**National Livelihoods Working Group Meeting**

Minutes – 24 October 2017 – Beirut

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| **Meeting** | | | |
| **Name** | Livelihoods Working Group meeting | **Meeting Date** | 28/11/17 |
| **Meeting Location** | UNDP building (6th floor) | **Meeting Time** | 1pm |
| **Co-Chair person** | Bastien Revel – UNDP  Hiba Douaihy - MoSA  Johnny Matta – MoET | **Meeting Duration** | 1.30 hours |
| **Minutes Prepared by** | William Barakat, Yousra Taleb, Lama Srour - UNDP |  |  |
| **Main discussion points**  **Participants:** | 1. Welcome & introduction 2. LCRP 2018 update 3. Presentation of the Graduation Pilot with NPTP (World Bank) 4. Presentation of Alliance 2015 Consortium Livelihoods project ( ACTED) 5. Field Updates 6. AoB   70 Participants | | |

**Summary of discussions and action points**

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| **1** | **Welcome and introduction** |
|  | The chair welcomed the participants on behalf of the co-leads. The agenda was approved with a slight change in order of points, starting with the field updates. |
| **2** | **Field Updates** |
|  | See Presentation for details.  North updates:  In the last three months there has been increase in labor intensive programs with 75% of the total beneficiaries so far being in the last three months. However, despite this significant increase it is still beyond the appeal target we are still not at target, 169 municipalities benefitted from LIP with 2422 laborers.  Talking about career guidance and employment services, a slight increase, not so significant but some projects started in the last three months  MBST lots of initiatives in Akkar and North but with still some gaps not only in this output but within the other outputs mainly geographically in Tripoli. Majority of partners’ concentration in a smaller geographical area. The yearly target has been reached a couple of months ago  Room for improvement basically in job creation and value chain. 20 partners in north governorate and 17 in Akkar governorate with the majority focusing on workforce employability and MBST; 4 are doing support to SME’s and job creation has 5 partners through Labour Intensive Projects.  BML:  19 active partners based on activity info but actually 3 active partners in the WG in the area, interventions fall primarily under workforce employability gap in Labour Intensive Projects and value chain, with slight improvement by the end of the year and plans for next year  The working group focused on looking at alignment between ongoing SME support and the MoET strategy, on youth programming related to employability, and women entrepreneurship support activity. Conclusions from all the discussions will be online soon and the working group will try to do more thematic work with the partners in other areas. If partners are interested in similar activities in the areas contact coordinators.  Bekaa  Bekaa new coordinator in place soon. The Positive trend about Bekaa is the increase of job creation program is in the Bekaa which is different from other years. Concentration of activities in both areas of public work and support to businesses but most labour intensive interventions are in Rachaya.  South  A significant increase (more than doubled) in number of partners in the Workforce Employability output (from 5 to 12) BUT the concentration of interventions remain in skills training with rare linkage to Internships/on the job trainings and to sensitization on decent work conditions  The gaps remain in both VC interventions and public works (Labor intensive programming)  MSME’s support in more within the in kind or cash grants with no direction towards technology transfers and incubation services.  The 3W map is online [here](http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=14572). |
| **3** | **LCRP Update** |
|  | The overall LCRP has been adopted and sent to region and had the steering committee meeting. We stand at the fact that appeal is slightly less than last year (2.68 bnUSD vs. 2.75bnUSD in 2017) which is the first time that the appeal is decreasing. There are a total of 120 partners contributing.  Livelihoods is among the sectors with smaller appeals but it is the sector with the largest number of partners.  The chapter was approved by the steering committee last week with no comments or changes. The steering committee went very well, good discussion and endorsement of the sector. This is the first year the process is so smooth with all stakeholders on the same page behind the strategy. The sector leads thanked all the partners of the sector and in the core group for the contributions.  In total cumulated appeal from 63 partners in LH is 242 M USD. The sector appeal remains stable at 207 million. The fact that partners appeal went from 150 to 242 M USD since last year shows a higher interest in developing livelihoods programming.  In addition, looking at other information, including money secured, this year we are at 40 M USD secured – this means that we already have more funding secured for 2018 than for 2017 from all partners who reported. Total 56 M + carry over and we have some funding secured for 2019 and 2020.  In terms of geographic areas for which there are less partners interested are Nabatieh and Baalbek.  **Key indicators of 2017** **meanwhile the new dashboard is issued in January 2018**:  **-**2,000 jobs have been retained (4 times more than 2016).  **-**1,600 businesses have been supported (3 times more than 2016)  -Only 3,000 individuals (who benefited from trainings) accessed work or home-based income generation activities. This low figure highlights one of key challenges to improve quality and outcome rather than just increasing number of trainees. |
| **4** | **Presentation of the Graduation Pilot and National Poverty Targeting Programme- Graduation (NPTP-G) in Lebanon by the World Bank (WB)** |
