



2023 4th QUARTER SECTOR DASHBOARD

Food Security and Agriculture



Inter-Agency
Coordination
Lebanon

The dashboard summarizes the progress made by partners involved in the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan and highlights trends affecting people in need. The Food Security and Agriculture sector in Lebanon is working to:

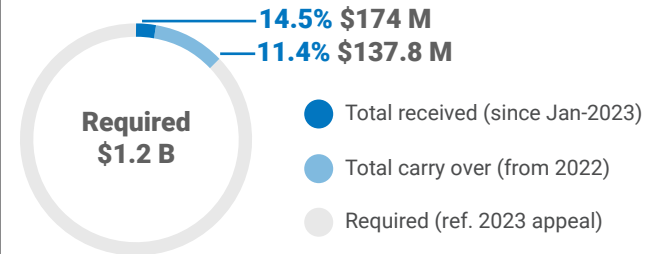
OUTCOME 1) To ensure most vulnerable communities in Lebanon receive FOOD ASSISTANCE to reduce their food gaps and diversify their food intake.

OUTCOME 2) To improve agricultural production and productivity of most vulnerable farmers through AGRICULTURE LIVELIHOODS ASSISTANCE to protect, restore and sustain their livelihoods.

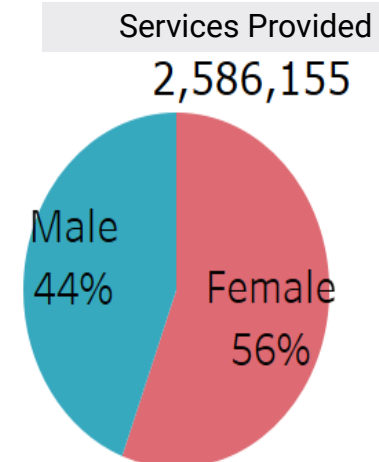
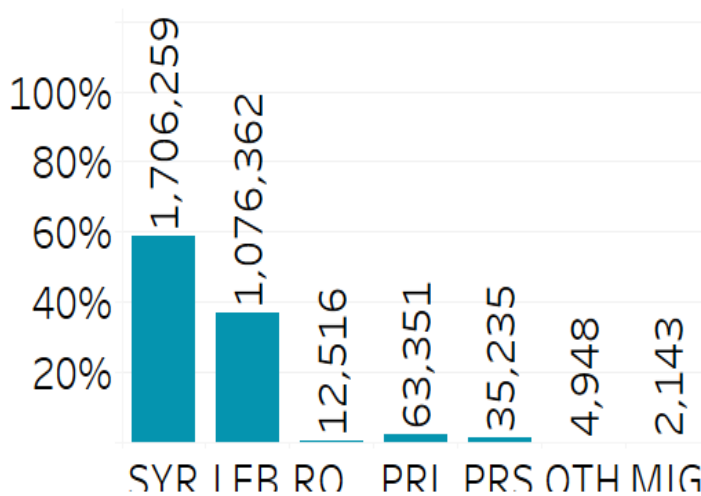
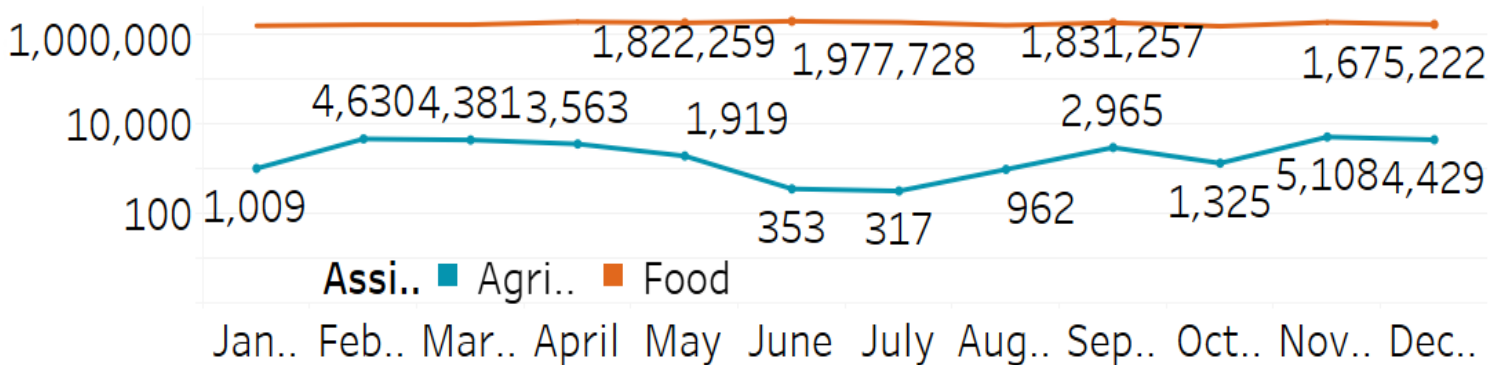
OUTCOME 3) To enhance national CAPACITIES, COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SHARING on food security and agriculture.

