

Food Security Sector Working Group (SYRIA CRISIS)

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TIME 12 PM
VENUE ESCWA, WFP Office, Beirut

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AGENDA

1. Approval of the minutes from previous meeting
2. Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR) - Update
3. 3Ws/5Ws
4. AOB/Next Meeting

1. Approval of the minutes from previous meeting

The meeting was opened by WFP's Head of South, Mount Lebanon and Beirut Sub-Offices, Hazem El-Zein, who went through the minutes from the previous FSSWG meeting, which took place on the 21 May 2013. The minutes from the fourth FSSWG were endorsed by the group.

2. Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR)- Update

The assessment finished on Monday 10 June after two weeks of interviews. The assessment took longer than expected because of security and access issues in some areas.

The VASyR team will produce results one week at a time. There will be an analysis and a presentation every week to present results. Therefore, stakeholders will be able to provide input every week. These will be consolidated and included in the analysis as it goes forward.

Some members of the group expressed concerns about coordination with UNHCR and stressed the importance of using the same methodology and criteria for targeting in the future. Susana

Moreno, WFP's Food Security Expert and lead on the project, reassured the group that UNHCR was fully involved in the mission and that one staff member was working with them full time in the WFP office.

ACTION POINT

Members should receive the first update and set of results next week.

Members who do not have the analysis plan should email: Susana.moreno@wfp.org.

3. 3Ws/ 5Ws

WFP presented the final version of the 3Ws matrix that will summarise each organisation's current operations and allow the group to identify the gaps in food assistance. It will be a basis for the mapping exercise. Once finalised, each organisation will be responsible for filling in information relating to their activities.

DRC expressed concerns about the ability of the group to identify and evaluate the "new comers" gap. WFP suggested that the first step was to identify the geographical gaps (i.e. areas not being covered by any organisation) as any prediction in numbers is very difficult to make. It is about identifying the current capacity of the organisations involved in food security.

DRC also stressed the importance to coordinate with NFIs to identify the trend in new comers

ACTION POINT

WFP will circulate this matrix to be filled in. Members should fill in the matrix for the next meeting.

4. AOB/Next meeting

Chairing System

FAO started the discussion by highlighting the difference between a co-lead and a co-chair. FAO added that when the time comes it would make sense to co-lead with WFP as food production is an important part of food security. This would also prepare for the possible transition to a cluster system.

All members agreed on a co-chair system whereby WFP would chair with an NGO on a three-month rotation basis.

ACTION POINT

WFP asks interested NGOs to come forward. Members will consult with their management team and get back to WFP 19 June 2013. The first NGO will chair with WFP starting June 24.

Nutrition group

Currently nutrition is discussed under health. Members evoked the possibility of including the nutrition group within the FSSWG. Other members evoked the possibility of creating a separate group as it falls both under health and food security.

ACTION POINT

The discussion will be brought to the "cross-sector" meeting that takes place on Fridays to show the FSSWG's interest in the issue of nutrition.

Solidar Swiss

WFP has been approached by Solidar Switzerland for advice on the implementation of a voucher programme for unregistered refugees (1000 per month in the Bekaa). The NGO has been invited to the FSSWG meeting.

WFP stressed the need to re-direct to the group any NGO which is starting/considering providing food assistance to ensure coordination.

Food Consumption Assessment (Save the Children)

Save the Children (STC)'s latest M&E results revealed a quick deterioration of the dietary regimes of refugee population, especially in terms of diversity. STC is currently providing unconditional cash transfers but is moving towards providing fruit/vegetable specific cash transfers. In order to have a better understanding of the situation, STC will perform a short consumption pattern assessment in a small sample (three locations) and within existing caseload.

Susana Moreno, WFP Food Security Expert, also pointed out that the VASyR exercise would provide some food consumption patterns information that could complement STC's assessment. WFP will carry out a nutrition survey in September as a follow-up from last year's survey which could also be useful.

ACTION POINT

STC is looking for someone with a nutrition background, preferably with experience in conducting this type of assessment, to lead the mission. If members have available staff to recommend, email l.pelly@savethechildren.org

Ramadan:

WFP raised the question of specific intervention for the Holy month of Ramadan. Lebanese NGOs will increase soup kitchens capacities and organise iftars. Islamic Relief and Muslim aid are likely to implement some projects. The Gulf countries usually give dates to vulnerable population.

In the group: Mercy-USA has yet to finalise its plans in Wadi Khaled. WFP has started brainstorming about possible ways to contribute but so far, no concrete decision has been taken. DRC will help in community centres and for WASH but nothing relating to food assistance.

Contingency Plan

WFP is in the process of signing an agreement with a second supplier. The two suppliers will be able to provide 6,000 parcels a week divided between them. WFP plans on stocking the partners' warehouses and replenish them on a 50% basis to begin with, starting in a couple of weeks. WFP will amend its partner's agreements to include the provision of a contingency stock to its partners.

DRC worries that the 1,000 parcels they have received so far will not be enough. It also urged the group to harmonise funding between the food parcels and the NFI kits to be able to provide all families with the same level of assistance.

Funding and Winterization

Money for expensive assistance is being put into question, especially at the donor level. One area of concern is the upcoming winter in face of the growing number of refugees. So far, there has not been any winterization plan as far as food assistance is concerned but planning should start sometime in July.

ACTION POINT

NGOs are asked to evaluate what their capacities to respond to the winter would be, what might be needed and who might need it. Suggestions will be discussed at the next meeting.

Other

Agricultural sector: Currently livelihood is not being looked at as participating to food security. Cooperation has already started in the North (Akka) to move towards an integrated agriculture/food security system. However, efforts have so far been focused on skill gaps than proper food production.

UAE Red Crescent Donation: The UAE Red Crescent has been giving food parcels to the Lebanese Red Cross to provide assistance to 30,000 refugees in three months in the Bekaa. The ICRC representative pointed out that the organisation tried to track down the lead on this initiative but it has proven quite difficult. WFP does not have any further information but is monitoring the situation closely.

Mercy-USA is looking for some guidance on how to best target its operations in view of the increasing caseload. Mercy-USA is currently distributing bread three times a week to 2,100 refugees in Wadi Khaled.

IFRC would like for the group to share the composition of their food parcels and NFI kit. WFP will share the composition of its food parcels but it is in the process of being revised to find a balance between nutritive value and price. The composition of the kit could also change in light of the establishment of transit camps and the provision within these of cooking facilities. There is currently a discrepancy between the type of food provided and the lack of cooking facilities which an increasing number of refugee households face.

ACTION POINT

In relation to this, members are to report to the group on the specifics to the cooking needs- new arrivals and registered caseload in order to clarify the needs and how we can respond.

Transit camps: There are on-going talks within the government for the establishment of transit camps in face of the increasing number of refugees living in shelters and tents. NGOs have been asked to submit a proposal for camp management strategy, capacities and capabilities by Friday 14.

E-Voucher-Update: The pilot will start on the 1 August. The implementation at the national level should take place in September. UNHCR should start using the technology in October or November.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on the **25 June 2013**.

FSSWG CONTACTS:

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