

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROJECT IN LEBANON

Intervention Context / Background Rationale

Five years since the beginning of Syria crisis, Lebanon is hosting an estimate of **2 million vulnerable Syrian refugees** fleeing violence and conflict, out of which 1 million are registered¹: hosting the world's highest number of refugees per inhabitant², **Lebanon is witnessing internal instability** such as poverty, unemployment, and deteriorating infrastructure. Among other reasons, the Syrian conflict is determined as one of the key driving forces for Lebanon's instability³, continuing to create **significant needs in all sectors** such as cash for food, access to basic public goods and services (water, electricity, solid waste collection, healthcare, wastewater management), as well as access to and quality of basic education. Particularly this has been observed **in the Bekaa Valley**; the governorate continues to be amongst the poorest in Lebanon, being home to almost one third of rural poor in Lebanon and 35% of the Syrian refugee population.

Currently, 363,417 registered Syrian refugees are residing in the Bekaa⁴. The Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) in Lebanon 2015⁵ provided valuable insight into many aspects of the living conditions and vulnerability levels of Syrian refugees in the country with reference to, among others, Shelter, Education, Health, Water and Sanitation, and Protection. Particularly, in terms of **Food Security and Food Consumption** there is the ongoing trend that more and more refugees are relying on food assistance to cover their basic needs. All in all, the food security situation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon significantly worsened compared to previous years, as the %age of Households **food access fell from 25% to 11%**. The food consumption does further



underpin this argument, as for instance children under the age of five consumed fewer than three cooked meals the previous day in 65% of Households versus 41% in 2014; moreover, more than a quarter of interviewed **Households (27%) reported to be unable to cook at least once a**

¹ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122> , last updated: Last Updated 30 Jun 2016

² <http://www.statista.com/chart/3576/the-countries-with-the-most-refugees-per-capita>

³ World Vision International, Making Sense of Turbulent Contexts, 2014.

⁴ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122> , last updated: 05 October 2016.

⁵ The Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees (VASyR) in Lebanon 2015 was conducted for the third year jointly by the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Field data was collected by various INGOs such as ACTED, Caritas, INTERSOS, Mercy Corps, Save the Children, and World Vision International. The assessment was conducted between 27 May and 12 June 2015.

day on average⁶. Furthermore, increasing deterioration in food consumption patterns have been investigated, as 60% of Households are not able to consume vegetables or fruits on a daily basis (versus 30% in 2014). Generally, both negative food and coping strategies can be observed among Syrian refugees: lack of food or money to buy food were reported by 89% of the interviewed Households, which resulted in relying on less preferred/expensive food, reducing the number of meals per day, borrowing food from friends or relatives, and reducing portion sizes at meal times – it was even revealed that in 29% of the Households adults restricted food consumption to allow children to eat. Further coping strategies include withdrawing children from school and reducing essential non-food expenses such as health or education⁷.



This deteriorating humanitarian context prompts various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UN agencies and the Lebanese government to respond quickly and alleviate living conditions by providing the basic assistance such as Food Assistance, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, Education, Health Care, Livelihoods and Shelter to the affected refugees. Through its programmes, World Vision is aiming at providing comprehensive and complementary services to the affected population in Lebanon without discrimination. This is crucial as the 2015 Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment (FSLA)⁸ has indicated that, on average, Lebanese households reported a **50% reduction in income** over the last two years, of which 24% is spent on food. This has led to over **50% of households incurring debt**, mainly to purchase food (43%); and to buy agricultural inputs (32.5%, with the highest %age in Bekaa at 62%). Due to a lack of resources,

49% of Lebanese interviewed reported worrying about not having enough food, with 38% reporting eating few kinds of foods, and 31% unable to access healthy and nutritious food.

World Vision has been implementing a **food assistance project through e-cards** since November 2013. The proposed project is a complementary intervention that will support the access of Syrian and host community members already receiving food assistance to livelihoods opportunities, helping them meet their remaining daily needs.

⁶ Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) in Lebanon, *Executive Summary*, p. 7.

⁷ Ibid, p. 8 ff.

⁸ Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment of Lebanese host communities, 2015.

Available from <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=9122> . Sample: 855 Lebanese households interviewed

Anticipated Coverage

Through this intervention, World Vision, is planning to **reach cash-for-work beneficiaries** in the following geographical locations where the majority of Syrian refugees and vulnerable community members reside in Central Bekaa, namely: Kab Elias, Bar Elias, Anjar, Mreijat, Bwerij, Meksi and Majdel Anjar.