2023 Sector Funding Status

As of 31 December



Key Achievements



*Total reached doesn't include hot meals nor partial food parcels

For more details, please visit and navigate the FSA sector [dynamic dashboard](#).



Situation Update

The food security situation in Lebanon remains dire, stemming from the economic, financial, and social crises that have plagued the country since 2019. Lebanon currently hosts the highest number of displaced persons per capita globally, totalling 2.47 million individuals, including Lebanese, displaced Syrians, Palestinian refugees, and migrants, who are projected to require food and agricultural livelihood support in 2024.

Various factors contribute to food insecurity in Lebanon, with inflation being a primary driver. The Lebanese Pound's unprecedented depreciation, reaching a peak of US Dollar/LBP 140,000 in March 2023, has led to soaring food prices. Despite a global drop in food and oil prices, domestic prices in Lebanon have not followed suit. Food inflation reached 208 percent by December 2023, and the general inflation rate averaged 221 percent in 2023. Even after stabilization of the exchange rate, the cost of the food Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket rose to \$34.9 per person by December 2023, surpassing pre-crisis levels.

The Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) Acute Food Insecurity (AFI) Analysis predicts that 1.14 million individuals in Lebanon will face high levels of food insecurity between April and September 2024, placing them in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) or above, constituting 21 percent of the analyzed population. Key drivers of food insecurity include high and rising inflation, currency depreciation, subsidy discontinuation, wage disparity, unemployment, political inaction, and deteriorating basic

services. The value of humanitarian assistance is limited, exacerbating the crisis.

Emerging drivers of food insecurity include recent hostilities in South Lebanon, leading to population displacement and disruptions in the agri-food system supply and demand chains. In October – November 2023, inflation of food and transportation costs in the South Governorate surpassed national levels, influencing the nutritional status of the vulnerable population. Financial challenges deterred households from relocating, and some returnees went back to unsafe areas due to the inability to cope with displacement costs.

Despite grocery store purchases being the main source of food, 22 percent of displaced households relied on gifts, and only 45 percent had dry food stocks. Accessibility to shops decreased from 98 percent to 83 percent from October to January, impacting food availability. The reduced Market Functionality Index (MFI) revealed high scores for availability and resilience but lower scores for assortment, indicating potential shortages in essential items in South and Nabatieh governorates.

The situation is expected to worsen, affecting access to nutritious food, and disrupting agricultural production and livelihoods. Vulnerable groups, including women, female-headed households, those with disabilities, and the elderly, are disproportionately impacted by the ongoing crises in Lebanon.

1. ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SECTOR AT THE OUTPUT LEVEL

To ensure most vulnerable communities in Lebanon receive FOOD ASSISTANCE to reduce their food gaps and diversify their food intake.

