

## Meeting Notes

### Ad-Hoc Inter-Sector Coordination Group Meeting

Friday, 24 January 2025, 9:00 - 10:00  
ESCWA/Online via MS Teams

The Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) meeting was held to discuss the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Analysis, highlight the Returning Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) Situation and Preliminary Findings, provide a Logistics Cluster update, and present the Lebanon Country Page as well as the updated Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Timeline. Key highlights and action points from the meeting are noted below:

#### Key Highlights:

#### Integrated Food Security Phase Classification Analysis

- The IPC analysis for Lebanon has recorded a deterioration in food security, with a 6% increase in food insecurity levels compared to last year.
- The findings show that 1.65 million people are food insecure, with a significant increase in the number of people classified under Phase 4 (Emergency).
- The most affected regions include the South, where areas have shifted from IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) to Phase 4.
- The projections for December to March indicate a slight improvement due to de-escalation, but vulnerabilities remain high.
- The reduction in food assistance may increase social tensions and force negative coping mechanisms such as child labor, migration, and deprioritization of essential needs like healthcare and education.
- **Discussion:** Sectors were asked to assess the sectoral implications of these findings and suggest adjustments to reduce vulnerabilities.

Sector	Key Concerns	Recommendations
Basic Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The deterioration in food security (6% increase in food-insecure populations) exacerbates economic vulnerability, placing additional pressure on humanitarian assistance.</li> <li>• Households in IPC Phase 3 (Crisis) and Phase 4 (Emergency) are expected to struggle with basic needs beyond food, including rent, healthcare, and essential non-food items.</li> <li>• A reduction in food assistance or cash support will increase reliance on harmful coping mechanisms, including the sale of assets, child labor, and early marriage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy for full coverage of the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), ensuring that vulnerable populations can meet their essential needs.</li> <li>• Harmonized cash assistance programs across sectors to ensure consistent and predictable support for affected households.</li> <li>• Prioritization of assistance for households in IPC Phase 3 and 4 to prevent further deterioration.</li> <li>• Improved coordination with Food Security and Protection sectors to monitor trends in negative coping strategies and respond accordingly.</li> </ul>
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households in IPC Phase 3 and 4 are likely to prioritize food over education-related expenses, leading to:</li> <li>• Higher school dropout rates.</li> <li>• Reduced school attendance, particularly for girls (who may be more likely to be engaged in domestic work or early marriage).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen school feeding programs to ensure children receive at least one nutritious meal per day at school.</li> <li>• Enhance cash-for-education programs to reduce financial barriers for vulnerable households.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in child labor as families struggle to afford basic necessities.</li> <li>• School-aged children facing food insecurity may experience concentration difficulties, affecting learning outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure continued access to learning materials and support services for children at risk of dropping out.</li> <li>• Strengthen child protection referral mechanisms to identify at-risk children early.</li> </ul>
Food Security & Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant deterioration in food security, with 1.65 million people food insecure and an increase in IPC Phase 4 cases.</li> <li>• Households are shifting to negative coping mechanisms, such as reducing meal portions or skipping meals entirely.</li> <li>• Rising food prices and economic crisis are reducing purchasing power, further exacerbating the crisis.</li> <li>• The availability of food is at risk due to agricultural disruptions, including rising input costs and reduced productivity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for sustained food assistance, particularly for high-risk districts identified in the IPC analysis.</li> <li>• Support local food production and agricultural livelihoods to ensure food security beyond direct assistance.</li> <li>• Strengthen market-based interventions (e.g., vouchers, cash-for-food) to help stabilize access to food.</li> <li>• Enhance coordination with Nutrition, Livelihoods, and Protection sectors to address cross-cutting vulnerabilities.</li> </ul>
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malnutrition and food insecurity are contributing to rising health risks, particularly among children and pregnant/lactating women.</li> <li>• Access to healthcare is declining as families prioritize food over medical expenses.</li> <li>• Increased risk of infectious diseases due to poor nutrition and deteriorating living conditions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale up access to primary healthcare services for vulnerable populations, particularly in food-insecure regions.</li> <li>• Enhance nutrition-sensitive health programs, including prenatal and postnatal support.</li> <li>• Integrate food security assessments into routine healthcare services to identify at-risk individuals early.</li> <li>• Strengthen coordination with WASH and Nutrition sectors to prevent disease outbreaks linked to food insecurity.</li> </ul>
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong link between food insecurity and malnutrition, with rising levels of acute malnutrition (wasting, stunting, and micronutrient deficiencies).</li> <li>• The most vulnerable groups include children under five, pregnant and lactating women, and people with chronic illnesses.</li> <li>• Malnutrition is worsening due to declining food availability, affordability, and diversity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure IPC analysis is integrated with malnutrition data, especially trends in wasting, stunting, and micronutrient deficiencies.</li> <li>• Strengthen nutrition-sensitive interventions, such as fortification programs and maternal-child nutrition support.</li> <li>• Promote cash and food assistance models that prioritize dietary diversity.</li> <li>• Enhance referral pathways between nutrition, food security, and health sectors to provide comprehensive support to at-risk populations.</li> </ul>
Livelihoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households facing food insecurity are unlikely to access or benefit from traditional livelihood programs, as immediate survival needs take precedence.</li> <li>• The economic crisis limits job opportunities, particularly for displaced and marginalized communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop alternative livelihood options for food-insecure households, including cash-for-work and vocational training.</li> <li>• Ensure economic inclusion strategies consider the barriers faced by IPC Phase 3 and 4 populations.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a risk of increased informal and exploitative labor as families struggle to cope.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with Protection sector to monitor risks of exploitative labor, particularly for children and vulnerable groups.</li> </ul>
Protection (incl. CP & GBV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rising food insecurity is increasing risks of exploitation, early marriage, and GBV.</li> <li>• Negative coping mechanisms, such as child labor and transactional sex, are increasing.</li> </ul> <p>Social tensions are rising due to reduced assistance and increased competition for limited resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen inter-sectoral referral mechanisms to identify and support vulnerable individuals.</li> <li>• Increase cash assistance and social protection measures to reduce reliance on harmful coping strategies.</li> <li>• Improve community outreach and GBV prevention programs in areas facing high food insecurity.</li> </ul>
Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households prioritizing food over rent, leading to risk of eviction, overcrowding, and substandard living conditions.</li> <li>• Increased demand for rental assistance as vulnerable families struggle to afford housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scale up rental assistance programs for households in IPC Phase 3 and 4.</li> <li>• Improve shelter support for IDPs and returnees, ensuring safe and dignified living conditions.</li> <li>• Strengthen linkages between shelter assistance and basic assistance programs.</li> </ul>
Social Stability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing tensions between host communities and displaced populations due to economic stress and reduced aid.</li> <li>• Perceptions of unfair aid distribution may lead to further destabilization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure transparent communication about assistance programs to prevent misinformation.</li> <li>• Support community cohesion activities to address rising tensions.</li> <li>• Strengthen conflict-sensitive programming in affected areas.</li> </ul>
WASH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households in IPC Phase 3 and 4 may resort to unsafe water sources, increasing health risks.</li> <li>• Reduced spending on hygiene and sanitation materials may lead to disease outbreaks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand access to clean water and sanitation services in food-insecure regions.</li> <li>• Ensure WASH needs are integrated into cash assistance programs.</li> <li>• Enhance disease prevention efforts, particularly in overcrowded settlements.</li> </ul>

