

Lebanon's Non-Governmental Organizations' Needs Assessment In Livelihood and Food Security

Assessment Report by: Imad Salamey

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| ABOUT THE AUTHOR | 1 |
| ACRONYMS..... | 3 |
| Executive Summary..... | 4 |
| RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS | 4 |
| CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABILITY | 4 |
| NEEDS | 4 |
| LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY ACTION PLANS | 5 |
| REMAINING QUESTIONS | 5 |
| Background and Context..... | 6 |
| RATIONALE AND AIM | 6 |
| SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS | 6 |
| Objective of the NGO Needs Assessment | 8 |
| Evaluation Approach and Methodology | 8 |
| Assessment Criteria | 9 |
| Findings..... | 9 |
| ANNEXES | 15 |
| ANNEX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE | 15 |
| ANNEX 2: FREQUENCY..... | 15 |
| ANNEX 3: LIST OF SURVEYED ORGANIZATIONS OBJECTIVES..... | 15 |
| ANNEX 4: LIST OF INTERVIEWED ORGANIZATIONS..... | 19 |
| ANNEX 5: LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS MOST RELEVANT TO LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY | 21 |

ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|---|
| ACCD | The Catalan Agency for Development Cooperation |
| CCIAT | Industry and Agriculture in Tripoli and North Lebanon |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| EC | External Consultant |
| TEC | Tripoli Entrepreneurs Club |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| IO | International Organization |
| IR | Intermediate Result |
| KAS | Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V. |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| LASER | Lebanese Association for Scientific Research |
| LCRP | Lebanese Crisis Response Plan |
| LHSP | Lebanese Host Community Support Project in Tripoli |
| LOST | Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NHSF | National Human Security Forum |
| PII | Personally Identifiable Information |
| PPP | Private-Public Partnership |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| SME | Small Medium Enterprises |
| SMME | Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises |
| SOW | Scope of Work |
| TSEZ | Tripoli Special Economic Zone |
| WFP | World Food Program |

Executive Summary

RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

A livelihood and food security response survey of 55 active Lebanese Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) reveals that local community organizations in Lebanon are geographically spread-out, experienced, and capable, in different ways, to support any future national livelihood and food security response. Most NGOs have already set a built-in mechanism for effective implementation of projects, building upon local knowledge, efficient management, coordination, communication, monitoring, evaluation, and learning.

NGOs are currently providing support and a variety of services to local communities and targeted groups, including youth, women, farmers, Small Medium and Micro Enterprises (SMMEs), and the community at large. These services aim to strengthen the socio-economic resiliency of the different target groups against the fast-deteriorating economic crisis, as well as political instability. Therefore, NGOs have, to a large extent, come to substitute lacking government services. These NGOs have been increasingly shifting their services from development functions towards humanitarian response, as communities, businesses, and local agricultural stakeholders and farmers face devaluation of currency, fluctuation of prices, a collapsing banking and credit sector, rising unemployment and poverty, suspended electric services, and a declining water supply.

CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABILITY

Though different types of NGOs have coped differently with growing livelihood and food insecurity, most have been capable of sustaining their basic functions. Foreign funds have become the major source of revenues, and the sustainability of most NGOs has become almost totally dependent on international grants and support. Despite efforts to diversify resources and increase reliance on locally generated income, economic deterioration has undermined the currency value and hindered those intentions. Now, NGOs have become more dependent on foreign funds and seek greater flexibility from international organizations and donors in grants and reporting.

NGOs fear that rising grant-dependency be confronted with donor fatigue and the dry-out of funds. At the same time, NGOs are growing worried that their qualified local human resources will soon be totally consumed by IOs or driven out of the country in search of better opportunities.

NEEDS

NGO needs are multi-faceted, prime among them is increasing NGO access to grants and funds. In addition, NGOs need to become better equipped to respond to livelihood and food insecurity, including procuring critical items such as tractors, water pumping, refrigerators, solar palates, food drying, and sorting and packaging machines. All the while, NGOs need to retain qualified and trained staff despite deteriorating income and salaries. There are other essential NGO needs, as well, that can be better catered for through coordinated efforts with the Lebanese Government. For instance, NGOs count on government subsidies of seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. NGOs also find in the army a pivotal partner in supporting relief efforts, having demonstrated effectiveness in post-Beirut Port Explosion relief efforts. Furthermore, NGOs seek greater government support in sharing information and coordinating to facilitate response activities, particularly from ministries related to agriculture, social affairs, industry and commerce, and economy and trade. It is important to mention that NGOs not only continuously look for ways to support farmers and SMMEs in exporting their products, but they also work on facilitating agribusiness activities in local markets, increasing diaspora engagements in supporting Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and exploring ways to gain the backing of local philanthropists.

LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY ACTION PLANS

NGOs recommend that future livelihood and food security action plans encourage high-quality domestic production, promote contract farming for agri-development, advocate for the sustainable management of environment, land, and water, ensure the quality of food support in social institutions helping the marginalized, increase access of marginalized groups to highly nutritional food, encourage off-farm employment and economic empowerment, reduce food loss and waste, establish new business models for smallholder agriculture and rural development, shorten and localize food supply chains to reduce cost, establish community grain banks, and promote integration of livestock into smallholder farming systems.

While such action plans are primarily rooted in crisis and relief response, it is recommended that they be linked to longer-term development goals that reduce reliance on foreign funds. For that purpose, NGOs stand ready to optimize local resources, share knowledge, provide training, showcase lessons learned, and advocate policies.

REMAINING QUESTIONS

Given the above findings several questions appear urgent to address:

- › What are best ways for NGOs to diversify their revenues?
- › How best to improve the relationship between IOs and local NGOs?
- › How to strengthen the cooperation between NGOs and government, including the army?
- › What role can NGOs take in any future livelihood and food security action plans and how?

Background and Context

RATIONALE AND AIM

As Lebanon faces dire socio-economic deteriorations, state institutions remain incapable of responding to urgent community needs. Human security in the country is, thus, challenged on many fronts. Among the urgent priorities is mitigating the consequences of collapsing state institutions on critical food security and community livelihood. Partnerships between communities and local non-governmental civil society organizations emerge as one of the critical strategies to optimize resources and decentralize responses. Concerned international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) and international organizations (IOs) can also play a pivotal role in supporting Lebanese NGO response to food security and critical livelihood conditions in local communities. Based on that, the National Human Security Forum (NHSF), Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), and the Lebanese Organization for Studies and Training (LOST) aim to engage relevant NGOs in Lebanon, conduct an NGO community needs assessment, and convene a stakeholder meeting towards proposing a national food security and livelihood strategy.

The objective of this report is to reveal how Lebanese NGOs are responding to the livelihood and food security challenges confronting the country that have been aggravated by the Russian military attack on Ukraine and the resulting disruption of supply chains and hikes in global food and energy prices. It also aims to provide a rapid assessment of NGO relevance to these objectives and their effectiveness in managing and responding to current crises, while evaluating their interactions with the various stakeholders. Finally, it seeks to identify the needs of NGOs that are to be addressed in any future national action response, in order to guarantee the sustainability of their activities.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

A National Crisis

The conflict in Syria, which started in 2011, forced more than 1.5 million Syrians to seek refuge in Lebanon. A protracted situation of displacement exerted immense pressures on local resources, shifting local priorities from development towards relief. In 2019, the economic situation in the country went down a rapid deterioration path. The gross domestic product (GDP) contracted by about 25% in 2020 and fell a further 10-15% in 2021.¹ Lebanon defaulted on its sovereign debt in March 2020, and between 2019 and 2022, its currency lost more than 90% of its value. Efforts by the government to reduce public debt by printing currency led to hyperinflation, which cost most of the Lebanese their bank savings and reduced their salaries and pensions to around 10% of their 2019 value. Human suffering became widespread in the country, as youth unemployment rose to 30% in 2021.² Currently, more than half of the population lives below the poverty line, and malnutrition is spreading, especially among children and refugees.³ According to Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), most Lebanese households have reported a drop in their income, in excess of 60%.⁴

The economic crisis that stormed Lebanon is not just severe but virtually uniquely so in several regards. Lebanon imports some 80% of its basic goods, including foodstuffs, but it no longer has sufficient hard currency to pay for them. The country's high dependence on imports is largely a result of the Lebanese version of the "Dutch Disease". Over a period of almost two decades, an over-valued currency undermined most productive sectors in favor of a dependent, rentier economy reliant upon constant infusions of foreign capital. However, from

¹ [GDP growth \(annual %\) - Lebanon | Data \(worldbank.org\)](https://data.worldbank.org/ny/gdp-growth-annual-%-lebanon)

² [Lebanon Youth Unemployment Rate 1991-2022 | MacroTrends](https://data.worldbank.org/ny/youth-unemployment-rate-1991-2022-lebanon)

³ Lebanon Political Economy Assessment 2021. USAID.