Specific Objectives

- **To promote livelihood opportunities to vulnerable Syrian Refugees and host community members in Central Bekaa**

The 2015 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees (VASyR) shows a **significant worsening in overall food security since 2014**. Moderate food security has doubled, affecting one quarter of households while food secure households have fallen from 25% to 11%. This decline could be attributed to a **high dependence on food assistance**, limited access to income and the overall decline in the amount of food assistance provided. According to VASyR 2015, 54% of displaced Syrians depend on e-card food assistance as their main livelihood source, a 14 % increase from 2014. This issue has been further exacerbated by limited implementation of non-food assistance activities. This decline in food security can be seen when applying the food assistance formula of the multi sectoral targeting exercise against the VASyR household sample⁹. An estimated 57% of the households are found to be highly and severely vulnerable to food insecurity, and 20% moderately vulnerable.



⁹ The 2015 VASyR data is based on a representative sample of displaced Syrians households (4,105) throughout Lebanon.

The VASyR 2015 shows that twice as many households adopted severe and crisis coping strategies (61 %) compared to 2014 (28 %) with 85% households relying on borrowing money. The number of households that are unable to cover the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (US\$435/month for a household of five) has doubled since 2014, reaching 52 % in 2015, while 70 % fall below the poverty line (US\$3.84/person/day), an increase of 20 % from 2014. Consumption of nutrient-rich healthy food groups, including vegetables, dairy products and eggs, has fallen and was replaced by a higher consumption of fats and sugar. **Infants and young child feeding practices continue to remain inadequate for almost all children (96 %).** These issues of dietary diversity have been detected over the last three years, resulting in increasing **concerns of large-scale micronutrient deficiencies** amongst displaced populations. The governorates of Akkar, North and Bekaa have the highest proportion of food insecure households.



In light of the worsening food security situation and subsequent increase in needs, the LCRP will continue to address food insecurity through targeted programs which enhance **direct access to food for the most vulnerable**, combined with activities promoting dietary diversity, **sustainable agriculture and rural livelihoods**, to respond to all

food security aspects according to the standard four pillars: availability, access, utilization and stability¹⁰. The Food sector recognizes that, in a protracted crisis, a combination of (I) direct food assistance responding to immediate short-term humanitarian needs, with sustainable food production and improved agricultural livelihood activities is required to achieve food security. As such, this project will focus on providing unconditional **cash assistance through cash-for-work interventions** for a total of 605 individuals in Central Bekaa and, therefore, continue to address the urgent survival needs of displaced Syrians and consequently helping them meeting their nutritional needs. Beneficiaries are identified and are already receiving food assistance from the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP) if they belong to the host community. This approach takes into consideration the food security vulnerability of these targeted beneficiaries and the added value of topping up the assistance.

¹⁰ LCRP 2015-16

Expected Outputs

Output 1: *Promote environmental protection by engaging Syrian refugees and host community members in livelihood opportunities in Central Bekaa*

Within this program, food-eligible Syrian Refugees and vulnerable host community members benefiting from the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP) in Central Bekaa will be selected by World Vision to participate in the **cash-for-work program**. This will entail the **cleaning of a 37 Km road** passing through the areas of Dahr El Baidar, Mekse, Bar Elias, Deir Zanoun and Masnaa as well as the **cleaning of the largest river in Kab Elias** including fencing the area surrounding it with the aim of protecting it from future pollution threats. The workers participating in this program will be compensated for their work through their **food assistance electronic cards** (e-cards). Participants (unskilled laborers) will work 10 days per month for a duration of 6 hours per day, receiving an hourly wage of 2.5 USD per hour (3,750LL). Participants would therefore receive on a daily basis 15USD per day worked. As for other skilled laborers that are needed for specific tasks such as putting in place the safety fence/gate and pruning trees in an environmentally friendly manner, they will be receiving an hourly wage of 3.33 USD per hour (5,000 LL); therefore, skilled participants receive on a daily basis 20 USD per 6-hour day worked. Transportation in safe buses contracted by World Vision will be provided to all beneficiaries on working days as well as an insurance covering them for the project period as per the legislative decree 136, which includes all treatments due to the activities such as medical expenses, medications, physiotherapy, disability etc.



Activity 1: Identification of beneficiaries eligible to participate in the cash-for-work programme

As a first step, World Vision will work on identifying **605 cash-for-work beneficiaries** (162 from Kab Elias for the river cleaning and 443 workers for the cleaning of the road). An initial assessment of the caseload revealed that the biggest number of Syrian refugees benefiting from the Food program are located in Kab Elias, Bar Elias and Majdel Anjar. As such, the biggest caseload of beneficiaries participating in the cash-for-work program is expected to be from these areas.

World Vision will then print 605 project participation cards to ensure control over the daily attendance of beneficiaries as these will be marked each time they attend a day of work and will be used to track the number of days worked ensuring that the same person is attending throughout the designated work period. The distribution of the participation cards will be done on the first day of each 10-day cycle for every workers under the supervision of the World Vision Officer. On a daily basis, the team leaders and bus drivers will be responsible to ensure the stamp on each worker's card as well as their attendance and signature on the attendance sheet (date and time-in/time-out).

