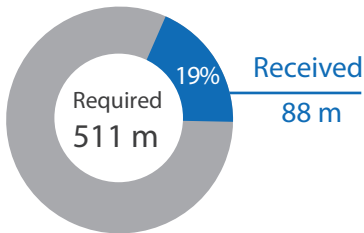


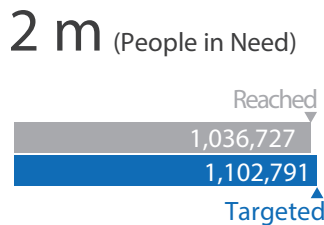


The dashboard summarizes the progress made by partners involved in the Lebanon Crisis Response and highlights trends affecting people in need. The Food Security and Agriculture sector in Lebanon is working to: OUTCOME 1) Promote food availability; OUTCOME 2) Promote food accessibility; OUTCOME 3) Promote food utilization; OUTCOME 4) Promote stabilization.

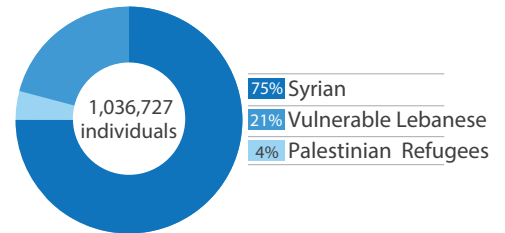
### 2020 Funding Status



### Targeted Population groups

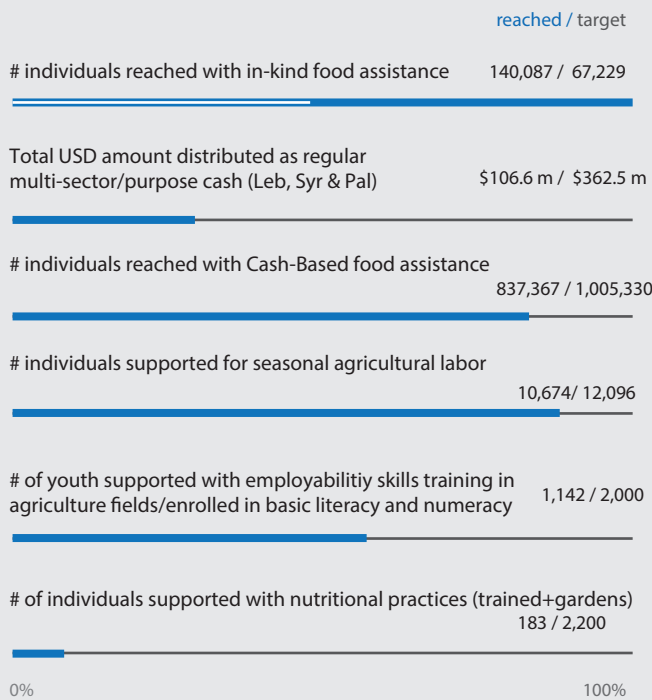


### Population reached by cohort

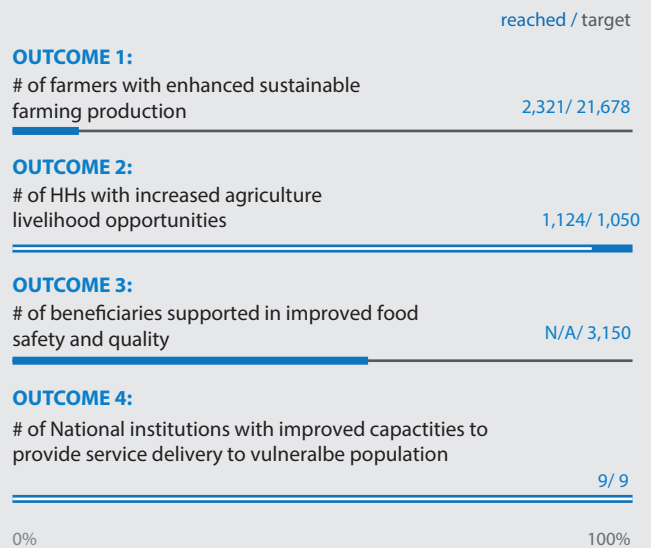


## Progress against targets

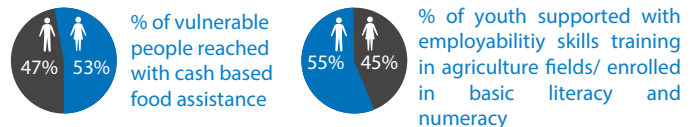
### Key Achievements



### Outputs/Outcomes

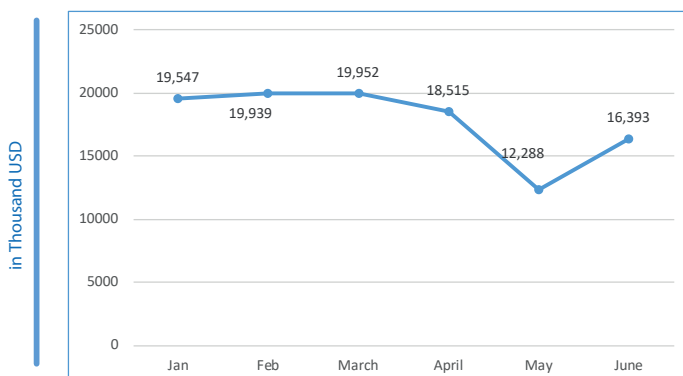


### Age/Gender breakdown

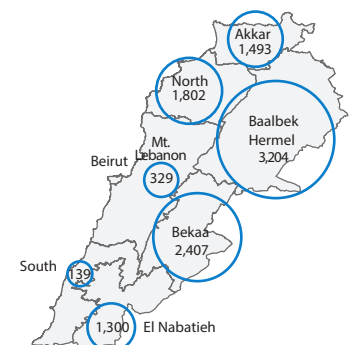


## Analysis

Amount of USD injected in the cash based food assistance system



# of individuals supported for seasonal agricultural labor/casual labor





## 1. ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SECTOR AT THE OUTPUT LEVEL

The Food Security and Agriculture Sector (FSS) has two overarching objectives in 2020: i) reduce food insecurity by 2020; and ii) improve the resilience of the agricultural sector to the impact of the Syria crisis. FSS interventions are focused on improving food availability and food access for affected populations. Food availability is achieved through the provision of in-kind food assistance and agriculture production support, while food access is achieved through cash-based food assistance and agricultural livelihoods