Since the beginning of 2023, more than 2.1 million times to individuals in Lebanon received food assistance (of which 56% women) regardless of the modality at least one time through the support of sector partners. Most of the response (80% of all food assistance) was done through cash-based interventions (e-cards, vouchers, ATM and through financial providers), while more than half a million individuals benefited from in-kind food assistance. In addition, hot meals were provided to around 180,000 individuals - but in the absence of guidance and limited monitoring and reporting capacities, this assistance is not accounted for in the overall reach. Food assistance was provided either as one-off or short-term assistance to 33% of Palestine refugees from Lebanon reaching 59,562 individuals (of which 54% women), all Palestine refugees from Syria, 852,145 Lebanese (58% of Lebanese in need), and 1.6 million displaced Syrians (of which 60% women). Furthermore, 12,516 refugees from other nationalities (of which 51% women) and 1,167 migrants (46% women) were provided with food assistance at least once. Overall, 56% of individuals benefiting from food assistance were women and girls. It is to be noted that due to the growing needs and the multiple crises, in 2023 more vulnerable Lebanese - almost 413,404 (of which 50% women) - were supported through the National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP), a 21% increase from 2022. Due to funding shortfalls and as a result of the retargeting exercise conducted on a yearly basis by WFP/UNHCR, the coverage of cash assistance to displaced Syrians was reduced by 30 percent in December 2023. In total, the value of cash transfers was around USD 270 million including the NPTP, while the total amount disbursed in Lebanese Pounds was around LBP 515 billion for cash-based food assistance.

To improve agricultural production and productivity of most vulnerable farmers through AGRICULTURE LIVELIHOODS ASSISTANCE to protect, restore and sustain their livelihoods.

In 2023, and to alleviate the impact of the multi-faceted crises on the agricultural community, the Sector supported 22,196 small-scale farmers (29% women): 17,512 enhanced their technical and operational capacities, benefitting from the implemented agricultural livelihoods interventions, and 4,684 benefitting from cash assistance. These included technical trainings and distribution of agricultural inputs to improve crop and livestock farming practices as well as emergency short-term support through cash or vouchers modalities to purchase agricultural inputs to promote agricultural investment and sustain their farming activities. In addition, such support benefitting small-scale farmers from new or rehabilitated infrastructure and assets, from vaccination campaign and from improved access to markets through trainings and technical support, as well as linkages to market actors. The overall committed total value of investment in agriculture and assets reached more than USD 2,8 million in 2023. This corresponds to rehabilitation of lands, construction of water reservoirs, etc. In addition, a total of 490 agricultural MSMEs, cooperatives and/or agricultural associations (formal and informal) received support (in-kind, financial, or technical) representing 98% of the 2023 set targets. Around 231 of these agricultural MSMEs, cooperatives and or associations received technical trainings and/or equipment to strengthen value chain practices, with a total amount of grants reaching USD 1.27 million. A total of 4,577 individuals were employed in temporary casual labour and received training on skills and competencies in the agriculture sector, of which 57% were women. The assistance provided employment opportunities y in return of cash, while creating agricultural assets benefitting small-scale farmers and farming communities. Out of the total assisted with temporary casual labour, 66% were Lebanese individuals, 31% displaced Syrians. Moreover, 164 youth received technical vocational training in agriculture to improve livelihood sources, among which 75% are women, 117 are Lebanese and the rest were displaced Syrians.



To enhance national CAPACITIES, COORDINATION AND INFORMATION SHARING on food security and agriculture

On the capacity building level, several public institutions, including the Ministry of Agriculture with its Regional Services, the Green Plan, the General Directorate of Cooperatives, and the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI), as well as the Ministry of Social Affairs were supported with capacity building, and in-kind and grants assistance.

The sector also supported in the capacity building of FSA sector partners on various topics including food security, food security

integrated phase classification (IPC) and gender and social inclusion reaching 70 NNGO, INGO, UN staff and academics. The sector ensures updated information on the humanitarian assistance is published on a monthly basis on the dynamic dashboard, supported the production of needs assessments and published and shared relevant information on a timely basis relevant. The sector gender focal points supported in the development of the FSA sector gender and GBV tipsheets, which will be published in 2024.

2. KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SECTOR TO LCRP OUTCOME AND IMPACTS

The FSAS response has directly supported the achievements of the LCRP Strategic Objectives 1, 2 and 4. Under SO 2 "Provide immediate assistance to vulnerable populations" - Impact 2 "Immediate humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable populations are met", the FSAS was able to provide services up to 2.1 million to Lebanese, displaced Syrians, Palestine refugees, refugees of other nationalities and migrants. The response included provision of food assistance and agricultural livelihoods support. The latter also contributed to SO 1 "Ensure protection of vulnerable populations" - Impact 1 "Displaced persons from Syria and vulnerable populations live in safe protective environment" and SO 4 "Reinforce Lebanon's economic, social and environmental stability" - Impact 4 "Mitigated deterioration in the economic condition of vulnerable populations".

Related to the FSAS theory of change, the sector partners were able to provide around 2 million individuals with cash-based food assistance, including the support to the NPTP which

reached 413,404 vulnerable Lebanese. This was complemented by in-kind food assistance to around 500,000 individuals, of which most were Lebanese. Provision of emergency cash and voucher support, aimed at restoring agricultural livelihoods and productive capacities, as well as building households' resilience to future shocks, was scaled up, targeting 22,196 farming households, benefiting more than 110,980 members of farming households. In support to strengthening Lebanon's agriculture production capacity, the FSAS partners reached 4,577 individuals with temporary/casual labour and training on skills in the agricultural sector. Sector partners strengthened the capacities of 490 agricultural MSMEs and agricultural cooperatives/groups, particularly those whose members are mostly women, to make value chains in agriculture and food production more competitive, profitable and thus sustainable. The sector will increase its reach, by ensuring a coordinated response and avoiding duplication across other actors.

3. KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SECTOR TO LCRP OUTCOME AND IMPACTS

The year 2023 continued to be a challenging year for the FSA Sector. Despite the high coverage of HFA, increased availability of foreign hard currency following the summer season and fragile economic stability, the needs remained high, especially for highly vulnerable groups. Food access and availability continued to be a major concern across all population cohorts with growing needs and demands, a consequence of the dollarization of most products in the country, the soaring of food prices and essential needs, the increase in fuel prices and the impact of lifting the subsidies on commodities and medicines combined with the decline of the people's purchase power. In November 2023, based on WFP market monitoring, the SMEB reached LBP 33.9 million (USD 378) for a family of five, and LBP 3.12 million (USD 34.8) for the food SMEB component per person. Despite the basket value stability at the end of the year, this stability followed successive months of significant inflation, with a high increase in the full SMEB and the food SMEB cost (34 and 24 percent yearly respectively). In November, the amount disbursed to displaced Syrians (USD 20 per person) was almost two times lower than the SMEB of November 2023 (USD 34.8). Starting in May 2023, the dual currency system was introduced for cash-based food assistance. As part of the deduplication discussion for displaced Syrians food assistance, the sector continued to encourage partners to use the RAIS booking system, with ten partners using the system starting January 2023. Similarly, as the response to Lebanese populations is increasing, it is imperative that FSAS partners coordinate their assistance. As such, the sector and its partners discussed in 2023 the launch for the deduplication system of food assistance using the "Building Blocks" system, while continuing to advocate for a harmonized targeting methodology and centralized social safety-net systems. In addition, the sector continues to advocate access to the Farmer's registered within the MoA to enhance access and reach to the most vulnerable farmers. From the agricultural livelihoods' perspective, and in the context of the protracted economic and financial crisis, the prices of imported agricultural inputs

(seeds, fertilizers, feed, veterinary drugs) are still high and unaffordable to small-scale farmers. Emergency support in the form of cash and/or vouchers for the purchase of these inputs is necessary to allow farmers to sustain their farming activities for the coming agricultural seasons and to avoid the agriculture sector moving to a low inputs system which might result in lower yields and lower marketable production. To this effect, funds are needed to support domestic food production and farmers through different schemes and these funds need to be made available as complementary to short-term relief food assistance.