⁴ [DIEM - Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 2 - Search \(bing.com\)](https://www.diem.org/en/data-in-emergencies-monitoring-brief-round-2)

2019 onward, even this rentier economy stagnated. The Lebanese are left with little to rely on by way of domestic economic foundations and have few export opportunities to exploit.

All this happened and continues to happen in a context where gender inequalities are predominant and pre-existent. According to the World Economic Forum's Gender Gap report published in 2022, Lebanon has one of the highest overall gender gaps in the world, ranking 119th out of 146 countries.⁵ In terms of economy and livelihood, the ratio of employed to unemployed is only one in four in women, compared to three in four in men. Within the refugee community in Lebanon, women are the group that most experiences food-insecurity, notwithstanding increased vulnerability if they are heads of households. Despite making progress in reducing gender gaps over the past two years, as well as appointing several women ministers in 2019 Hariri's cabinet and increasing female education enrollments, widening economic and political gaps prevail.⁶

Private Sector and Civil Society

The economic crisis in Lebanon had a direct toll on the private sector, alongside state institutions. The collapse of the banking and credit system put many private companies and small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) out of business, leading to a youth unemployment rate exceeding 29% (2021). For SMMEs, which represent 90% of businesses and employ 50% of the country's labor force, the economic meltdown resulted in massive inventory losses and diminished personal equity. This jeopardized the livelihood of many communities around the country.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have attempted to adapt to the new circumstances in various ways. Some increased their readiness and capacities to respond to emergencies, thus providing critical assistance and support to the victims of the Beirut port explosion, while others turned to support the immediate needs of the increasing number of citizens thrown into poverty and insecurities.

Food Security

According to a WFP survey, 46% of the Lebanese population suffer from food insecurity,⁷ the main driver being the economic crisis. First, the quality of imported food has been dramatically reduced, as the purchasing power and the availability of foreign currency declined. At the same time, the situation in the country has had direct repercussions on the local agricultural sector, especially as the cost of imported agricultural products, including fertilizers and pesticides, multiplied because of the devaluated local currency. The lack of pesticides and fertilizers has come to constitute one of the biggest challenges facing crop production.⁸ As a result, the prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages rose by approximately 332% from June 2021 to June 2022.⁹ Moreover, collapsing public services, primarily energy and water, have left the entire sector in a dire situation, further increasing the burden and the cost of cultivation and agricultural production. Rising fuel and energy costs have also challenged the profitability of agri-business and undermined investment interest in the sector. In fact, according to a FAO survey, one of the most serious shocks experienced by Lebanese households was the sharp increase in food and fuel prices (84%).¹⁰ In addition, the Beirut explosion and the destruction of the major grain silos have limited strategic food storage capacities and undermined food security. To exacerbate the situation further, the Russian military invasion of Ukraine has threatened the sustainable supply of grains and cooking-oil,

⁵ [Global Gender Gap Report 2022 | World Economic Forum \(weforum.org\)](#)

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ [Lebanon | World Food Programme \(wfp.org\)](#)

⁸ [DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 2 - Search \(bing.com\)](#)

⁹ [https://aub.edu.lb/fafs/foodsecurity/Documents/2022-08-08\(Lebanon-Food-Security-Portal-Food-Security-Brief-28\).pdf](https://aub.edu.lb/fafs/foodsecurity/Documents/2022-08-08(Lebanon-Food-Security-Portal-Food-Security-Brief-28).pdf) (Lebanon Central Administration of Statistics (CAS)).

¹⁰ [DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 2 - Search \(bing.com\)](#)

thus increasing both their prices and food insecurity.

Objective of the NGO Needs Assessment

The main objective of this needs assessment is to determine whether NGOs in Lebanon have been or are currently capable of adequately responding to growing livelihood and food insecurity. The assessment focuses on evaluating the relevancy, effectiveness, and sustainability of NGO responses, while highlighting existing needs and gaps. It presents the different propositions of NGOs towards a nationally coordinated livelihood and food security action plan.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

Approach

NHSF lead consultant, Dr. Imad Salamey, has developed a needs assessment approach in consultation with KAS and LOST staff. During joint meetings, the survey instrument was discussed and refined. Three methods of data collection were determined, and they include document review, in addition to in-person interviews and an online survey, both of which target NGOs responding to livelihood and food insecurity in Lebanon.

Accordingly, this assessment relied on a mixed method seeking to identify NGO needs and capacities in terms of responding to livelihood and food insecurity in Lebanon.

