



Food Security Sector coordination meeting: Beirut Blast

Meeting minutes

18 January 2021

Chair: WFP

Co-Chair: Acted

Date: January 18, 2021

Location: Teams

Attendees: WFP, FAO, Preemptive Love Coalition, Michel Daher Social Foundation, MCC MERATH, ACF, WVI, Care, Caritas, Dorcas / Tabitha, Oxfam, SCI, CESVI, WHH, ARCS, Amel, Nusaned NGO, ADRA, OCHA, ACTED

Agenda:

1. FSS coordination
 - a. Tacking stocks on Activity Info response
 - b. Priority Food Security needs resulting from Beirut port explosion that will continue in 2021
 - c. Flash appeal partners' project end date
2. Lockdown exceptions for critical activities: OCHA updates and feedback from partners on impact of the lockdown and critical activities that need to continue
3. Partners updates and plans for 2021
4. Task forces feedback:
 - a. Cash based task force
 - b. Support to SMEs group
5. WFP/VAM updates on the key FSS indicators
6. AOB: merge the FSSWG for the BB with the LCRP FSSWG for Beirut/Mount Lebanon and South/ FS assessments in Karantina

1. FSS coordination

Tracking stocks on Activity Info response

- We checked with OCHA regarding the reporting for January as we are supposed to report on the first half of January and as you know normally the flash appeal ended by the end of December. Reporting will normally continue for now; the sector IMO will be sharing an update on that.
- It would be important and good if you have a look at the reporting from August to December 2020, if you feel you might have some discrepancies or didn't report on activity on activity

info please check the data and the system, because we need to prepare a end of year reporting

- We will be contacting some of you regarding the reporting between the inside flash appeal and outside flash appeal because as you know we did some revision to the FTS for the financial issues of the flash appeal and outside the flash appeal and it came to our attention that some of the organizations are reporting outside the flash appeal although they should have reported inside the flash appeal database (the database is divided into 2 subfolders under the Beirut blast response). For those reason, we will be sharing an email with simple steps to follow for partners to the untick from outside flash appeal to include them inside the flash appeal. There are only 3 to 4 organizations who will be asked to do so.

Priority Food Security needs resulting from Beirut port explosion that will continue in 2021

- We have been asked by OCHA to provide information on the continuing needs for each sector under the BB after the closing of the Flash appeal officially in December 2020. We have prepared this slide (check the attachment) where we summarize the strategic objectives under the flash appeal and also we summarized the current status of the activities and are asking for inputs on outstanding gap or need or constraints.
- Some partners under the flash appeal have receive funds that went beyond the length of the flash appeal and we will update the end date of projects accordingly (see next agenda point). For non-flash appeal activities the picture is still burred because we don't know exactly when to activities are planned to end or to continue, so it will be good eventually to have feedback from the partners on how many partners are still implementing a response. If a number of partners are continuing activities, especially when it comes to the food assistance, we will continue coordination meetings, but merging this group with the LCRP FSS regional WG for BML and South. And for the SMEs group we have been asking OCHA to organize a meeting with the 3RF to see how UNDP, who is the lead sector under the 3RF, would support.
- In terms of reporting we are checking to see if January will be the last month to report on the sitrep that we usually send update for OCHA every 2 weeks. The coordination team will need to get back to you and we will see if the activity info will stay open for the next months for the partners to update.

Nusaned NGO

- Provided support for 40,000\$ connecting local SMEs to 500 families through vouchers for the families to redeem at local SMEs. Activities extended to 3 weeks because of the lockdown; assessing if these activities could be also done in 2021

3.Flash appeal partners' project end date

We already sent a request via email.

