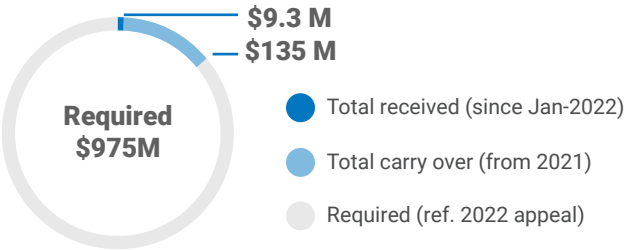
2022 2nd QUARTER SECTOR DASHBOARD
Food Security and Agriculture

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) Promote food availability; OUTCOME 2) Promote food accessibility; OUTCOME 3) Promote food utilization; OUTCOME 4) Promote stabilization.

2022 Sector Funding Status
As of 30 June



2022 population reached

3,006,0008*
People in need

67%
1,423,828 reached
2,095,448 targeted
1,026,994 female
978,454 male

2022 population figures by cohort

1,500,000
Lebanese individuals in need

51%
326,727 reached
633,846 targeted
327,065 female
306,781 male

1,360,000
Displaced Syrians in need

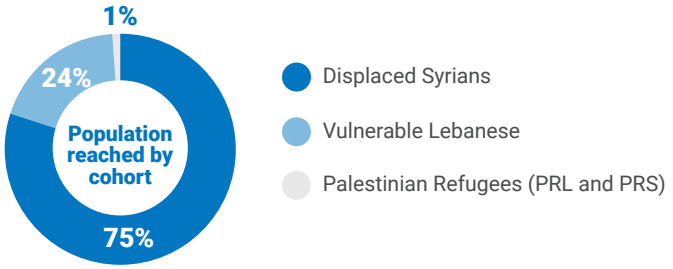
79%
1,049,189 reached
1,320,000 targeted
673,100 female
646,800 male

29,000
Palestinian Refugees from Syria (individuals)

102%
29,746 reached
29,000 targeted
15,022 female
13,978 male

117,000
Palestine Refugees in Lebanon (individuals)

38%
8,596 reached
22,602 targeted
11,708 female
10,894 male



Progress against targets

Key Achievements

Number of individuals provided with in-kind food assistance (parcels provided on one-off basis)
138,069/ 158,506

# of individuals having access to cash-based food assistance (through e-cards, NPTP, ATMs, food vouchers....)
1,409,461 / 1,878,175

Total amount of cash-based food assistance ($) redeemed through (e-cards,NPTP, ATM.)
96,234,920 / 800,591,369

Total amount of cash-based food assistance (LBP) redeemed through (e-cards,NPTP, ATM.)
31,423,382,112

farmers receiving emergency assistance (cash or vouchers) to promote agricultural investment
32,735/ 48,051

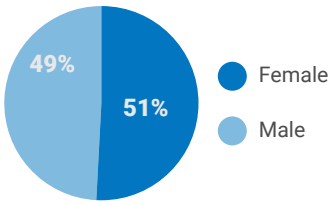
# of individuals having access to temporary/casual agricultural labor
4,105 / 7,000

# of local agricultural groups/ associations/ cooperatives/ SMEs receiving technical and or material support
56/ 192

# of individuals attending trainings on skills and compentencies to access temporary/casual labour in exchange of Food Assistance for Training
882 /56,138

Gender breakdown

Gender Breakdown of vulnerable people reached with cash based food assistance



*Excluding refugees of other nationalities(12,686)