|  | See presentation for details.  **History and Impact**:  The Model of the CGAP/Ford Foundation Graduation programme dates back to 1980s with BRAC (an NGO in Bangladesh). It focused mainly on microfinance, but it did lead to significant improvements in sustainable livelihoods. More services were added later to the microfinance project, in an attempt to tackle the multi-dimension nature of poverty. This “enhanced” approach led to good results in terms of improvements in overall wellbeing of participants.  In 2006, based on the successful pilot in Bangladesh, the CGAP (Consultative Group to Assist the Poor) consisting of 30 different institutions, decided to test the external validity of this model through piloting it at 10 different countries.  Each pilot program had different “graduation” criteria. Some pilots incorporated “graduation indicators” related to increases in food security, others included indicators related to increases on consumption levels per capita, and some others included indicators related to increases in assets, savings, as well as to improvements on access to health care, and self-confidence. or a combination of all these criteria.  Most pilots have been implemented in rural areas, which contributed to the literature of the Graduation programme in rural context.  Early results of the 10 pilots, which were implemented in countries with different income levels , showed great results, including graduation rates of 75-98%. In terms of design, pilots adapted the model’s components based on country context (e.g. specifically in the case of Lebanon, services will be sequenced differently and services will be tailored to the needs specifically regarding women).  There was high programme take-up across countries, with exception of India, where beneficiaries either didn’t know how or were hesitant to apply due to poor communication and awareness (ie.:they knew that if they had applied and achieved their graduation indicators, then they would no longer be eligible for the assistance components).  An impact evaluation was embedded in most of the 10 pilots. For the most part, the 10 pilots had a significant effect across the different components, in terms of consumption, food security, savings, time spent to working, and income/ revenues, with very small effect on mental health and not so much on women decision making specifically in food and households expenditures.  Model Components and Objectives: The Model has 4 different components as below:  1-The first component is the safety net or food consumption support, that could be either in cash or in kind, and its outcome would be to increase food security. Some countries decided to incorporate the Graduation pilot in their existing social safety nets, while others, who don’t have any safety nets, decided simply to add cash or in-kind component to the Graduation pilot upon the country and its needs.  2- The second component is about sustainable Livelihoods and includes two elements: The asset transfer and technical skills trainings related to the asset. e.g. Transfer of chicken and training on how to invest in them. The value of the assets ranges in average from $124 in India till $464 in Peru. The most commonly chosen assets depends on the market analysis that is done at the local level by each country e.g. cheap, goat, cows, commodities to establish own business, sewing machine, etc.  3- The third component is the financial services through assistance on how to open a bank account, as well as, provision of financial literacy trainings and linkages to financial services. The outcome would be to improve the income management and saving of assets. It depends on the country’s circumstances e.g. some countries decided to enforce opening a savings account, or decided to enforce a minimum savings a month, and others decided to provide grants if beneficiaries already had saved a certain amount.  4-The forth component is the coaching through life skills, health care and other customized services to the context of vulnerable beneficiaries to accompany them if they face mental health related challenges.  Implementation Steps:  The programme’s steps and components are implemented with a certain sequencing and for a period between 18 to 24 months, to ensure sustainable Livelihoods after project finalization.  The process starts with the selection of the target population, then a market assessment is accomplished at the local level that aimed at,  -identifying constraints from both supply and demand sides, in reaching employment or self-employment and absorption in local economy,  -as well as, identifying the needed assets to be transferred in each country.  Afterwards, the 4 Model components are implemented, starting with the consumption support and Life skills coaching, then, with the provision of savings assistance (as of the assumption of that once people have some extra money they can start saving), and ending with the provision of technical trainings coupled with a transfer of assets.  Weekly coaching visits are conducted during all the period of the project.  In late 2017, the CGAP handed over the programme to the WB, and it’s called now ‘Partnership for Economic Inclusion-PEI’.  The first meeting of the platform will take place on 29 November 2017, where more updates will be shared on the programme and its enrolment in Lebanon.  Implementing partners in Lebanon are NGOs, Government and other related institutions from financial services.  NPTP-G Pilot in Lebanon:  The National Social Safety Net programme in Lebanon (National Poverty Targeting Program - NPTP) was launched in 2011, and includes currently 105,000 households that were eligible for assistance. MoSA is the implementing agency.  In 2016, the WB provided technical assistance to MoSA to revise the Proxy Means Testing (PMT) Formula, which was subsequently used to recertify the 105,000 households that are currently NPTP beneficiaries. The recertification of beneficiaries is ongoing, and its completion (expected in early 2018) will be needed before NPTP-G is launched.  