Since 8 October, the escalation of hostilities in the South, led to more than 80,000 internally displaced people (IDPs). The FSA sector was among the first to respond to the South needs through the coordination with the Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Response (DRR) units along with governors and mayors, with sector partners providing life-saving food assistance (hot meals, parcels, ready-to-eat, cash) to the population displaced by the ongoing clashes (ie. in collective shelters or hosted with families). Since the beginning of the conflict 209,109 daily meals have been provided to Tyre's (4) and Saida (1) collective shelters. In addition, a total of 11,919 food parcels were distributed, among which 487 for Tyre, Hasbaya and Rachaya shelters, and 11,432 to IDPs hosted with relatives in Tyre, Mount Lebanon, North, and Bekaa-Baalbeck-Hermel. About USD 4.5 million was mobilized for the response. WFP intends to implement a significant scale-up over the first three months in 2024, aiming to provide assistance through a variety of delivery channels, including cash-based assistance through the horizontal expansion of the Emergency Social Safety Net and National Poverty Targeting Program.

The FSA sector is facing funding shortfalls, compared to the increased needs. By the end of 2023 is stood at USD 174 M, only 13% of the total LCRP appeal of the sector.



4. Case Study

168,000 Vacuum Meals Targeting Food security for households of Persons with Special Needs (PWSN)

In 2020, M Social Catering (MSC) innovated its vacuum meals for improved food security. Vacuumed Meals exhibit an extended shelf life in regular refrigerators, varying from 7 to 20 days depending on the meal, a notable contrast to the two-day shelf life of traditionally cooked meals. This convenience enables recipients to enjoy ready-to-eat meals without compromising food freshness and essential vitamins, thanks to the vacuuming and modifying atmosphere technique of vacuum bags which also provides an accessible solution for individuals facing economic challenges, necessitating only a small stove, a pan, and water for heating.

MSC is a food security department, under shareQ, with more than 10 years of experience, specializing in the preparation and distribution of food such as healthy snacks, vacuum meals, and mouneh boxes to vulnerable communities, schools, and NGOs. In 2023, with the support of the Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF), a new project was launched aiming to support MSC in producing an additional 168,000 meals, reaching a total of 387,000 distributed vacuum meals to date. The project targets 480 Persons with Special Needs (PWSN) and their household members living in acute poverty, totaling 2,400 beneficiaries. These families were targeted as they are subject to double vulnerability and face a lack of support from public and private institutions, accentuating the crucial aspect of this mission to provide food security for these niche communities.

This project follows two different approaches in its distribution, the first being a blanket approach in which MSC collaborates with local NGOs to support the beneficiaries they host, and the second being a direct household approach.

What makes our product genuine is the holistic approach that has a double effect; on one hand, the implementation of the project leaves a direct positive impact on the targeted community, and on the other hand, it creates a well-needed and highly recommended circular economy: From local farmers, cooperatives and small markets from whom we buy the raw material, to the PWSNs and financially challenged employees at MSC's central kitchen, to the distribution to vulnerable communities, as well as the environmental aspect of reducing food waste.

MSC's distinctive approach involves a team trained on ISO 22000 standards, closely supervised by an experienced chef and quality control experts within MSC's industrial kitchen, with easily chewable, and diversified menus, tailored to the needs of PWSNs and households living under the poverty line. These meals contribute to nutritional well-being and economic empowerment.