The NGOs surveyed were identified following a comprehensive mapping of relevant organizations working in the sector. The lists of relevant NGOs were compiled from various sources and databases, including those of KAS, LOST, NHSF, WFP, and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Methodology

To answer the evaluation questions (See Annex I), a mixed methods approach was thus adopted. Qualitative data was collected from open-ended personal key informant interviews (KIIs) targeting seven NGOs (See Annex 4), while quantitative data was collected from an online survey completed by 50 other participants (See Annex 3). The KIIs and surveys were conducted over the months of October and November 2022. Additional triangulation of information relied on findings from a desk review of studies and secondary data sources.

Data collection methods for this evaluation are further detailed below:

- **Document Review (DR)**

The document review covered studies and reports that examined the challenges of livelihood and food security and their relation to NGO. The review also mapped the different activities aiming to engage and build the capacities of Lebanese NGOs in response to crises. The review provided a comprehensive understanding of the sector and of existing response plans. This report references some of the studies and reports examined.

- **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)**

Semi-structured KIIs were conducted with 7 NGOs. These interviews were carried out virtually, to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19. The selection criteria were set with an intention

to diversify the types of organizations contacted for participation, so as to include NGOs that are active in direct response, agricultural cooperatives, and research conducts. The rationale behind the KIIs was to conduct in-depth interviews with key actors in sector. These KIIs are especially helpful in providing multiple perspectives on the current work of NGOs, their needs, lessons learned, and propositions for future coordinated actions.

- **Online Needs Assessment Survey (ONAS)**

A nationwide online needs assessment survey was completed by 50 NGOs, who were selected from a mapped pool of 100 organizations, Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises, and food cooperatives relevant to the livelihood and food security sector (See Annex 3). The participant NGOs represented a diverse group of entities active in the nine governorates of Lebanon. and who engage in different types of actions seeking to respond to livelihood and food insecurity. Their responses were statistically described and tabulated to inform the findings in this report (Annex 2).

Assessment Criteria

The questionnaire for the needs assessment was developed to probe for NGO relevance, effectiveness, sustainability, needs, and proposed recommendations in response to livelihood and food insecurity. A panel of 6 experts from KAS, LOST, and NHSF developed the survey tool (See Annex 1) along the main guiding criteria (Table 1).

Table 1: Survey Guiding Criteria

| |
|--|
| NGO information and <u>Relevance</u> to Livelihood and Food Security |
| NGO <u>Effectiveness</u> in Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity |
| <u>Challenges</u> Confronting NGO Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity |
| <u>Sustainability</u> of NGO Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity |
| NGO <u>Needs</u> Required for Improving Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity |
| NGO <u>Recommendations</u> for a Livelihood and Food Security Action Plan |

Findings

1. Information and Relevance to Livelihood and Food Security

Finding 1: Throughout different areas of Lebanon, NGOs are actively engaged in responding to growing livelihood and food insecurity. Their aims have positioned them well to deliver a wide range of programs and services that support farmers and SMMEs, while benefiting women, youth, vulnerable groups, and the community at large.

The 50 NGOs interviewed online (See Annex 3) work in different areas of operation from all nine governorates, distributed as follows: Bekaa (17.7%), North (13.8%), Beirut (13.8%), Mount Lebanon (12.2%), South (11.0%), Akkar (10.5%), Baalbak-Hermel (7.7%), Jbeil-Keserwan (7.2%), Nabatieh (6.1%). These organizations serve various sectors, predominantly food security (28%), agriculture (27%), livelihood (23%), relief (15%), and environmental protection (14%).

The aims of the NGOs surveyed focus primarily on supporting farmers, the agricultural sector, and SMMEs through a variety of interventions and linkages with other sectors. For instance, some provide training and capacity building to small farmers, while others provide farmers with technical assistance in marketing their production. NGO aims also include support for the community, as well as the empowerment of women and youth to confront poverty and hunger through supporting SMMEs. Other NGOs, particularly universities, aim to link research to agricultural development, teaching, and policy outlooks.

The beneficiaries of the surveyed NGOs include farmers (21.7%), the community at large (16.4%), marginalized groups (11.8%), agriculture workers (10.5%), Small and Medium Enterprises (8.6%), people with disabilities (7.9%), refugees (6.6%), cooperatives (6.6%), municipalities (4.6%), the government (3.3%), and industrialists (2.0%). Other groups mentioned include livestock breeders, migrants, students, refugees, hosts, and youth.

Most NGOs (64%) in the sector rely on a relatively small number of staff and volunteers, but sizable NGOs do exist. According to the KIIs, large NGOs work in multi-sectors; however, since the beginning of the economic crisis in Lebanon, allocation of more staff, volunteers, and programing has been shifting in favor of relief work, including related to livelihood and food security.

