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**Terms of Reference**

**Food Security Sector Working Group**

“Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufﬁcient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life”. (World Food Summit, 1996)

**Background**

After four years of generous welcome of people displaced by the Syrian crisis, Lebanon’s government and communities now face a critical test of stability. The Government of Lebanon (GoL), the United Nations (UN), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other humanitarian partners jointly launched the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) in December 2014. This plan describes how the GoL and its partners will work together to reinforce stability through this crisis by addressing national and local service delivery systems while also meeting humanitarian needs.

The LCRP is based on nine sector strategies (including the strategic direction of the Child Protection and Sexual and gender based Violence task forces), which are implemented and coordinated by the GoL, the UN and NGOs. The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA), UNHCR and UNDP assume the responsibility to coordinate the existing sectors in all field locations and in Beirut, and draws on UN agencies’ and NGO comparative expertise, supported by an integrated information management system. Each sector has a working group (WG) which is led by government, UN and NGO agency according to these terms of reference.

**Objective**

The aim of the Food Security sector (FSS) is to build strong partnerships to support sustainable, comprehensive, food availability, access, utilizations and stability initiatives in Lebanon, drawing on both humanitarian and development funding streams.

The sector will focus the widely accepted four pillars of Food Security:

1. **Food availability**: the availability of sufficient quantities of food of appropriate quality, supplied through sustainable agricultural domestic production, food value chain and marketing or imports, including food assistance targeting vulnerable households impacted by the Syrian crisis)
2. **Food access**: Access by individuals to adequate resources (entitlements) for acquiring appropriate foods for a nutritious diet. Entitlements are defined as the set of all commodities bundles over which a person can establish command given the legal, political, economic and social arrangements of the community in which they live
3. **Utilization**: utilization of food through adequate diet and clean water by promoting diversified and quality foods to improve food safety and nutritional practices;
4. **Stability**: To be food secure, a population, household or individual must have access to adequate food at all times. They should not risk of losing access to food as a consequence of sudden shocks or cyclical events. The concept of stability requires enhancing information on food security, coordination of agriculture activities and supporting national policy formulations.

The FSS approach for fighting hunger combines sustainable agriculture and rural development with targeted programmes for enhancing direct access to food for the most needy.

**Structure of the working group**

The Food Security sector Working Group (FSSWG) is open to all humanitarian and stabilization operational partners intervening in the Food Security sector, be they Government, UN/inter-governmental organisations, or non-governmental organisations (both national and international) that are abiding by established humanitarian principles in the delivery of their humanitarian and stabilization interventions.

The WG shall be led by the Core Group which is composed of MoSA, MoA, FAO and WFP and one INGO/NGO/academic institution representative where each agency is conveying their respective technical specific expertise and ensure Information Management focal point responsibilities. WFP and FAO will represent the FSS as co-leads and coordinate the WG as co-chairs and manage secretarial work of the sector.

The INGO/NGO/academic institution representative must be selected through a participatory and transparent process, and by wide agreement of the WG partners. The NGO co-lead should be from an organization with (a) recognised technical expertise in the sector, (b) operational capacity in the sector in the geographic area covered by the WG, and (c) the willingness and capacity to commit time and resources to the co-lead responsibilities. The INGO/NGO/academic institution will co-lead on a 6 months rotation basis every January and July.

Technical sub-groups will be formed based on identified needs and agreed upon with the sector members. The sub-technical WGs will meet on ad hoc basis, in Beirut or in the field, and during non-defined period to work on specific technical issues and report back to the sector.

The working group will meet every first Tuesday of the month in Beirut and field meeting will be organised following the demand but at least once per year in each of the 4 operational sites.

**Accountabilities**

Consistent with the Food Security sector strategy and its supporting sector results framework including Outcomes, Outputs and Targets in the LCRP, the sector (co-) leads are accountable to:

* The LCRP steering committee through the inter-sectoral coordination structure;
* The Working Group members;
* The technical sub-working groups;
* The institutions and individuals benefiting from the sector interventions in line with the Humanitarian Accountability Principles;
* Convey and validate by the members any strategic decision made by the Core Group.