Oxfam

- Part of the work was completed in December
- Another distributed started last Wednesday but on hold
- End of February would be the end date
- Similar cash project on-going but under other funds, they can continue report outside of the Flash appeal in AI

SCI

- Anticipated that flash appeal related activities end at end of February
- Similarly, a programme will end in March
- Some resilience programme will end later on (LCRP – activity info objective)

4. Lockdown exceptions for critical activities: OCHA updates and feedback from partners on impact of the lockdown and critical activities that need to continue

- As you know the humanitarian coordinator was negotiating with the Deputy prime minister to guarantee access for the UN and NGOs to ensure the continuation of critical activities but the information didn't really trickle down from the PM office to the enforcer at local level of the lockdown and we heard that there was a second negotiation that happened during the weekend and given the gravity of the situation of COVID and it was agreed that the exception will be only given to the agencies working in food security, health, protection and WASH activities.
- All other activities intended to be suspended until the end of the lockdown
- The agencies that are included in the list will be able to apply for authorization through the governmental online portal choosing "other" and mention the reason "urgent and critical humanitarian work".
- A dedicated category will be soon available mentioning "life-saving activities"
- The exception will be granted during the duration of the strict lockdown. Confirmation received electronically can be shown at checkpoints
- From the FSS perspective the activities considered life-saving are related to food assistance under current programmes; referrals from cases not currently assisted by partners' programme and food assistance for COVID related isolated cases and families.

AMEL

Issue in term of the modality: some activities required mobility of beneficiaries. Should it be door to door or is there any foreseeing scenario?

FSS: For collection points beneficiaries there is the SMS system put in place by the government but that needs to be confirmed by OCHA in its negotiation with the government. In case there are partners using distribution centers instead of door to door please let us know so we can discuss that with OCHA.

Dorcias-Tabitha

- Update about food programme status under LCRP
- Educational activities are on-hold
- Some children under Borj Brajne are picking their meals
- Assistance for BB and hot meals distribution are on hold this week

FSS Regional coordinators had been in contact with the NGOs to check their food stock availability and capacity and see how to be able to reply to emergency for non-assisted beneficiaries and requests to call center.

Update of the service mapping is very important for the referral to take place

Proposition has been made to use for the distribution, in case the lockdown is extended, the sms sent from organization as a document that beneficiaries can use to exit their residences and redeem assistance. The coordination team will approach OCHA with this proposition.

MCC

- We're able to distribute voucher before lockdown
- Concern people are not be able to use them because people can't move and might need to go to switch back to in-kind, although donors prefer cash or vouchers

5.Partners updates and plans for 2021

Peemptive love

- Completed food distribution (hot meals and parcels)
- Still have a portion of fund that we could use
- Waiting to see after the lockdown what we could do with it

ACF

- Finished all activities concerning the BB
- For the new project with have 50 HHs in Beirut for MPC and 7 MSMEs related to food activities under the French embassy fund

ADRA

- SMES: last stage of doing the selection targeting 28 SMEs
- Then we will be starting to do the assessment by early next moth
- Distributed 1000 food e-cards and waiting for the supermarket to open again to be able to benefit from it

WFP

- BB for January cycle is planned last week of January
- We don't anticipate technical issue
- But checking how people will do the transportation
- For Western Union exempted from the decision and there are lots of branches in Beirut

WVI

Everything is on-hold

WFP/VAM updates on the key FSS indicators

Please check the presentation

6.Task forces feedback:

Cash based task force

CBT TF and OCHA are currently monitoring the disbursement through activity info and the deduplication system: highlighting errors in reporting, and urging actors to report on activity info in case they haven't.

Support to SMEs group

Next meeting January 28; group is covering coordination new focal points in non-assisted areas and on-going assessments; PDM: core questions proposed as standards to partners; Follow up on future coordination of the group

7. AOB: merge with FSS Beirut/Mount Lebanon and South regional WG/ FS assessments in Karantina

- Next meeting: February 1st together with the LCRP regional FSSWG for Beirut/MTL. Will discuss if the meetings will take place every 2 weeks or once a month
- AUB wants to conduct an FS assessment in Karantina and asking if someone has data they could share
- Sector is drafting advocacy note on removal of subsidies effect on food security