Staff Size of NGOs

| | N | % |
|---------------|----|-------|
| 1-50 | 32 | 64.0% |
| 51-100 | 4 | 8.0% |
| 101-150 | 6 | 12.0% |
| 151-200 | 1 | 2.0% |
| More than 200 | 7 | 14.0% |

Year NGO Established

| | N | % |
|------------|----|-------|
| 1870-1950 | 2 | 4.0% |
| 1951-1989 | 8 | 16.0% |
| 1990-2005 | 15 | 30.0% |
| 2006-2012 | 12 | 24.0% |
| Since 2013 | 11 | 22.0% |

NGOs in Lebanon have been long-present, but an increasing number of NGOs has been formed after the independence of the country and throughout the different crises (Table). A notable pattern, however, points to the prevalence of small to medium-sized NGOs formed after the end of the Lebanese Civil War.

2. NGO Effectiveness in Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity

Finding 2.1: NGOs are growing increasingly effective in response to livelihood and food insecurity, as they have built experiences that provided them with the ability to intervene in wide-ranging roles while institutionalizing evaluation, monitoring, and learning practices.

The typical response activities of NGOs include training and capacity building (23.4%), development (20.6%), community engagement and support (21.3%), project advocacy and awareness (18.4%), and financial assistance and fundraising (16.3%). Other activities mentioned include business support, research field work, and agricultural and food processing.

These NGOs spend significant efforts in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of their projects (27.9%), conducting frequent visits to observe outputs (23.3%), revising plans when needed (17.8%), and carrying out surveys to monitor outcomes (16.3%).

Moreover, NGOs consider the main reasons for their success to be international collaboration and funds (26.8%), partnerships with locals (18.8%), engagement with locals (18.8%), localization of resources (18.1%), and resource optimization (18.1%).

Klls point, as well, to NGO reputation, an asset that NGOs built while performing essential community support and delivering the needed assistance throughout the many post-war Lebanese socio-economic crises. Some of these reputable NGOs were established during the 1975-1989 Lebanese Civil War to substitute public services. After the civil war and following the 2019 economic collapse, public reliance on NGOs continued to increase. Some NGOs interviewed in this assessment have even begun to transfer their crisis-response knowledge into international practices.

Finding 2.2: NGO effectiveness is undermined by the lack of local revenues and increased dependency on foreign assistance.

37 out of 50 NGOs surveyed online (78.7%) receive support from international organizations to implement their projects. 20% of them receive support from only one international organization, 40% are linked to 2 to 4 IOs, while 33.3% receive support from more than 4 IOs. Only 6.4% considered such support as making no difference in their work, while 92.6% considered it helpful to very crucial.

International support comes in different ways: financial (39.0%), technical (25.6%), in-kind contributions (25.6%), and political (2.4%).

NGOs that don't receive foreign assistance are typically locally productive rather than service-provider NGOs, such as agricultural cooperatives.

Some NGOs receive support in the form of donated items or being introduced to a network of stakeholders. Many rely on a mixed basket of support, including their own resources, such as revenues from food kitchen and agribusiness. However, local income is drying out as a direct consequence of the ongoing economic crisis.

Finding 2.3: NGOs seek to improve relations with international organizations through flexible, transparent, and long-term partnerships.

In order to improve their relationships with IOs, NGOs recommend establishing a more flexible and responsive approval process (23.1%), simplifying application reporting requirements (20.5%), following-up on activities to sustain projects (17.9%), expanding technical support and assistance in implementation (14.5%), supporting project management (12%), and accompanying project implementation (12%).

Others suggested harmonizing due diligence and capacity assessment procedures, as well as establishing long-term partnership agreements with structural support. Some NGOs also recommended providing long-term multi-year agreements to reach the required outputs and

reducing proposal requirements that small organizations lack the resources and capacities to submit. It was suggested, as well, that donors not launch Requests for Applications (RFA) announcements, if they already have a beneficiary NGO in mind.

3. Challenges Confronting NGO Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity

Finding 3: Accessing funds remains among the major challenges confronting the work of NGOs, in addition to the general instability that is undermining NGO ability to retain qualified staff.

The main challenges confronting NGO work are financial restrictions (38.8%), political instability (22.4%), security concerns (16.5%), shifting priorities (11.8%), and social repercussions emerging from the different crises (10.6%).