**Responsibilities**

Sector Core Group shares the following responsibilities:

**Establishment and Maintenance of Appropriate Sectoral Coordination Mechanisms**

* Ensure appropriate coordination with all humanitarian and stabilization partners (including governmental institutions and agencies, national and international NGOs, the International/national Red Cross, UN agencies, IOM and other organizations), through establishment/maintenance of appropriate sectoral coordination mechanisms (i.e. regularly scheduled working group meetings; use of inter-agency portal and mailing list to disseminate information), including working groups at the national and, if necessary, local level;
* Participate in monthly inter-sectoral and inter-agency meetings and other relevant inter-agency processes to ensure that appropriate linkages are made with other sectors’ objectives and strategies;
* Participate in field based technical sub-working group meetings and ensure minutes of meetings are shared with all sector members including those based in the field;
* Secure commitments from partners in responding to needs and filling gaps, ensuring an appropriate distribution of responsibilities within the sectoral working group, with clearly defined focal points for specific issues where necessary;
* Ensure the complementarity of different humanitarian and stabilization actors’ actions;
* Ensure that sectoral coordination mechanisms are adapted over time to reflect the capacities of local actors and the engagement of development partners;
* Provide technical support/training to partners and promote capacity building, mainly through technical WGs;
* Engage sector/inter-agency Information Management structures in the implementation of the sector strategies.

**Planning, Assessments and Strategy Development**

* Ensure participatory planning, mid-term reviews and strategy development for the sector;
* Engage with the Joint Analysis Unit, the Information Management and Assessments Working Groups to ensure effectively coordinated needs assessments, gaps and capacities analysis, evaluation and impact assessments to maximize impact, prevent overlap and minimize gaps;
* Identify and share information about needs/gaps analysis to guarantee a common understanding by all partners of the sector’s needs, to ensure that the strategy’s objectives and targets are met;
* Encourage the use of common needs assessment and monitoring tools, and ensure timely and accurate reporting by all partners, and advise accordingly;
* Provide inputs into the development of national and regional planning and reporting documents;
* Develop appropriate strategic documents, guidelines, SOPs and policies to implement the sector strategy

**Attention to crosscutting and cross-sectoral issues including environment, climate change and gender**

* Reach out to other sectors (i.e. attending meetings of other sectors or engage members members to attend) to improve sectoral implementation efficiency;
* Identify and address sectors duplication
* Identify and foster cross sector synergy
* Ensure gender-sensitive programming and promote gender equality and ensure that the needs, contributions and capacities of women and girls as well as men and boys are addressed;
* Ensure that social stability principles are integrated in the sector strategies; programmes and activities through conflict sensitivity mainstreaming.

**Monitoring and Reporting**

* Use and promote Activity Info as the inter-sectoral reporting tool for members to update on their activities, to monitor progress of the implementation of the sector strategy and identify in all sectors all activities which contributes directly to Food Security;
* Use and promote OpsFEED as the Food Security sector information management tool;
* Verify monthly data entry of sector partners and provide quality assurance of Activity Info data for the sector;
* Coordinate with Information Management WG via the sector IM focal point;
* Submit the monthly and quarterly sector dashboards on the reporting deadline of the month following the reporting period. The dashboards monitor progress against key indicators and targets as set out in the LCRP sector strategies and results frameworks.

**Communication, Advocacy and Resource Mobilization**

* Identify core advocacy concerns, including resource requirements, and contribute key messages to broader advocacy initiatives of the HC and other actors;
* Advocate for donors to fund humanitarian actors to carry out priority activities in the sector concerned, while at the same time encouraging sectoral group participants to mobilize resources for their activities through their usual channels;
* Submit inputs into regular inter-agency communication products.

**Emergency preparedness**

* Ensure contingency planning, preparedness, and capacity building for new/seasonal emergencies;
* Participate in contingency planning and preparedness processes.

**Application of standards**

* Ensure that agreed in-country and global standards and guidelines are met;
* Ensure that the working group members are aware of relevant policy guidelines, technical standards and relevant commitments/policy changes that the Government has made.

**Inclusion of key stabilization and humanitarian partners**

* Ensure inclusion of key stabilization and humanitarian partners for the sector respecting their respective mandates and programme priorities. Special focus will be given to the inclusion of Lebanese institutions and organizations.

**Responsibilities of the Core Group (if applicable)**

The Core Group should not exceed a maximum of 5members (MoSA, MoA, WFP, FAO and one INGO/NGO/academic institution representative). The CG will:

* Participate actively in the development of the sector strategy/review, including with respect to setting priority interventions, targets and indicators;
* Provide strategic oversight on the prioritization of resources within the sector and on the division of labour amongst the sector’s partners;
* Participate in the drafting of sector guidelines, SOPs and policies;
* Participate in the preparation of the monthly WG meetings (agenda, meeting minutes…) and lead meetings;
* Monitor implementation of the sector’s objectives against the LCRP sector results frameworks and assist in the identification of significant gaps;
* Validate common processes related to the sector’s response, such as contingency planning, transition from in-kind to cash interventions, targeting, or use of common data collection and information management tools; and,
* Support internal and external evaluation of the sector, and sharing of lessons learned;
* Act as back-up to the sector leads in representing the sector at the request of the co-leads as required.