interventions. In the first half of 2020, a total of 1,017,437 individuals received food assistance, including 877,350 (W: 52%; M: 48%) through cash-based assistance and 140,087 (W: 53%; M: 47 %) through in-kind assistance. In addition to the regular food parcels distribution, Syrian refugees, Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS), Palestinian refugees from Lebanon (PRL) and vulnerable Lebanese households also benefitted from ready-to-eat meals, Ramadan distributions, COVID-19-related distributions, school snack provision and meals prepared in school kitchens. A total of 305,624 vulnerable people<sup>1</sup> have had increased access to food on a more or less temporary basis during the first six months of 2020.

Many new partners that had not appealed under the LCRP FSS re-programmed funds to support in-kind food assistance to respond to the COVID-19 emergency. Since April, 32,859 individuals have received food parcels (32,644) and ready-to-eat meals (215) ensuring their access to food during a period of uncertainty, movement restrictions, purchasing-power losses and constrained access to food. These activities were traced through sector-led ongoing mapping at the regional level.

The target for Lebanese beneficiaries was not reached by mid-year, with 54% of target reached (114,784 individuals reached vs. a target of 211,625). However, WFP increased the number of National Poverty Targeting Programme (NPTP) households targeted from 10,000 to 15,000 in March, reaching 105,000 beneficiaries, and a further scale-up of food-assistance to a total of 50,000 NPTP families is expected to be put in place during the remainder of 2020.