The Graduation pilot is embedded into the NPTP and will benefit around 675 households (hhs), from the assisted poorest 10,000 hhs in Lebanon (and which benefit from the e-food card voucher). In Lebanon, 90 to 95% of hhs that receive food vouchers are located in the North and Bekaa, thus NPTP-G’s beneficiaries will be selected randomly from two regions in the North, with highest concentration of targeted hhs. The project will focus on women and benefit at least one rural and one urban area, with making sure services are adjusted accordingly.  The NPTP-G pilot will finance a Monitoring and Evaluation mechanism not only to monitor the outcomes and outputs at the beneficiaries’ level, but to also assess the overall impact over the 24 months, whether the additional services provided to beneficiaries beyond the food vouchers assistance, have a substantial impact in terms of consumption, savings and income. There is a high number of dedicated social workers (80 to 90 Social workers for the pilot only) to implement the project.  MoSA is in the process of launching the market analysis, and the pilot will start in mid-2018 (form now there is one year before the first results).  **Questions & Answers**  Q (EU):  Question 1: Is the targeting, recertification and the proxy mean testing approach is the right way to make sure to reach most vulnerable (because of critics of NPTP)? What work has been done by the World Bank (WB) on that to make sure that criteria were selected and used correctly?  Ar: The WB supported MoSA to revise NPTP’s targeting formula last year, and has been working on the recertification based on the revised formula that improved the targeting accuracy. Until now, the MoSA has yet to finish the recertification process, but so far, they have reviewed 75,000 applications from the old data.  The Prime Minister Office representative added that 31 to 35% from the old NPTP caseload have been found to remain eligible so far, and that the final caseload might reach up to 40% of the old one.  The World Bank added that no single safety net has a 100% targeting accuracy. The WB conducted a small exercise (2 weeks ago), and subsampled a thousand households (hhs) from the recertified cases’ pool to test NPTP’s targeting accuracy. Early results show that the NPTP’s targeting accuracy is comparable to that of international good practices (ie.: 55% of the sampled HHs come from the poorest two deciles of the income distribution).  Question 2: Assuming this is only about the NPTP for Lebanese, what is the function of the inter-ministerial committee and how it is supposed to ensure the coordination of the relevant ministries?  A: The inter-ministerial committee has set the social strategy net for the social resistance beyond NPTP that is just a component of the whole social strategy. UNICEF is working with MoSA to revive the ministerial technical role around the overall social protection  Q (National Basic Assistance Coordinator):  Question 1: This kind of programmes is very expensive especially in the context of Lebanon where the cost is extremely high notably in the humanitarian field, what would be the cost of this programme in Lebanon?  A: The cost depends on the prices of each country, it ranges in the 10 pilots from $1,500 up to 4,000$ by beneficiary.  This programme has been also piloted in Egypt, West Africa and Colombia with some targeted refugees, and showed a positive impact of services that have been tailored to each of those countries’ context. The WB went for the high-end which is around 4,000 $ by beneficiary for a period of 18 to 24 months in Lebanon due to the expensive cost in this country. However, recent studies showed that most of the 10 pilots yielded a positive results. . More material can be shared by the WB upon request.  Question 2: What is the WB looking for in the follow up on the market analysis in terms of targeting certain areas through any geographical approach? Are there any international and existing tools the WB is trying to adapt and use in to lebanon?  A: Since most voucher recipients live in the North and the Beeka, the NPTP-G (and thus the market analyses) will target these regions. In terms of the market analysis, the idea is to profile NPTP-beneficiaries and then assess local market needs through a very small Value Chain development analysis in each Municipality, trying to match both supply to demand, which is consistent with the WB’s approach and development tools. More material can be shared by the WB upon request.  Question 3: To which extend based on the experience in other countries these programmes can be scaled up? Noting that existing programmes face a challenge in scalability.  A: Scalability is an issue. However, there are positive results as 6 out of 10 pilots are currently being scaled up such as in India, Haiti, Pakistan and Bangladesh… with prospects to have more positive results moving forward, e.g. In India, the programme is still ongoing from 7 years and results are encouraging which proves sustainability of this programme, notably in the consumption support where participants increased consumption support by 50% after 3 years, and almost 90% after 7 years. The new platform that the WB is launching shortly (tomorrow) is for economic inclusion that will support governments around the world, and will precisely support countries around the world to assess scalability options.  Q: The context in lebanon is much different from all the 10 pilots’ countries, how has the contextualization for the NPTP-G been done for Lebanon?  A: The WB/MoSA conducted some Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with NPTP beneficiaries in Lebanon and specifically with those who receive food vouchers to assess their needs. The assistance modality in the NPTP is through food vouchers and not cash, therefore the sequencing will be a bit different and must take this into account in Lebanon. Ready to discuss one-on-one how the WB/MoSA adapted the pilot especially regarding female beneficiaries.  