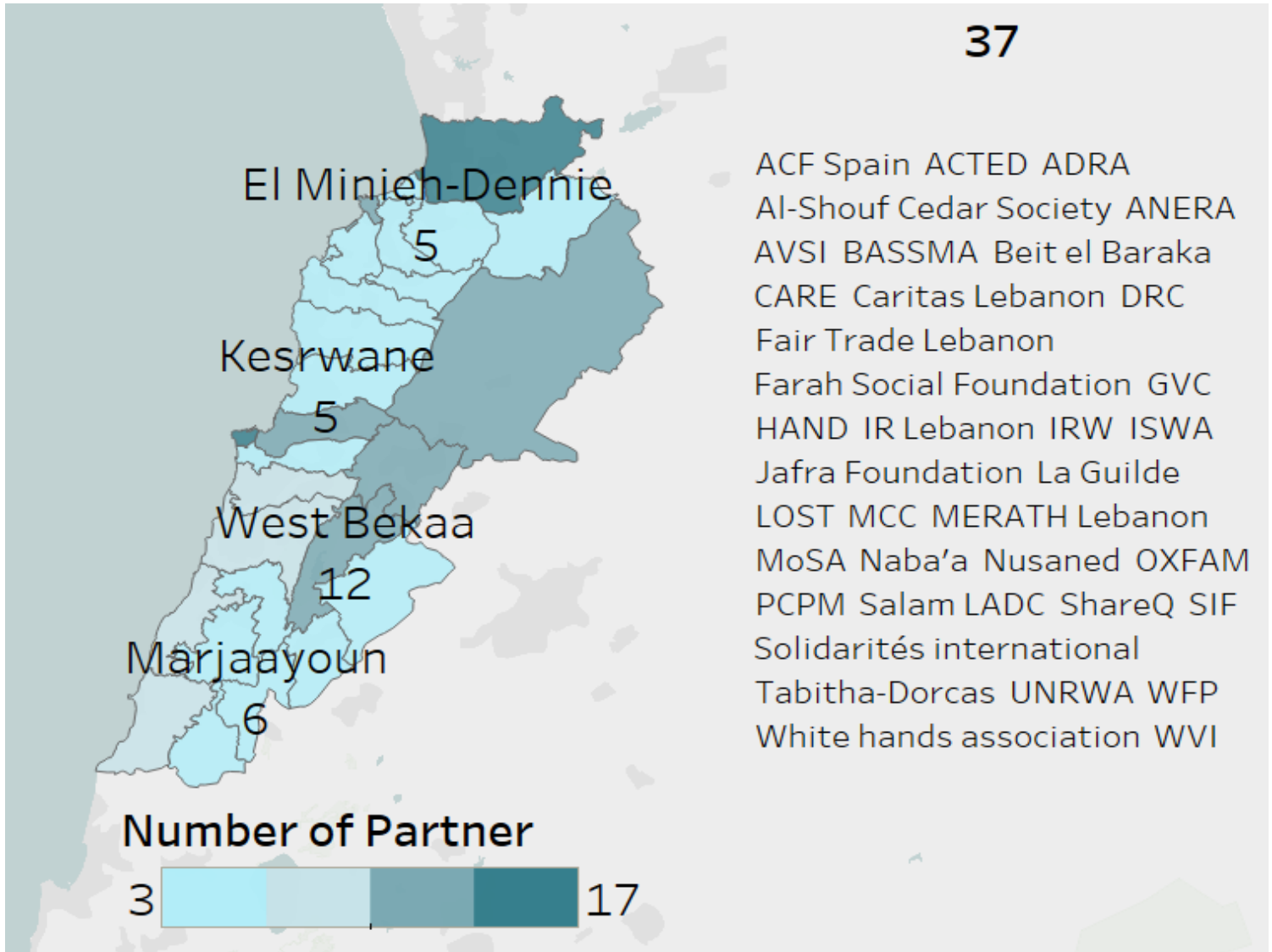
MSC has the capacity to produce up to 5,000 vacuum meals per day and has a transportation fleet to support the delivery of the meals directly to the doors of the households and NGOs in question.

At the heart of MSC's and shareQ's mission is a vision to provide steadfast support for individuals facing physical and financial challenges, empowering them to overcome obstacles and lead dignified lives. We will keep innovating for more impact.