For cash-based food assistance, WFP increased the transfer value between May and June due to exchange rate adjustments by the financial service provider. This enabled an additional 87,000 vulnerable Syrians to be reached. Escalating inflation and the lack of job opportunities in Lebanon have driven a marked increase in the number of Syrian refugees that fall below the SMEB level,<sup>2</sup> rendering the full-year target of 768,268 vulnerable Syrian refugees somewhat obsolete.

Farmers have been severely impacted by the economic, financial and COVID-19 crises. The majority of partners postponed their field activities and/or substituted them with alternative communication means (i.e., social media, online remote teleworking and WhatsApp), which enabled nearly 770 individuals (15 % women) to receive technical agricultural training during the reporting period. The training contributed to strengthening the capacities and knowledge of farmers and agriculture workers to adopt climate smart sustainable agricultural, water use and conservation practices. Some 410 individuals (8% women) also received training specifically on agricultural value chain development.

Training on Integrated Pest Management practice was delivered to 221 farmers, which has contributed to building farmers' capacity to reduce the use of agro-chemicals in farming practices and pollution of natural resources (soil, air and water) especially along the Litani River (North and Central). This will have a positive impact on reducing the pollution of the Qaraoun lake in West Bekaa where the Litani River flows into. The adoption of better practices and practical application of new skills will increase and improve a sustainable, local agricultural production and the natural environment.

Some 38 small-scale farmers (including 1 woman) reported having new and better market links and access as a result of soft skills training, which will help them to better market their products through accessing new market channels and market information. It is still a challenge for women to establish themselves in the agriculture sector and to obtain equal access to resources, land, markets and services. Concerted efforts to support women farmers is needed to make long-term changes.

Several FSS partners are also supporting agricultural cooperatives/associations and/or their members through training and awareness sessions. Some 28 cooperatives received financial and/or technical or material support during the reporting period, and 40 members of cooperatives received training on soil resource management, pest management and efficient use of water resources. Such interventions strengthen the technical and financial capacity of cooperatives to improve service delivery to their members, which will in turn improve local production and farmer-to-farmer coordination and collaboration.

<sup>1</sup> Please note that this figure does not represent a unique number of food recipients.

<sup>2</sup> From 825,000 to 1,245,000

FSS partners also supported youth (aged 15-25 years) to have access to better formal and informal technical agricultural education. Due to wide communication outreach at the beginning of 2020, 97 students were enrolled in the first Agricultural Technical Baccalaureate (BTA) year (formal education) for the 2019/2020 academic year, of which almost 88% Lebanese (35 girls) and 12% Syrians (3 girls). After drop out, 80 BT1 students were still regularly attending classes of which 27 girls. As for the second and third BT years, 89 enrolled students (7% displaced non-Lebanese people and 42% young women) participated in online courses during March and May. Enrollment in the formal education programme will have a positive impact on attracting youth to enter the agriculture sector and will contribute to increase the number of individuals having a technical agricultural background with practical needed skills. It is to be noted that since beginning of 2020 a new formal BT agricultural education curriculum has been set up and implemented.

A total of 1,097 students (aged 15-25 years) (35% girls and 35% displaced non-Lebanese people) attended short-term vocational courses (informal education). In addition, more than 200 youth (30% young women) were reported to be engaged as interns and/or receiving on-the-job training as of the mid-year point. These experiences allowed them to acquire technical agricultural expertise, providing them strong opportunities for employment and income generation in the agricultural sector.

Among additional interventions implemented by FSS partners, a total of 143 small-scale farmers (7% women) received agricultural inputs (i.e., seeds, seedlings, livestock, equipment, fertilizers, pesticides and fodder) to enhance their agricultural production capacity. Some 128 Lebanese farmers (26% women) received financial and/or technical support (i.e., access and utilization of unproductive land, terracing and irrigation/water management) to facilitate increased investment and improve agricultural productive infrastructure and communal assets (i.e., agricultural roads, irrigation networks, forests, hill lakes and water reservoirs). The grant schemes were distributed to farmers mainly for land reclamation and water reservoirs construction through the Green Plan and have provided new farmers with an additional source of income.