Furthermore, some NGOs suggested they are confronting challenges imposed by IOs who are attracting local qualified human resources, including their own, for higher salaries. A whole list of other challenges was mentioned in KIIs, but the main issues were mostly linked to lack of urgent government support in response to ongoing crises, such as subsidized prices by the Ministry of Agriculture or not receiving retributions after weather storms. Transportation and power shortages remain among the major threats to sustainability. Water irrigation, agri-food refrigeration facilities, sorting and packaging as well as agricultural cultivation equipment are also among the critical missing resources.

Given the many challenges facing NGOs in the sector, most rely on their own knowledge and expertise in local affairs to mitigate existing risks (33.8%), while others consult with local municipal leaders to find solutions (27%), hold frequent meetings with local authorities to assess situations (23%), consult with local security agencies (8.1%), or reach out to local political parties to assess the situation (8.1%). Others rely on their own security or consult with experts.

4. Sustainability of NGO Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity

Finding 4: The sustainability of NGO response is almost entirely dependent on foreign support, while facing the risk of donor fatigue and shifting priorities. At the same time, the diaspora and local philanthropy are emerging as potential substitutes capable of providing a sustainable response.

Sustaining NGO activities in the sector requires urgently needed resources such as grants (28.4%), qualified staff (27.6%), data (16.4%), equipment (13.8%), and other resources such as health and agriculture kits (13.8%). Other NGOs also mentioned the need for crowdfunds and service provisions, typically made available to INGOs.

In this way, sustainability becomes largely dependent on NGOs receiving support from international donor organizations (43.6%), on the NGOs' own income (19.2%), partnerships with diaspora and local donors (19.2%), partnerships with the private sector (16.7%), and funds from municipalities and the government (1.3%).

NGOs cooperate and coordinate with donors (29.1%), explore with others ways for joint venture and expansion (27.9%), develop partnerships to consolidate resources (22.1%), and

coordinate to avoid duplicate efforts (20.9%). Others said that they participate in sector working groups and in coordination meetings.

Well-established NGOs rely on their own services to generate revenues, such as managing oil mills or providing health care and education. These sources of funds are said, however, to have dramatically shrunk due to devaluation and declining income. Therefore, the sustainability of NGO work is viewed as increasingly impacted by the vulnerability of foreign funds and grants.

Some KIIs additionally suggested that NGOs are growing increasingly worried of donor fatigue. Their concern stems from either shifts in donor interest in favor of responding to the Ukrainian war or from growing frustrations resulting from lack of progress and permanent failure of domestic reforms.

5. NGOs Needs Required for Improving Response to Livelihood and Food Insecurity

Finding 5: Access to sources for grants and funds remains among the most critical priority needs for NGOs responding to livelihood and food insecurity.

In terms of food security, NGOs consider that most of their needs for effective response lie in obtaining financial support (24.5%), being equipped (15.6%), having international engagement (15.6%), coordinating with other stakeholders (14.3%), being capacitated (13.6%), having wide reaching media campaigns (11.6%), and having adequate and capable staff (4.8%). Other NGOs also suggested the need for information sharing and databases.

In terms of agri-food livelihood, NGOs expressed several needs for effective response, namely receiving financial support (27.4%), having international engagement (15.8%), coordinating with other stakeholders (15.8%), being equipped (13.7%), being capacitated (13.7%), having wide reaching media campaigns (8.9%), having adequate and capable staff (4.8%). Other NGOs believe, as well, that they need to learn more about best practices.

KIIs demonstrated that responses to livelihood and food insecurity have become solely relief-oriented, which makes most of NGO actions driven by external funds. The economic crisis has also undermined the ability of local and public resources to support relief activities.

Among the critical needs, as well, is the support of a sustainable and motivated agricultural labor force and the support of targeted sectors with needed equipment, such as fridges and tractors, water and fuel, appropriate subsidization of seeds and fertilizations.

6. NGO Recommendations for a Livelihood and Food Security Action Plan

Finding 6: Action plans for livelihood and food security should emphasize support for local agricultural production, contract farming, the participation of women, environmental regulations, inclusion of marginalized groups, and new local business models. While any action plan is primarily rooted in crisis and relief response, it should also be linked to longer term development goals to reduce reliance on foreign funds. NGOs stand ready to share knowledge, provide training, and advocate policies.

Recommendations for priorities within a food security national action plan emphasized actions that encourage high-quality domestic production (19.3%), promote contract farming for agri-development (16%), advocate for proper management of environment, land, and water for sustainable development (16%), ensure the quality of food support in social institutions helping the marginalized (12.6%), increase access of marginalized groups to highly nutritious food (10.1%), encourage off-farm employment and economic empowerment (9.2%), establish a community grains bank (6.7%), promote integration of livestock into smallholder farming systems (5.0%), create a conducive environment for private sector investment and local community participation in irrigation development (5.0%). Other NGOs suggested that such an action plan should promote subsidizing food at community kitchens and having food processing and marketing training.