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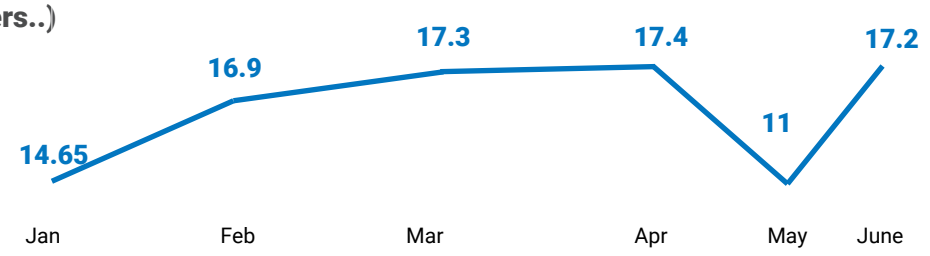
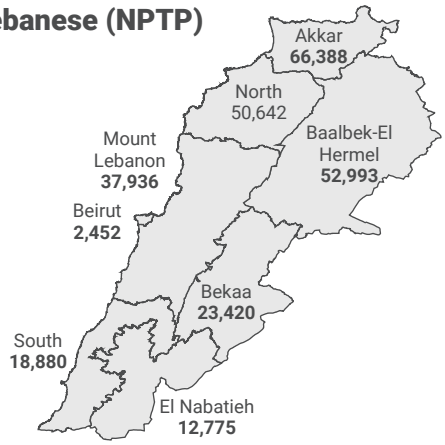
Analysis

Amount (in Millions) of USD injected in the cash based food assistance system through various modalities (NPTP, e-cards, ATMs, food vouchers..)



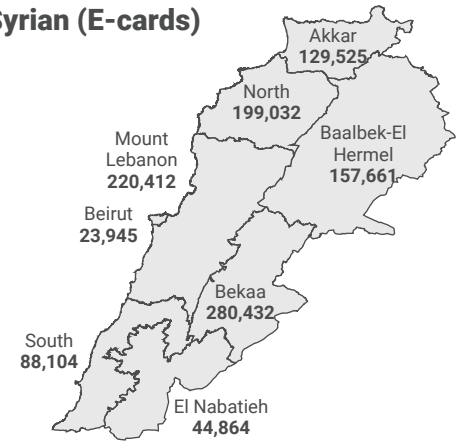
Lebanese (NPTP)



Amount of cash redeemed through NPTP(USD)

Jan 2022	2,820,150
Feb 2022	2,898,305
Mar 2022	2,975,650
Apr 2022	4,981,580

Syrian (E-cards)



Amount of cash redeemed through e-cards (USD)

Jan 2022	12,575,041
Feb 2022	14,759,666
Mar 2022	14,336,900
Apr 2022	12,271,389
May 2022	11,093,772
Jun 2022	17,211,938

Multi-sectoral situation update

In the second quarter of 2022, families across Lebanon continued to face depleting purchasing power, affecting vulnerable peoples' ability to meet their basic needs. Some 94 per cent of refugees surveyed through May protection monitoring reported that they had difficulties buying food due to lack of money, while 81 per cent reported an inability or increased difficulty in paying rent. By May 2022, the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) had increased by more than 150 per cent since the same time in 2021. Based on WFP price monitoring, in mid-June 2022, the food SMEB sat at 770,000LBP per person (an increase of 50,000 LBP compared to the previous week), while the non-food basket reached 1,400,000 LBP per family of five. The price of combustible fuel continued to increase, while a rapid increase was noted in gasoline, despite the fact that in Q2-2022, gasoline remained the only commodity for which the Central Bank provides USD through Sayrafa for its import. Food availability continued to be affected, including an 18 per cent decrease in unloaded food imports through the Port of Beirut when comparing the first five months of 2022 with 2021, and a 33 per cent decrease compared to 2020. WFP-contracted shops however saw some stability in stock availability, with 79 per cent of shops reporting at least two weeks of stock coverage by May 2022. During Q2, the exchange rate averaged 27,988 LBP to the USD, peaking at 38,000 LBP in May. According to a Central Administration of Statistics (CAS) 2022 survey, Lebanon reported an all-time high unemployment rate of 29.6 percent. A World Economic Forum report published in 2022 shows that women's economic participation stands at almost 20 percent, placing Lebanon a concerning 132nd in the world ranking.