Between January and March, partners engaged with 5,622 Lebanese and Syrian participants in the maintenance and rehabilitation of agricultural infrastructure and forestry, through short-term food-assistance for assets opportunities. By the end of the interventions, participants' engagement is expected to contribute to improved communal land and resources, enable increased agricultural production and improve livelihoods for small-scale farmers and community members. A total of 30,484 vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian individuals benefitted from approximately USD 1.4 million in cash-based food assistance as part of these efforts. Furthermore, a total of 10,674 individuals (5,392 Syrian refugees of which 24% women) and (5,280 vulnerable Lebanese of which 21% women) accessed temporary or casual work through partners' interventions, improving household livelihoods in the short-term.

Interventions under the Food Utilization Outcome are still limited. A total of 183 Syrian women received training or attended awareness sessions that improved their nutrition knowledge, which will enable them to improve the nutritional practices of their families.

As for the outcome related to the support to public institutions at national and regional levels, interventions targeted mainly the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and its institutions (i.e., Green Plan, General Directorate of Cooperatives, extension staff and agricultural schools). The Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) was also targeted via its Social Development Centres (SDCs) with interventions to strengthen the system and service delivery. The MoA was also supported at central level and through its Regional Services in the seven governorates. In addition, different interventions were implemented to strengthen the Green Plan and the General Directorate of Cooperatives (GDC). MoSA staff also received capacity building training on Post Distribution Monitoring.

More than 60 staff from agriculture schools, MoA and GDC had increased capacity on coordination with the private sector and cooperative support. A training on cooperatives legislation was delivered to 203 members (90% women), contributing to an improved understanding on Lebanese law of cooperatives, governance structure, comparative advantage, establishment conditions, relations with the GDC, the financial management of the cooperatives and the members' benefits. In turn, this will serve to improve the enabling environment of the agricultural market system allowing stronger support for agriculture cooperatives.

On-site field plots demonstrations were also carried out for 31 trainees (48% women) to consolidate the skills of MoA staff, allowing them to better support the farmers at the regional level through the agricultural centres of the Ministry on Integrated Crop Production Practices.

In the medium to long-term run, the MoA is being technically supported by FAO to update the agriculture sector strategy and to develop an Action Plan for 2021-2025. This will give decision makers a strategic vision for the sector on the horizon for 2030.



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

Up to **1,017,437** vulnerable individuals received food assistance, representing 95 percent of 2020 targets (1,072,559).

Beneficiaries included up to **733,637** displaced Syrians, representing **53** percent females and **47** percent males receiving food assistance through e-cards and food vouchers.

Up to **105,485** vulnerable Lebanese (51 percent men and 49 percent women) received monthly food assistance through e-cards under the National Poverty Targeting Program framework (NPTP).

Up to **27,250** Palestine refugees from Syria (PRS)- **52** percent women and **48** percent men were provided through food assistance various support.

Among the most vulnerable farmers, **2,321** individuals had their capacities improved for farming practices.

Rehabilitation of agricultural productive infrastructure and communal assets have been carried out and consequently, around **110** worksites have been improved.

The total value of investment in agricultural worksite contracted through private sector or implementing partners reached **USD 317,454**.

The Ministry of Agriculture is receiving continuously technical support through different interventions by partners and capacity building of its staff particularly through the agricultural TVET program for the agricultural technical schools and the green plan with its decentralized offices.