Recommendations for priorities within an agri-food livelihood national action plan emphasized actions that increase agricultural productivity (17.2%), empower women along the value chain (17.2%), improve agricultural system management to increase efficiency and reduce environmental degradation (14.9%), secure the nutritional needs of marginalized groups (12.7%), reduce food losses and waste (11.2%), establish new business models for smallholder agriculture and rural development (10.4%), shorten and localize food supply chains to reduce cost (8.2%), make use of weather and climate forecasts to engage in better and risk-informed seasonal and long-term livelihood adaptation (5.2%), promote shifts towards healthier diets (3.0%).

More specific recommendations include linking with investors while supporting essential infrastructure for farming, such as water, fuel, tractors, refrigerators, seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, and farming equipment. Additional subsidization for seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides are among the essentials. These needs correspond to the needs identified for farmers through the FAO survey, which showed that fertilizer (75%), pesticides (69%) and seeds (40%) were the most common needs indicated by crop producers.¹¹

NGOs expressed willingness to support and contribute to other organizations through knowledge exchange (33.7%), agricultural training (22.4%), evidence-based research (17.3%), cash-based interventions (8.2%), and policy engagement (7.1%).

KIIs demonstrated the need to strengthen the ability of public institutions to collaborate with NGOs in response to crises, with special attention given to civil-military cooperation. NGO-public cooperation is critical for any response plan in order to reduce reliance on foreign driven funds and agendas in favor of localization. Hence, emergency response should be linked to a national development strategy, such as that developed by the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture.¹²

NGOs recommended several key actors that need to be engaged in any livelihood and food security action plan, most importantly: The Ministry of Agriculture, WFO, FAO, USAID, UNDP, UNICEF, UN Women, General Directorate of Cooperatives, Agricultural Cooperatives, and the American University of Beirut, among various others (See Annex 5).

¹¹ [DIEM – Data in Emergencies Monitoring brief, round 2 - Search \(bing.com\)](#)

¹² [NAS-web-Eng-7Sep2020.pdf \(agriculture.gov.lb\)](#)

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE



English
Questionnaire.pdf



Arabic
Questionnaire.pdf

ANNEX 2: FREQUENCY



Food Security
Discriptive Report.pdf

ANNEX 3: LIST OF SURVEYED ORGANIZATIONS OBJECTIVES

| Organization | Objectives |
|---|--|
| Golden Valley coop | Proper mission to increase the awareness of farmers on a range of producing the best quality of agricultural production |
| The Food Heritage Foundation | The Food Heritage Foundation is a non-profit organization (Reg.11) affiliated to the Environment and Sustainable Development Unit (ESDU) at the American University of Beirut (AUB) that strongly believes in local food heritage being a potent tool for economic development. Since its inception in 11, the foundation works closely with women and small producers/ farmers in rural areas through several programs that aim at supporting farmers and promoting local food systems. |
| Lebanon Reforestation Initiative (LRI) | Support municipalities and local community members to develop and implement forest management plans in their village; Bring diverse communities together and support them to advocate for improved forest management policies; Encourage the private sector in adopting mid and long-term CSR strategies aimed at conserving and expanding Lebanon's Forests; Provide technical assistance to relevant local stakeholders. |
| Basmeh and Zeitooneh for relief and development | In terms of FSL to meet people urgent food and other basic needs, stabilize the economy during crisis situations through support to MSEs, retention of jobs and increasing wellbeing of vulnerable populations |
| Young Women's Christian Association-Beirut | Our main objective is to develop the collective power of women and youth in order to achieve justice and human dignity. We have a multidimensional program strategy that mainly empower women and youth at all levels. |
| Rene Mouawad Foundation | RMF was founded to implement his vision of a strong and democratic state and for a progressive and modern peaceful Lebanon, which embraces the values of democracy, human rights, moderation and pluralism. |