Lebanese parliamentary elections were held on 15 May 2022, in the midst of ongoing economic turmoil in Lebanon. Voter turnout stood at 49 per cent, on a par with the 2018 parliamentary election. The ARK/UNDP perceptions survey revealed that 58 per cent of Lebanese were concerned in advance about the threat of electoral violence, however the overall process took place in a generally calm and organized climate with no major security incidents reported. In terms of inter-communal tensions, however, monitoring data from May shows that negative perceptions remain extremely high, with 49 per cent of Lebanese and Syrian respondents report that they perceive inter-communal relations as negative, an increase from 24 per cent in January 2021. Negative sentiments expressed online regarding the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon spiked in Q2-2022 including in response to political statements made around the Brussels VI Conference on Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region, held in May 2022. Despite fears that funding and international attention may be diverted from the Syria crisis response given escalating needs associated with the crisis in Ukraine, the Conference delivered financial pledges at an equivalent level to 2021 for the response in Syria and across the region.

1. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SECTOR AT THE OUTPUT LEVEL

Output 1.1: Over Q1 and Q2, 138,069 individuals (54 percent women and 46 percent men) received in-kind food assistance through food parcels, either as one-off or short-term assistance, with 56 percent women and 44 percent men. This represents 87 percent of the annual target for 2022 (158,506). Cohorts reached during this period with the in-kind food assistance were Syrian beneficiaries (55 percent) followed by Lebanese (39 percent), Palestinian refugees (5 percent) and some refugees of other nationalities. In addition, 1,141 households with Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW) or children <5 years received food parcels' support (54 percent Lebanese; 45 percent Syrians; 1 percent refugees of other nationalities), compared to the annual target of 23,776.

Output 1.2: In the first half of 2022, 256 small-scale farmers received trainings and/or inputs to improve crop and/or livestock farming practices, 70 percent of which are Lebanese. While woman-headed agricultural farms account for only 9 percent of all farms in the country, around 36 percent of the 256 small-scale farmers who received trainings were female. These beneficiaries reached over Q1 and Q2 are still far below the annual total target of 17,540. This is mainly due to the fact that some interventions are still in the preparatory phase and implementation is expected during Q3.

Output 2.1: In 2022, a total of 1,878,175 individuals were reached through cash-based transfers interventions. During the first semester, almost 1.37 million (52 percent women and 48 percent men) individuals received food assistance through cash-based transfers including distribution of cash or vouchers redeemable at retailers network or a combination of both. Syrian refugees account for 76 percent of these beneficiaries, while Lebanese account for 20 percent (mainly through the NPTP), Palestinian refugees for 3 percent and refugees of other nationalities for 1 percent. The total amount disbursed and redeemed by beneficiaries over Q1 and Q2 totalled USD 96.2 million (12 percent of the annual target) in addition to almost 31.4 billion LBP for partners disbursed. Furthermore, 1,417 households (62 percent Lebanese, 37 percent Syrians and 1 percent PRL) with Pregnant and Lactating Women and/or with children below 5 years old received cash-based food assistance (cash and/or vouchers) during the same period.

Output 2.2: Over Q1 and Q2, a total number of 56 farmers associations, cooperatives, informal groups and agricultural MSMEs received financial support, representing 29 percent of the annual target for 2022. Grants amounting USD 10 million were transfered to these groups.

Output 2.3: During the first semester of 2022, around 32,736 (16 percent women) small-scale farmers received emergency short-term support as cash or vouchers to purchase agricultural inputs (seeds, fertilizers, agricultural equipment, etc.,) in order to promote agricultural investment and sustain their farming activities throughout 2022. This represents 68 percent of the total number of farmers targeted (48,051) in 2022. The total amount disbursed as cash or vouchers to promote agricultural investment reached USD 9.8 million.
In addition, 112 small-scale farmers (80 percent Lebanese and 20 percent Syrians and/or Palestinians) received either financial, technical or in-kind agricultural support.

Output 2.4: Out of 1,150 young individuals (aged 15-25 years) targeted to receive TVET training courses on agriculture skills or related basic numeracy and literacy in 2022, only 2 were reported as effectively benefited from education activities during the first semester of 2022. The reporting issues will be addressed in Q3.