## Facts and Figures

**92%** Of Syrians displaced HHs present some level of food insecurity<sup>1</sup>

**25%** Of Syrians Displaced HHs with poor and borderline food consumption<sup>1</sup>

**45%** Of Syrians displaced HHs depend on food vouchers/e-cards for income source<sup>1</sup>

**63%** Of Syrians Displaced HHs adopt severe and crisis coping strategies<sup>1</sup>

**55%** Of Syrians Displaced HHs unable to cover SMEB (Survival Minimum Expenditures Basket)<sup>1</sup>

**10%** Of Lebanese HHs vulnerable to food insecurity<sup>2</sup>

**73%** of Farmers in need of agricultural support<sup>2</sup>

**95%** of PRS are food insecure<sup>3</sup>

### References:

1- Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VaSyr 2019)

2- Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment of Lebanese Host Communities (FSLA 2015)

3- AUB / UNRWA 2015



## 2. CHALLENGES

Ever increasing needs for food and the effects of economic, financial and COVID-19 crises on the agriculture sector are impacting the country's food security. Many population groups report that they are becoming increasingly vulnerable to food insecurity, as detailed in a WFP web-based impact assessment in June 2020<sup>3</sup>. The assessment shows that among respondents 66% of Syrians and 62% of Lebanese have suffered from income losses compared to last year, and 70 % of Syrians and 52% of Lebanese have either lost their jobs or their salary was reduced. Some 50% of Lebanese and 75% of Syrians report feeling worried about not having enough food to eat in the last month. Food security indicators collected in this survey point to specific groups of vulnerable households who require special attention. These include larger families (with 8 members or more) and those with one or more dependents, either school-aged children (5-14 years), or an elderly member (60+ years), a person with chronic disease or a permanent disability. Families with the head of household unemployed have also shown to be reducing their food consumption and are more frequently applying negative coping strategies than those with a working head of household.

Across all assessed groups, Syrian refugees tend to be more concerned about not having enough food to eat and applying food-based and livelihood-based coping strategies to meet their essential needs; followed by Palestinian refugees and Lebanese populations.

<sup>3</sup> WFP, Assessing the Impact of the Economic and COVID-19 Crises in Lebanon, June 2020

The measures undertaken to prevent the COVID-19 transmission have exacerbated preexisting problems and have led to the suspension of activities for a number of partners working on agriculture and agriculture livelihoods and school feeding. Many partners adopted a gradual and soft resumption of activities in June. However, another surge in COVID-19 cases and ensuing lockdowns and restrictions will pose a major challenge to sector partners.

Several partners working in the agriculture sector are conducting a number of assessments on the impact of the economic crisis on agriculture where it is already clear that the needs are large and urgent emergency assistance is needed. Lebanese small-scale farmers have been seriously affected by the cumulative crises through cost increases for imported agricultural inputs (i.e., seeds, fertilizers and feed) and the lack of financial resources to purchase them in cash and in foreign currency (i.e., USD). Consequently, farmers were forced to use local or uncertified seeds and were unable to contract loans over the agricultural season as in previous years, which has put future cropping seasons at risk. This will have a serious impact on farmers and their livelihoods, pushing them towards vulnerability and hardship.

Food assistance partners received higher volume of assistance requests across all population cohorts. A number of partners were able to scale up their coverage for Syrians and Palestinians and increased the number of people reached in 2020 thanks to the windfall from a preferential exchange rate granted by financial service providers. However, the volume of food assistance requests continues to increase and it is unlikely partners will be able to continue to scale-up assistance to meet increasing needs.



### 3. KEY PRIORITIES AND GAPS FOR THE SECOND SEMESTER 2020

It is estimated that 1,245,000 refugees fall below the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB) in 2020. As cash for food and food e-card, there is an estimated assistance gap of around 515,681 vulnerable refugees. While in-kind assistance is provided, this assistance is mostly one-off and does little to close the gap over the longer-term if the situation continues to deteriorate.

The referral channels for the sector set up at the onset of the national COVID-19 response have been inundated with requests for assistance; however, many partners do not have the capacity to respond. Partners have been able to respond to the most urgent referrals related to cases under isolation because of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases. A planned Lebanon Humanitarian Fund (LHF) allocation for food security will help to absorb part of the backlog with emergency one-off assistance to those most vulnerable to COVID-19.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, as food needs increase, longer term food security programs are needed in order to support an increasing caseload of vulnerable Syrian, Lebanese and PRS/PRL families.