Q: Is the WB considering the food assistance to 10,000 hhs as part of the income support within the NPTP-G, since they are already receiving this type of assistance?  A: Yes, the WB/MoSA decided to embed the pilot into the current income support which could have a distortion effect on the impact evaluation and may overestimate the results in terms of consumption support, as targeted beneficiaries have been receiving an income support from a couple of years.  Q (JICA) How long has the project been in lebanon? And is there an average of years for graduation like in other pilots?  A: The graduation average period is 18 months, and in Lebanon the impact evaluation should take place 2 years (T 2 stage) after the first 18 months, in order to reach and measure positive results. This depends on each country for instance in India the graduation’s results are measured at T 7 and T 8 stages.  Q (WFP) Will the WB be providing the entire package in the NPTP graduation in Lebanon including livelihoods opportunities, trainings, health care and other according to vulnerability or specific target groups?  A: The WB/MoSA will adapt the model to Lebanon as a package, with slight adjustment and inclusion of additional services beyond what current beneficiaries are receiving so far, to test the impact of these services in terms of sustainable development through the impact evaluation 2 years after the first 18 months.  The Sector Coordinator wrapped up by highlighting 3 key take away for partners,  1. It is an opportunity to get an update on the recertification of NPTP recertification as organizations are using the NPTP database to target Lebanese in their interventionss components in one package programme like the Graduation one.  2. Partners from North and Bekaa should be aware of the NPTP-G intervention and beneficiaries that will benefit from this Livelihoods transition support in their areas.  3. The point of the presentation was not about adding new elements to the LCRP, rather to learn from the graduation programme to better connect the various elements of programming already existing in various sector. The Steering Committee advised during last meeting on Monday 20 November to look at these types of programmes and learn how to incorporate their elements to current programming in various sectors notably Livelihoods, Basic Assistance and food security. |
| **5** | ACTED presentation - Alliance 2015 Lebanon consortium |
|  | See presentation for details:   * The consortium coordinator from ACTED, presented the Alliance 2015 Lebanon consortium. * The Alliance2015 Lebanon Consortium Partners are: ACTED, Concern, Cesvi, Hivos. ACTED is the lead agency. All partners have previous experience working in Livelihoods and in Lebanon. * **Title**: Building Resilient Communities in Lebanon: An Integrated Approach to Livelihoods and Income Generation for Vulnerable Populations * **Donor**: The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs * **Location:** Akkar, Tripoli, Beirut and Mount Lebanon, South * **Duration:** 2.5 years (June 2017- December 2019)   Questions & Answers:   * Q: Do you have any kind of certification provided for the training? A: Yes. We’ve worked with focal points in the ministry of Labor and he said that as long as UNICEF approves the number of hours provided and the curriculum, the trainings will be officially certified. * Q: Will the action plans of the SDCs be publicly available? A: Most probably yes. They are living documents that can be made available for people working with SDCs. We’ve assessed a large number of SDCs along with the municipalities, and many SDC directors don’t know about existing and potential employment opportunities. * Q: Did you find any challenges in the human capacity of the SDC? A: And how are you planning to address these challenges? Yes. Capacity building program will be provided to SDCs according to their interest. Some SDCs have already expressed their interest. * Q: What is the average length of the training? A: It depends on the training, the majority are about 3 Months. For instance 60 hours for basic IT, but much more for solar system training. * Q: Does your program only target Lebanese and Syrians? Can Palestinians enroll in your program? A: Yes. The proposal foresees a split between Lebanese and Syrian beneficiaries and doesn’t specify any percentage for Palestinian participants, but this can be quite flexible. * Q: Are you going to reply on existing institutes for the training? A: Some of the trainings will be provided at the SDCs if there is space, for some others we will reply on the MoL and private Technical Vocational Institutes. * Q: How do you plan for the apprenticeship program? A: We coordinate with the companies or business owners to check if they are interested in having their employees participating in the training and in hosting the apprenticeship program. * Q: What is the connection between the Job matching and Job creation? A: we supported specific MSMEs, we can bring beneficiaries for internship (2nd outcome) * Q: Are you coordinating with the National employment office? A: Cesvi have started a communication with NEO, we are looking forward to build on that and further collaborate with them. |
| **6** | **AOB** |
|  | This was the last meeting of the sector coordinator who thanked partners for the constant support and commitment to coordination over the past four years. UNDP explained to partners that recruitment is under process to find a suitable replacement, which means that there will be a transition period early 2018. However Hiba Douaihy is now fully on board on MOSA side so the coordination of the sector will be maintained at high standards. |