Output 2.5: Twenty-five farmers benefitted during the first half of 2022 from new or rehabilitated infrastructure and assets. It is important to highlight that the target is away from being reached as some organizations are still in the preparatory phase of interventions. Activities will start in Q3 with good chances to reach the target. The value of investment in USD in agriculture infrastructure and communal assets amounted to USD 13,516 in Q1 and Q2. Out of 56,138 targeted in 2022, a total of 4,105 individuals were employed during the first semester of 2022 in temporary/casual labour in the agriculture sector (30 percent women; 70 percent men). Out of them, 54 percent are Lebanese individuals and 43 percent Syrians, 2 percent Palestinians and 1 percent of other nationalities. They received a total of USD 189,674 and LBP 7,227,000 out of the 2022-planned USD 32,825,595 as cash-based transfer for food assistance for assets (FFA).

Output 2.6: A total of 882 individuals out of 28,328 targeted received trainings on skills and competencies to access temporary or casual labour in exchange of Food Assistance for trainings (FFT) during the first semester of the year (94 percent were Lebanese and 6 percent Syrians; 63 percent women and 37 percent men). They received a total of USD 23,457 out of the USD 20,476,830 planned for 2022. The low achievement is caused by funding delays which were resolved and the activities will be scaled up in Q3.

Output 3.1: During the first semester of the year, a total of 555 caregivers of children under 5 and Pregnant and Lactating Women received information on healthy nutrition and diets (81 percent Syrians and 19 percent Lebanese; 46 percent women and 54 percent men). To be noted is the gender transformative engagement of men (fathers, brothers) in these activities, in order to strengthen their role in care giving and addressing gender stereotypes. This overall figure is well beyond the total annual target of 15,360. In addition, 495 caregivers enrolled in malnutrition programmes, out of 550 targeted, were referred to the Food Security and Agriculture Sector and received assistance (54 percent Lebanese and 46 percent Syrians - 48 percent women and 52 percent men).

Output 3.2: While 17,800 individuals are targeted in 2022, only 2 Syrian individuals were reported as receiving training on food safety and quality measures/practices during the first semester of the year. The Sector will address in Q3 the low achievement possibly caused by reporting issues.

Output 4.1: The FSAS partners continue to provide support to strengthen the capacities of the public institutions and their related decentralized services in an effort to promote delivery of food security, agriculture and social protection programmes. As a result, 25 institutions within the Ministry of Agriculture and its related decentralized institutions (the Green Plan and the General Directorate of Cooperatives) both at central and regional levels benefitted from technical assistance support. In addition, the Statistics and Economic Service of the Ministry of Agriculture benefitted from the support provided through the continuation of a series of farmers' households' survey on the impact of multiple shocks currently Lebanon is facing on their food security and agricultural livelihoods within an International Programme on "Data in Emergencies Monitoring". Results have been finalized in June 2022 and a presentation delivered to the FSAS working group.

An Inter-Agency Gender in Humanitarian Action Training was carried out during Q2 for the Food Security and Agriculture Sector partners. The training was attended by 23 FSAS partners (8 men, 15 women).
The training's objective was to support gender mainstreaming in the Lebanon's humanitarian and stabilization response in a practical, relatable, simplified manner, using a sectoral approach.
The training was very participative and interactions among participants were very enriching and fruitful in sharing experiences and lessons learned. The following topics were covered: (i) Introduction to gender; (ii) Needs assessment and gender analysis; (iii) strategic planning and gender markers; (iv) implementation, monitoring and evaluation in relation to gender.
This training will help mainstreaming and integrating gender across all partners' projects and programmes since the design and formulation in addition to build the capacity of the core team to conduct similar training to the field staff within their organizations.