Agricultural interventions should focus on maintaining the productive capacity of farming households who rely mostly on farming income and increasing their resilience to prevent abandoning the sector. Some municipalities have already stepped up their support to farmers through in-kind seed or plant distribution or the provision of partial financial support to buy seeds. Although interventions that target farmers are ongoing (for example via direct distribution of inputs), it remains of crucial importance to include also the private sector as its operational capacity will facilitate the medium to longer-term recovery.

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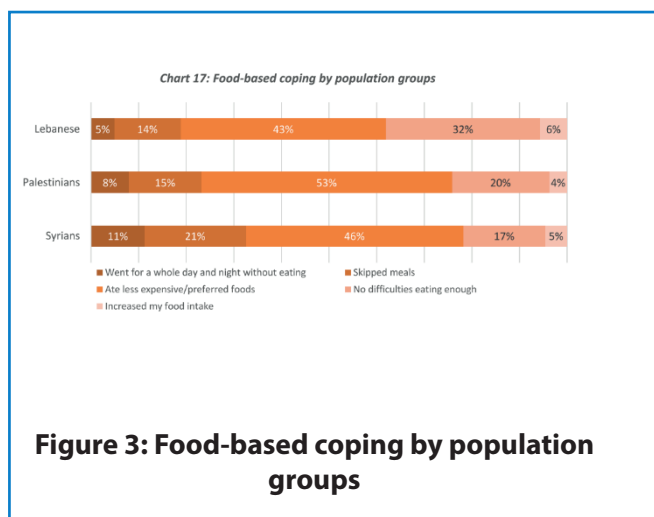
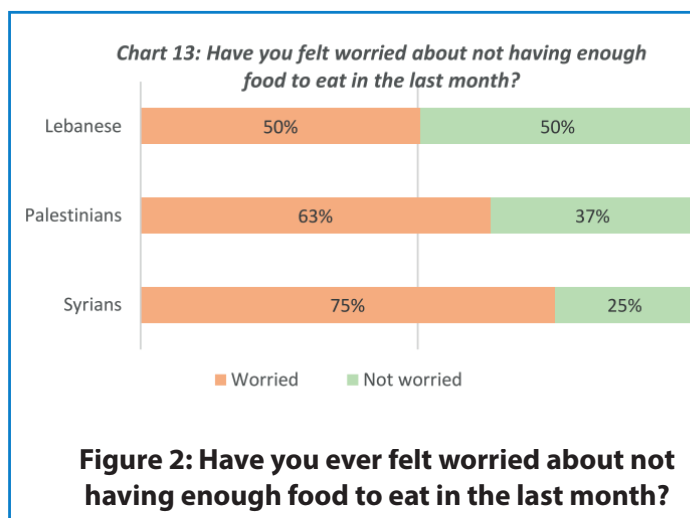
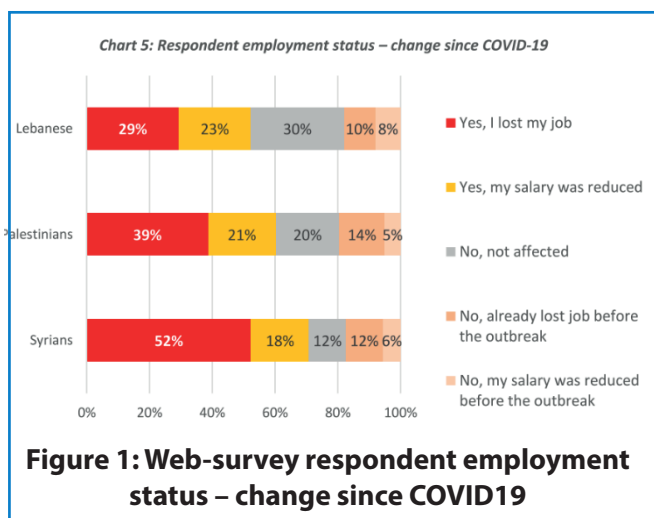
<sup>4</sup> In line with the LHF's person-centered approach, profiles of beneficiary to be considered under this allocation are a) older persons, b) those with serious medical conditions, c) persons with mental and physical disabilities or d) persons with other specific needs (including female-headed households, children engaged in the worst forms of child labor, women and girls at risk including child marriage, and e) those whose needs will be increasingly difficult to meet due to the enhanced and prolonged isolation measures in a context of a deteriorating socio-economic situation. The allocation will provide support to those most in-need among Syrian refugees, Lebanese, Palestine refugees and migrant & domestic worker communities.