### Returning IDPs Situation and Preliminary Findings

- A rapid assessment was conducted between 5–12 December 2024, surveying nearly 2,000 individuals, including Lebanese and Syrian IDPs.
- Key Findings:
  - 82% of Lebanese and 64% of Syrians had returned to their previous locations post-ceasefire.
  - 66% of respondents intended to stay in their current locations, with uncertainty among Syrians about return.
  - 40% of Lebanese IDPs have returned to their original residences.
  - 75% of Syrian IDPs are living in rented accommodation or with host families.
  - Main barriers to return include damaged housing (higher concern for Lebanese), fear of renewed conflict (more prevalent among Syrians), financial constraints, livelihood opportunities, and fear of conflict reescalation.
  - High psychosocial distress levels were reported, particularly among Syrians.
  - Identified vulnerabilities include psychosocial distress (higher among Syrians), serious medical conditions and disabilities, and risk of eviction (particularly for Syrian IDPs).
  - The assessment emphasized the need for multi-sectoral interventions to address protection risks, further identify return challenges, and to further analyze IDPs' long-term vulnerabilities.

### Logistics Cluster Update

- The Logistics Cluster continues to provide transport and storage services free of charge to partners.
- Key updates include:
  - Two mobile storage units installed in Tyre, expected to be operational by the end of January.
  - Active coordination meetings at national and sub-national levels to streamline logistical support.
  - The transport service remains available for partners requiring assistance in supply chain management.
  - Services expanded to Tripoli, Beirut, and potentially the Bekaa region based on needs.
- Partners were encouraged to utilize available resources and coordinate storage and transport needs effectively through the Logistics Cluster.

### AoB

- **Lebanon Country Page:**
  - The Lebanon Inter-Sector Coordination webpage has been revamped for improved accessibility and information sharing.
  - Each sector and working group has a dedicated page for key documents, reports, and assessments.
  - Sector IMOs were encouraged to update and share documents for better coordination.
- **Updated LRP Timeline:**
  - The planning timeline for the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) has been slightly adjusted.
  - Partners were reminded to submit expressions of interest and appeals for funding.
  - A Joint Task Force meeting will be convened in mid-February to review sector strategies.
  - The finalized LRP 2025 document is expected to be circulated by mid-February.

### Action Points:

1. Sector Coordinators to review inputs on the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) implications across sectors by Tuesday, 28 January 2025 COB ahead of the HCT Meeting.

For additional information, please refer to the meeting presentation [here](#).