2. KEY CHALLENGES OF THE SECTOR

Prices of wheat and other imported food commodities (such as sunflower oil) mainly from Ukraine and the Black Sea area are increasing, resulting in decreased purchasing power of vulnerable populations, in addition to potential shortages in the food supply chain, in particular for bread, causing long queues in front of the bakeries. The Government of Lebanon is seeking alternatives and support (e.g., from the World Bank in terms of a soft loan to import wheat for bread) and is exploring the possibility to extend the areas cultivated with wheat which is suitable for bread manufacturing.

With the combined effects of the depreciation of the Lebanese Lira and the increasing imported and locally-produced commodities prices, food access and availability remain a challenge and a concern. The food SMEB is constantly increasing, forcing the FSAS partners to readjust the transfer values on a regular basis and adapt their interventions. To cope with this constant change, some partners have opted for a disbursement of entitlements in USD. Challenges in ensuring harmonization of both the currency and the transfer value risk driving tensions within and between communities. Hence, the Sector is advocating for harmonized transfers, communicating good practices with partners as well as ensuring clear communication around criteria for cash transfers.
From the agricultural livelihoods perspective, and in the context of the protracted economic and financial crisis with the imported agricultural inputs prices still high and unaffordable to small-scale farmers, emergency support as cash and/or vouchers for the purchase of these inputs remains a challenge to address through emergency interventions in order to allow farmers to sustain their farming activities for the coming agricultural season.

3. Key priorities for the following quarter

As the number of Lebanese in need have increased since 2021, it is essential to ensure the scale-up of emergency assistance and guarantee direct access to food, through both in-kind and cash-based activities. In a context of a depreciating currency and rising imported commodities prices, advocating for meaningful transfer values is key to ensure beneficiaries are able to buy the food they need.
The response to assist Lebanese continued to scale up during Q2 and is expected to continue during Q3 (in particular through the NPTP).

Within the different ongoing and planned response plans and frameworks, the FSAS will continue facilitating and encouraging partners providing food assistance interventions to coordinate among themselves, in order to avoid duplication of beneficiaries receiving assistance. In that purpose, the FSAS will advocate for the necessary administrative and technical tools for the deduplication of Lebanese population.

Several organizations are currently supporting farmers through the provision of vouchers to redeem agricultural inputs from contracted suppliers. This helps farmers to maintain their agricultural production and maintain their activities within the current agricultural campaigns.
In parallel, the provision of technical assistance to small and medium farmers is a key priority to build their capacity in adopting Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), modern technologies, the use of renewable energy (solar pumps), Integrated Pest Management (IPM) with the view of increasing agricultural productivity and improve food availability and access.

In addition, supporting small scale farmers through matching grants is on process and will likely start during Q3. It will allow the farmers to rehabilitate their lands through land reclamation initiatives and the construction of water reservoirs.

In Q2, coordination with the Livelihoods sector's partners enabled the mapping of interventions on agriculture value chains. Discussions with the Livelihoods Sector were initiated, and will continue during Q3, in order to develop a common mapping matrix or dashboard to complement activities, and thus avoid duplication. This will allow a common understanding of current actions undertaken and provide guidance on agricultural value chain.

As Referral Orientation Sessions to partners were held in July by the Inter-Agency to use Referral Tools, the FSAS partners were requested to regularly update the Service Mapping tools.

The FSAS will continue discussions with its partners on mainstreaming cross-cutting topics (protection, gender, SGBV, PWD, conflict sensitivity) to identify feasible actions for the rest of 2022, in alignment with the Sector' strategy. Ad hoc meetings will take place during Q3.

An Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) process for Acute Food Insecurity in Lebanon is currently on-going, and implementation and analysis are expected to start in September 2022. It consists of multi-stakeholders initiative comprising of different UN Agencies, line ministries, the Food Security and Agriculture Sector, International and National NGOs and chaired by the Ministry of Agriculture.
This analysis will enable the humanitarian actors to have a better understanding of the food insecurity in the country, ensuring a common base for advocacy and humanitarian action for immediate responses and projections.