## 1. The impact of crises on agriculture and food security

In the context of dramatic economic, socio-political and health crises, WFP and FAO have conducted comprehensive assessments<sup>5</sup> to understand the impact of the multifaceted crises on agriculture, lives and livelihoods in Lebanon. The aim is to fill knowledge gaps and inform planning, operational responses and prioritization of efforts. In combination with other recent crisis assessment reports<sup>6</sup>, they provide insights into Lebanon's food system challenges across production and consumption streams.

The WFP web-based assessment found that many groups are becoming increasingly vulnerable to food insecurity. Those who have lost their jobs have shown to be more distressed than others about not having enough food. Across all assessed groups, Syrian refugees tend to be more concerned about not having enough food to eat and apply food-based and livelihood-based coping strategies to meet their essential needs.



Anxiety when thinking about the future and the ability to provide for their family was strongly reported by both Lebanese and refugees. One Syrian man said clearly:

“What worries me most is securing a better life and future for my family and to live as many people live without psychological pressure or harassment. At first, it was normal, but after the quarantine, things got worse. There are no job opportunities and prices for rent are increasing. We hope that our landlord doesn't evict us.”

Source: WFP 2020. Assessing the Impact of the Economic and COVID-19 Crises in Lebanon.

FAOs assessment report points, among other things, to the effect of increasing input costs resulting from the rapid devaluation of the Lebanese pound and disruption in imports on the productive capacity of the agricultural sector. Farmers, already struggling with high production costs, were faced with substantial increases in input prices in the months leading to planting and crucial field operations.

<sup>5</sup> FAO. 2020. Special Report - FAO Mission to Assess the Impact of the Financial Crisis on Agriculture in the Republic of Lebanon. Rome; WFP, 2020. Assessing the Impact of the Economic and COVID-19 Crises in Lebanon. Rome/Lebanon

<sup>6</sup> ILO (June 2020): Facing Multiple Crises: Rapid assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable workers and small-scale enterprises in Lebanon; DRC (April 2020): Lebanon: Multisectoral needs assessment; UN Women (2020): Women's needs and gender equality in Lebanon's COVID-19 response

## **2. Recommendations**

WFP's report recommends focused support to strengthening national social safety net systems as well as local food production and ensure trade and supply chains remain open and functional. It also highlights the particularly negative impact of the crises on women, and, finally, that nutrition surveys should be planned in the medium-term to detect malnutrition.

The FAO assessment emphasizes the immediate necessity to lessen the damage on agricultural livelihoods and maintain production potential of the land in the current season and allow farmers to continue farming. The report provides a set of recommendations aimed at fostering a macro-economic environment conducive for the continued operation of the private sector and farmers and addressing root causes of the crises.

## **3. Informing emergency programming and operations**

The FAO report has been presented and discussed in detail with the food security sector partners. As such, FAO's suggestions to provide assistance to farmers in the form of vouchers have been taken up by the sector through the preparation of a guidance on Cash & Voucher support to farmers. WFP's web-based assessment was published in June and has been widely used by sector partners to inform the design of proposals and projects, such as proposals submitted under the LHF first standard allocation.