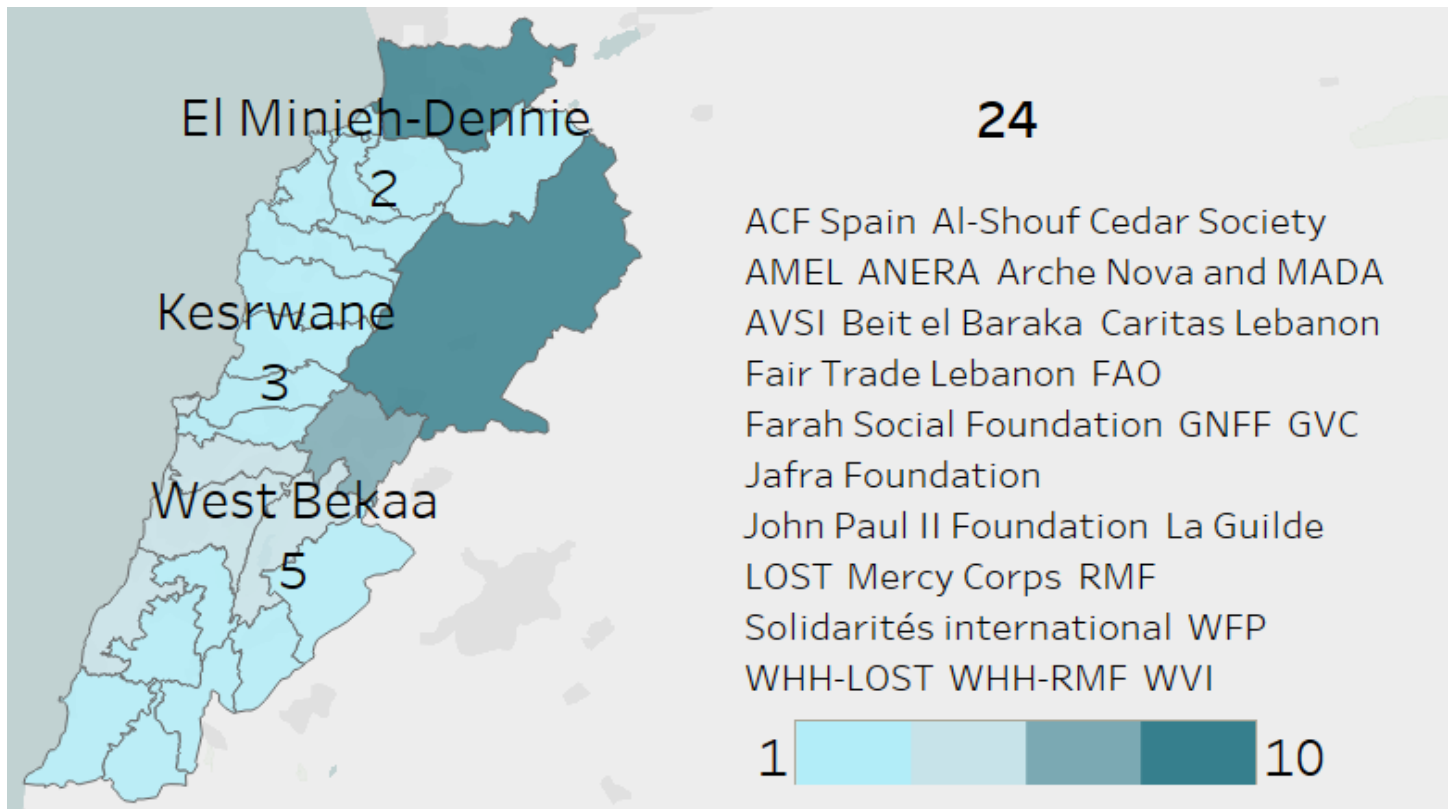


4.1 Presence map - Outcome 1: Food Assistance



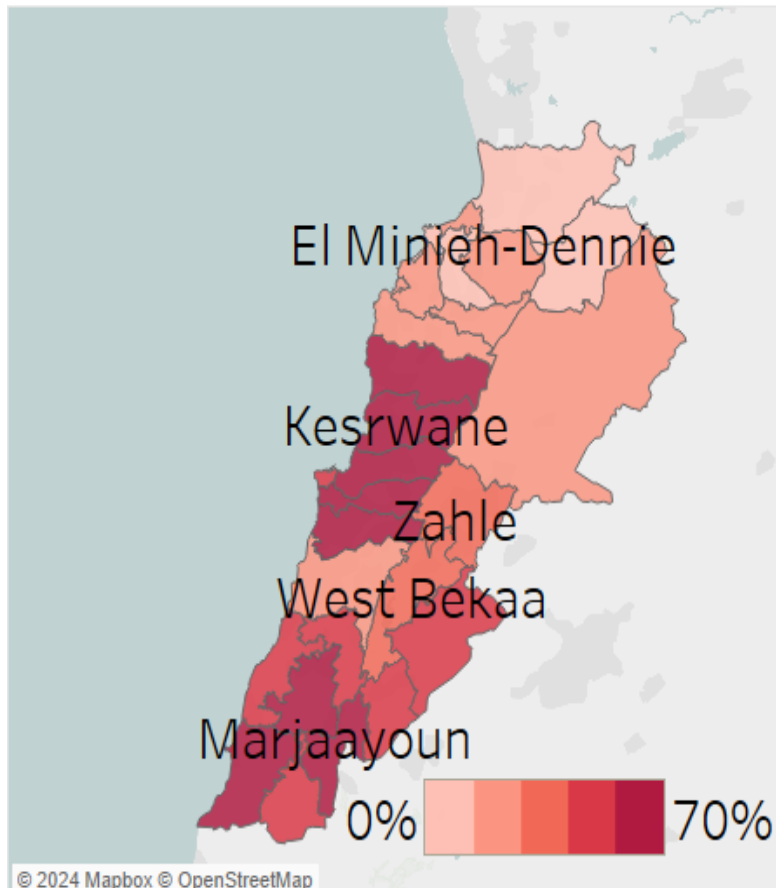


4.2 Presence map - Outcome 2: Agriculture Assistance