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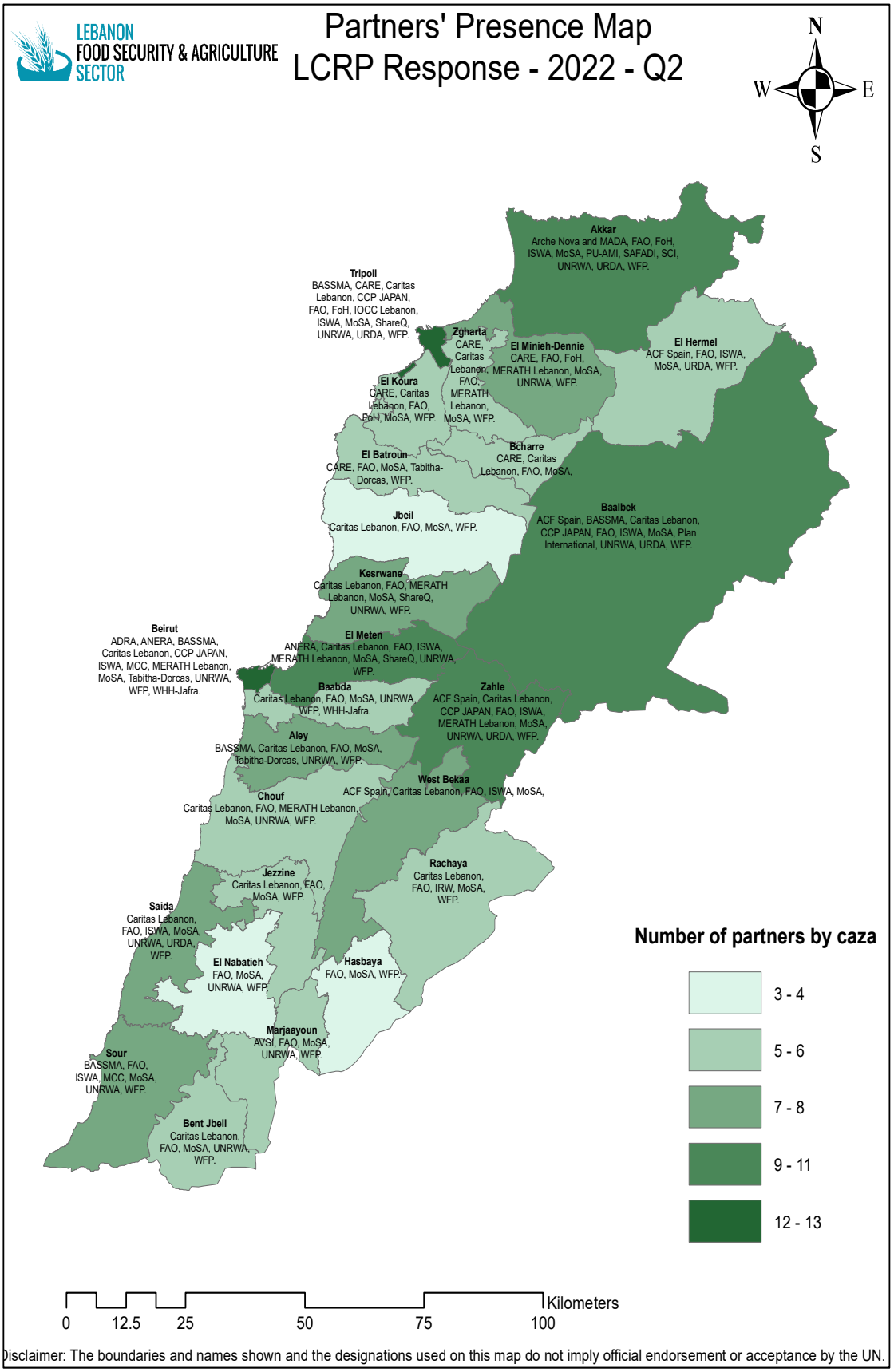
27 Reporting Partners

ACF Spain, ADRA, ANERA, Arche Nova - MADA, AVSI, BASSMA, CARE, Caritas Lebanon, CCP JAPAN, FAO, FoH, IOCC Lebanon, IRW, ISWA, MCC, MERATH Lebanon, MoSA, Plan International, PU-AMI, SAFADI, SCI, ShareQ, Tabitha-Dorcas, UNRWA, URDA, WFP, and WHH-Jafra.



