

Food Security Sector Working Group

(SYRIA CRISIS)

DATE Tuesday 22 October 2013

TIME 12 PM Beirut Time

VENUE ESCWA, WFP Office, Beirut

Members Present

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AGENDA

1. Introduction of Food Security Sector Coordinator and Government Co-Lead
2. Approval of the minutes from previous meeting
3. Targeting
 - Update and Feedback from the field
 - Appeals/Verification Process
4. RRP6 Process

- Figures Update
 - Objectives, Outputs, and Indicators Update
 - RRP6 Content-Clarification on targeting
5. E-Card Update
 6. AOB
 - Next meeting- New Venue

1. Introduction of Food Security Sector Coordinator and Government of Lebanon (GoL) Co-Lead

The meeting was opened by WFP's Programme Officer – Cash and Vouchers (C&V), who introduced the new Food Security Sector Working Group (FSSWG) Coordinator. Although a new GoL co-lead to the FSSWG was recently appointed by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), she was unable to attend the FSSWG due to a concurrent multi-sectoral meeting on the sixth Regional Refugee Response Plan (RRP6) that was being hosted by UNHCR.

2. Approval of the minutes from previous meeting

Minutes of the last working group meeting held on 08 October 2013, were approved.

3. Targeting

Update and feedback from the field

WFP's Field Coordinator shared an update on targeting, which has so far progressed smoothly with no security concerns. A targeting/appeals toolkit was shared with all partners on behalf of WFP and UNHCR. Several members of the meeting reported a few issues with the communication of targeting results to some refugees that had been screened by the process. The working group was informed that the targeting hotline was still functional.

Appeals/Verification Process

It was clarified that a continuous verification process was being set up, and appeals forms had been finalised and were set to be distributed on the day of the FSSWG meeting, 22 October.

A question was raised on the food security (FS) indicator, and it was clarified that the FS indicator was linked to the Burning Index calculated by UNHCR.

4. RRP6 Process

The initial consolidated Food Security Sector submission was sent to UNHCR on 17 October. The FSSWG was the first to send its submission to RRP6, ahead of other sectors. The final submission and narrative will be circulated to members for approval before the end of October.

Concern was raised that the RRP6 matrix template being used in the FSSWG was different from that being used in other sectors. This was acknowledged by WFP's Programme Officer – C&V but it was felt that there was no need to revise it as the RRP6 process was already at an advanced stage.

Most working group members indicated that they were still to secure funding for 2014.

Figures Update

WFP's Programme Officer – M&E and Information Management (IM) explained that the projected number of affected Lebanese has been revised, in consultation with the government, to 1.5 million by the end of 2014. The number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon at the end of 2014 has been brought down from over 1.9 million to 1.5 million, in part due to the limited capacity of the Lebanese territory to absorb more refugees in 2014. This has changed WFP's planning figures for 2014 and brought down the financial requirements for the whole sector.

Objectives, Outputs, and Indicators Update

The FSSWG objectives and outputs have changed following advice from UNHCR. The final objectives are:

- 1) Adequate food consumption for targeted affected population and;
- 2) Agricultural livelihoods of Lebanese returnees and rural affected communities restored,

The outputs were as follows:

- i) Food assistance distributed in sufficient quantity and quality to target groups under secure conditions to maintain adequate food consumption and dietary diversity,

ii) Spread of trans-boundary animal and plant diseases and pests contained, and food safety control established,

iii) Smallholder Agricultural Production Restored.

UNHCR requires that all indicators are the same for each objective and should not exceed 5 in total per objective. As many of the indicators were similar for Objective 1/Output 1, these have been harmonized across organizations. In order to track down the food security status of refugees, measuring the Food Consumption Index was added as main indicators for Objective 1/Output 1. Save the Children suggested that these indicators could be linked to the targeting exercise to ensure that there is consistency in activities. Save the Children also suggested that coping strategies are added to indicators, although this might be harder to harmonize across organizations.

The final indicators are:

- 1) % of planned distribution to which benefit women, men, boys and girls,
- 2) Total cash equivalent of e-card t/vouchers transfers or food distributed and redeemed,
- 3) Dietary diversity and food consumption scores remain at acceptable levels for the majority of the target populations,
- 4) Number of affected farming households that will have improved food nutrition and food safety,
- 5) Number of vaccinated animals.

5. RRP5 Reporting

It was reiterated that all organizations have to report on RRP5 achievements and levels of funding realised. Reporting will have to be more standardized in the RRP6 process. More information on RRP5 reporting will be circulated to FSSWG members in the coming weeks.

6. Update on the E-card

The working group was informed that the roll-out of the e-card to over 26,000 beneficiaries in Beirut, Mount Lebanon and South Lebanon has been welcomed by shop owners and Syrian refugees. The e-card will be rolled-out in the Bekaa Valley in November and across the rest of the country by the end of distributions in December.

The WFP Bekaa Sub-Office will work closely with UNHCR, DRC and WVI that are rolling-out both the WFP e-card and the card for winterization in November to ensure that the information campaign, training and distribution are streamlined.

It was also highlighted that the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the Lebanese High Relief Commission (HRC) had committed to working with WFP on utilizing the e-cards to meet the food security needs of the affected Lebanese host and Lebanese returnees respectively. Concurrently, there were on-going negotiations with an identified commercial bank on, customized lower ATM rates for WFP's planned cash pilot to be launched at the beginning of 2014. The negotiations also aim at facilitating a platform for other sector working group partners that plan to start or continue providing assistance in the form of cash in 2014.

7. Any other business (AOB)

It was announced that WFP were moving offices two blocks away from ESCWA. The new address is:

Azariah Building Downtown, Block E, 6th Floor (Next to Markaziah Hotel)

Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place on **05 November 2013**.

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