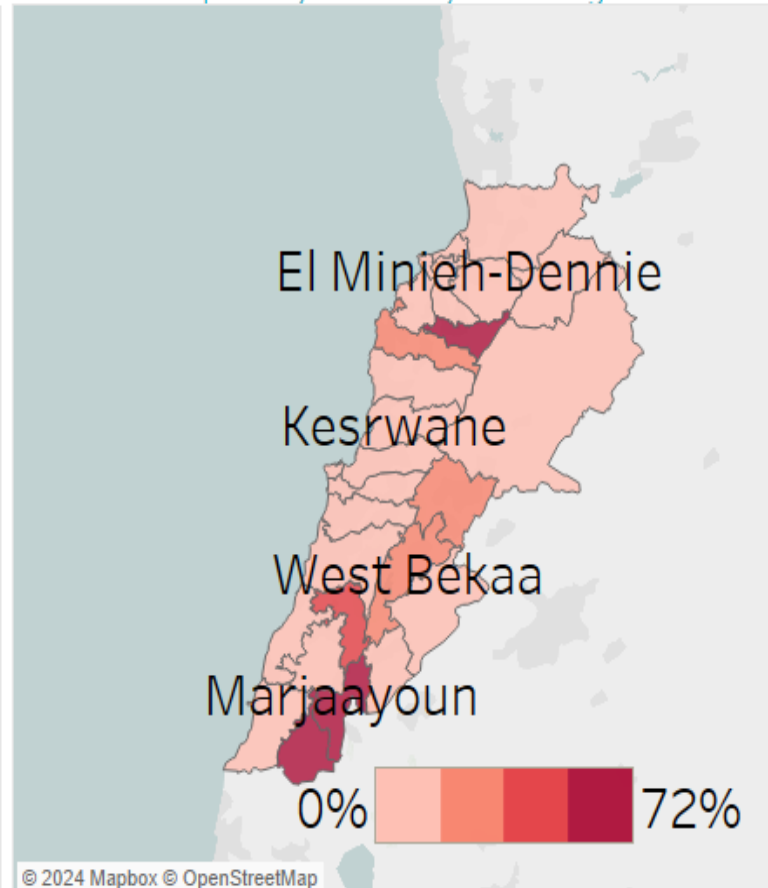


4.3 Gap Analysis

Gap Analysis* for Lebanese



Gap Analysis* for Syrian refugees



The Gap Analysis is calculated based on people assisted with food compared to the people in need