5. Case Study: Lebanese potato farmers find that less is more when it comes to agrochemicals

"Fix it with chemicals. That was the old belief."

Traditionally, farmers in Lebanon depended on chemical fertilizers and pesticides to manage plant nutrition or plant pests and diseases. Most farmers believed that increasing the quantity of chemical fertilizers would increase the yields of their crops.

But now, the rapidly deteriorating economic and financial crisis in Lebanon has made people rethink the situation. Most agricultural inputs (such as agrochemicals, seeds, animal feed, vaccines and other veterinary supplies, etc.) are imported and, with the devaluation of the Lebanese currency, these are becoming out of reach for most farmers. They can no longer afford to rely on these increasingly expensive inputs.
With this situation of necessity and so many downsides of chemicals, farmers are now more convinced than ever in using fewer fertilizers and pesticides and finding better ways to manage their land, improve yields and preserve water.

One FAO project "Prevention of Agrochemical Pollution in the Upper Litani Basin"[1] is helping farmers reduce their reliance on pesticides and fertilizers, while also addressing the agrochemical pollution of Lebanon's Upper Litani river basin. The project promotes Integrated Crop Management (ICM), a technique that balances farming requirements with environmental responsibility.

Mostapha Kheireddine, a young potato farmer from Majdal-oun-Baalbek in the eastern part of Lebanon, was farming with practices passed down in his family when he heard about this project from his neighbour. He attended a project field day during the late potato season in December 2020 and was then selected to join the project thanks to his interest in learning more about ICM.

The FAO project, implemented with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and with funding from Norway, trained Mostapha and 41 other potato farmers in ICM practices.

Mostapha and other farmers were able to decrease their use of chemical fertilizers by up to 50 percent and pesticides by up to 60 percent and maintain the same yields.
They now have proof that reducing agrochemicals will not harm their livelihoods or food security. ©FAO/ Elie Harika.

interventions made in both farmer and ICM plots, including quantities and types of pesticides and fertilizers used. At the end of the growing season, the yield of each field (farmer and ICM) was calculated and comparisons were drawn.

The results proved that it is feasible to reduce the use of chemical fertilizers by an average of 50 percent and pesticide sprays by at least 60 percent while maintaining the same or better productivity. Farmers could see the results directly in the field and were convinced about the positive results.

Mostapha reduced his application of fertilizers by 100 kilograms per dunum (about 0.1 hectare), a reduction of USD 130 in the cost of production per dunum and is confident in his work. "With the support of FAO and MoA teams, we now know how much water to add to the crops and how to test the soil. We are now more experienced." He added "This year I only used chemical pesticides once. I used to spray my land twice per year. Next year I am not spraying chemical pesticides at all!".
Potato farmers are now convinced that using fewer fertilizers and pesticides is possible without any decrease in potato yield. Farmers like Mustapha went on to apply ICM practices to other crops like grapes, which they usually plant in parallel with potatoes.

"I would like to thank FAO and MoA, in particular this year with the multiple crises we are facing in the country, in addition to the COVID-19 repercussions on the agricultural sector," said Abou Nazih another potato farmer involved in the project. "We barely managed, but we made it by following the instructions of the project team."

To ensure continued support to the farmers, FAO trained project facilitators and technical staff from the Ministry of Agriculture on ICM practices. With this knowledge, facilitators became more confident and were able to gain the trust of the farmers, who consult with them regularly on challenges they are having on their land. The project also intends to spread the use of these practices to other crop production in the area.

Story link:
https://www.fao.org/fao-stories/article/en/c/1445963/

[1] https://www.fao.org/lebanon/programmes-and-projects/project-list/en/