Activity 2: Cleaning the main water source in Kab Elias in order to promote cleaner water to the agricultural areas

Protection of river banks and mitigation of floods into agricultural areas and nearby households is presented as a priority in the LCRP and laid out as a top indicator “# of targeted villages benefitting from improved infrastructure and environmental assets”. In the absence of adequate wastewater network coverage and sanitary landfills, most rivers and streams in Lebanon are being used for the discharge of raw WW and solid waste. The waste and sludge generated by the 1.5 million persons displaced from Syria have added to the load¹¹. Cleaning of rivers and streams and protection of river banks - part of the Ministry of Energy & Water's mandate - are necessary to mitigate the flood risk and potential losses into neighboring agricultural lands and households. **Reduced access to water and inadequate wastewater management** expose vulnerable Lebanese and families displaced from Syria to **increased risk of waterborne diseases**¹².

Through this activity, **162 beneficiaries will participate in the cleaning of the 3 Km long Kab Elias river** with 40 workers per 10 day shift.

¹¹ LCRP 2015-16

¹² MoPH, November 10, 2015. Available from <http://www.moph.gov.lb/Prevention>

Activity 3: Preventing flooding by cleaning the 37 Km main road leading Dahr El Baydar to Masnaa

The increased quantity of solid waste results in a negative impact on water resources, soil and land, including an increase in the transmission of communicable diseases due to stagnation of water ponds around uncontrolled dumpsites. Furthermore, assessments estimated the incremental quantity of healthcare waste produced as a result of the Syrian crisis at 420 tons/year, i.e. in 2014 18 % was disposed of in the environment without any treatment¹³.

This activity will engage **443 beneficiaries** from the following areas: Meksi, Kab Elias, Bouerej, Mreijet, Bar Elias, Anjar, Majdel Anjar. Activities will take place through shifts, as laid out in the table below. Several shifts can work in parallel according to need.

| Zone A | Zone B | Zone C | Zone D |
|---|---|--|--|
| Road distance: 7 KM | Road distance: 14 KM | Road distance: 8 KM | Road distance: 8 KM |
| Activity: cleaning of a canal on one the side of the road and cleaning/sweeping both sides of the main road; pruning trees that cause flooding in the winter season; sweeping the road with shovels and brooms; cleaning the inside of the canal using buckets, shovels and picks. | | | |
| Workers/Day: 40 Number of days: 20 Area: Dahr el baidar-Mekse | Workers/Day: 41 Number of days: 30 Area: Mekse - Kascada mall | Workers/Day: 40 Number of days: 30 Area: Bar elias- Deir zanoun | Workers/Day: 40 Number of days: 30 Area: Deir Zanoun-Masnaa |
| | Activity: Cleaning of Kab Elias river Workers/day: 54 Number of days: 30 | | |

This activity will also serve to **promote recycling as all the collected recyclable waste** will be transported to the Arc-En-Ciel site where it will be repurposed. This environmental aspect is key in light of the challenging solid waste management situation; until 2015, municipal solid waste destinations were approximately 53 % to landfill, 30 % open dumped/burned, 9 % composted and 8 % recycled. There are **over 700 open dumps**, resulting in extensive environmental degradation and health risks. The current solid waste crisis that began in July 2015 with the closure of the Naameh Sanitary Landfill site has further escalated the situation.

¹³ LCRP 2015-16

Activity 4: Monitoring activities are conducted in order to ensure effectiveness and quality programming

Project sites will be subject to **daily site visits** in order to ensure that the planned activities are properly implemented. As such, a World Vision project management staff and a project engineer will be responsible for conducting these field observations as well as on-site spot-checks.

Moreover, prior to the initiation of the activities, **World Vision will establish together with the municipalities a set timeline** defining the progress towards the achievements; as such, they will receive a completion certification at each defined point leading to a quality check (compliance, documentation etc) and a payment release accordingly. All M&E mechanisms will provide an understanding of the project through regular progress tracking so that appropriate corrective actions can be taken in a timely manner when the performance deviates significantly from the original plan and strategy.

Activity 5: Accountability mechanisms are effectively implemented in order to ensure the quality of programming and accountability to beneficiaries and partners

World Vision is committed to mainstreaming principles of accountability throughout all its programs in accordance with the **Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) standard on accountability and quality management**. The Humanitarian Accountability team will promote accountability in the project by ensuring that the targeted beneficiaries have access to information packages, which include information about World Vision and partners, and the planned activities. These information will be provided through helplines. Furthermore, World Vision will also provide information to beneficiaries throughout its overall program portfolio through several channels such as hotlines, ITS Committees, and Households visits.

World Vision will continue to applying its hotline system. Through this system, reporting is evidence-based and all the complaints are recorded for further follow-up and/or investigation if sensitive cases are encountered.