/EdJEOLGgPnBNn6joH1g7-xwBy02Q3v7Ovhn-GTt9IzdZ0w?e=Xmis3b

Sub-sectors
Cash based transfers – Dima
Revised mapping of cash programmes summarizing the discussions has already been shared. Few partner information was missing and will be collected. For those who would like to be added to the mailing list to reach out to Dima krayem@unhcr.org
There is still no final agreement with the central bank on the preferential rate. The HC is following up on it. By Thursday if this hasn’t been signed, agencies are free to disburse in USD given the guidance agreed on. The alignment of different activities under the different sectors are ongoing and to be finalized as soon as all partners submit their inputs.
Q&A:
- Inability of partners to disburse in LBP. The harmonization of value is the important part regardless of the currency and to avoid delays in implementation.

Nutrition: Faith
Complimentary food has been received and looking for partners to distribute some of the commodities with the support of partners providing in-kind food or through community kitchens. The commodities include: plumpy food (that are used for prevention of malnutrition and not treatment, targeting children above 9 months old, 1 packet per day)
Those interested to reach out to Faith at: fnzioka@unicef.org

**MSME WG:** several partners are requesting a coordination structure. A consortium by MC and other organizations already led an assessment and coordination among 9 NGOs. Current discussions on how NGOs and other partners to structure a separate thematic taskforce or streamline within other structures.

**Field coordination: Joseph – ACTED / BoB – HelpDesk coordinator**
- Existing or planned helpdesks: Jemmayze, Mar Mkhayel, Karantina, Geitawi, Bourj hammoud (planned for next week), DT, Nabaa, Sin el fil
- To share information with effected people for referrals, documentation, data collection,
- Referral is done to NGOs who are working in the area to respond
- The number of volunteers is low while the residents’ needs are increasing
- Increase of bullying by certain actors (NGOs, municipality, political parties). Lack of complaint mechanisms to report these issues
- Referral numbers shared by NGOs either do not work or do not reply. Lack of follow up from NGOs after their data collection on needs.
- A lot of communities are still in the basic needs stage that are still not covered.
- Press conference in Bourj Hammoud (OCHA and Municipality) on the needs and response on Wednesday.
- The google sheet to be filled for volunteering
- 5W to be shared with Bob with list f partners accepting referrals
- Meeting tomorrow 22 September at 11, mar mkhayel St Michel church for partners coordination.

**Partners’ updates:**
- WFP: cash distribution started Wednesday through western union as preferential rate was still not available. Loading of beneficiaries started for those with no phone contact. 3rd loading is planned before the end of the month. Outreaching are ongoing and self-registration is also available for beneficiaries for blast impacted and economic situation. These will then be screened. Top up will be done through cash, while food component will be done through vouchers from WFP contracted shops (which are planned to increase).
  - Self-registration forms to be shared with HelpDesks
- WHH: working with LOST, after the assessment LOST selected several MSME and they started the rehabilitation in Karantina, Zkak I Blat, Khandaa I Ghami, Borj Abi Haidar, Salim Slaam, Borij Hamood, Saifi, Dawra and Basta

**Upcoming Meetings**
- Monday 28th September