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| Michel Daher Social Foundation | Michel Daher Foundation stands beside the Bekaa society in overcoming life challenges by responding to its needs, providing community support through health care services, building human capacities, promoting sustainable development and raising environmental awareness. |
| Oumniati by Children of Mary | Making a difference in people s life |
| Alawite Islamic Charity Association (AICA) | The Alawite Islamic Charity Association (AICA), is a local NGO established since 11 in North Lebanon, Tripoli, under the decree No. 10/11, operating since then under several divisions and institutions. We are committed to mitigate all forms of discrimination towards civil Rights access (Health, Education, Food security, Economic recovery, or any other additional required support), raise individual and collective awareness, mainstream protection and disseminate risks prevention. Our intervention strategy consists of a holistic approach within Development, Advocacy and Resilience as well as Relief and Emergency Response Action. Since 11, AICA has created several institutions and locations in order to ensure specific programs/activities responding to vulnerable community and individuals' needs, such as: Ø Al Doha School – 11 Ø House of wisdom Community kitchen – HOWCK 11 Ø Alzahraa Medical Centre 101 Ø Social Service Community Centre 11 Ø AICA Digital Lab: 11 |
| SOS Children's Villages - Lebanon | Provide short-term emergency assistance and a long-term empowering package, to enables families at risk of child abandonment to ensure their children's right to have a family and stable environment by enabling them to achieve social reintegration and self-reliance. Provide family-based care to children in need in all regions of Lebanon regardless of their religion or background |
| Rural Entrepreneurs | Foster and promote entrepreneurial mindset and education Build and Improve youth, women and marginalized groups' capacity to innovate Mentor and support private initiatives, entrepreneurs, startups and SMEs Improve access to productive resources and funding sources. |
| New Voice | working agriculture |
| Fair Trade Lebanon | FTL provides business development support, access to markets and export opportunities to dynamic and resourceful agro SMEs, small producers, and food processing cooperatives living in Lebanon, to enable them to meet today's consumer's demands, implement ethical '& Fair Trade" business standards, and stimulate growth. |
| MERATH/LSESD | To help local partners implement relief and development projects for vulnerable individuals and families. |
| Lebanese Food Bank Association | To alleviate hunger and help the environment throughout Lebanon by collecting wasted food of good quality and impartially distributing it to charities and people in need as a means to social progress. |
| Lebanese Food Bank | Eliminate hunger and food waste in Lebanon through different projects and activities |

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| Tabitha for Relief and Development | Tabitha wants to see people and communities' flourish. Tabitha envisions communities where there is a safe and peaceful environment, inclusive access to basic services and strong, inclusive and dynamic community structures; and where people have restored dignity, hope and ability and resilient livelihoods. Tabitha also strives for a society in which governments and other institutions cooperate with community structures, support the development of communities and are held accountable. The transformation from a situation of poverty and exclusion to a situation of empowered individuals and communities, as described above, can only be accomplished when working on change at three different levels simultaneously: individual, community and society. |
| Lebnene Ele | -establish a sense of responsibility towards the community amongst the youth - support the suffering Lebanese middle class families - give and promote access to education |
| General agricultural cooperative organisation in salhiye | Try to reduce the cost and improve on quality and aquantity of the product to have better income for farmers. |
| Beit El Baraka | Beit El Baraka's objective is to ensure dignity to hard working Lebanese citizens by assisting them in their struggle with the increasing cost of living. In a spirit of respect and support, we give them access to food, decent livelihood, medical services and education. To add, it aims to ultimately have a Lebanon where families can live a secure, valued and respectable life with access to social security, education and retirement pensions for all. |
| Arcenciel | Developmental and humanitarian |
| Farah Social Foundation | FSF aims to support the local communities to improve their livelihoods |
| Ahla Fawda | To provide the basic necessities to the underprivileged community and those in need in these times of crisis in Lebanon. |
| Lebanese League for Women in Business | LLWB aims to support women in business and women in the workforce to "take the lead and succeed". This is achieved through the design and implementation of skills development programs, mentorship and access to funding programs for women entrepreneurs and business owners. LLWB also works in partnership with the private sector as well as with key decision makers and stakeholders on advocating for women in leadership and decision making positions in organizations. LLWB operates in the areas of Beirut, North Lebanon and Beqaa and has over 1 members among its network including business owners, employees, entrepreneurs, independent professionals and students. LLWB works in partnership with several local and international organizations to achieve its mission. |
| Bassma | Enabling the disadvantaged families to achieve self-sufficiency - Achieving the social reintegration of the poor population through improved living standards , fighting hunger, improving education, Providing access to appropriate health care, access to decent housing, Providing job opportunities, Developing the skills of families while promoting self-responsibility and independence. |
| Milk Production Cooperative in Kfarmashki and its neighborhood | Provide a decent life for employees, focus on Non-Profit Healthy Food Production |

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| USJ Beirut | Create new knowledge (research), transfer this knowledge (teaching) and put this knowledge at the service of society (service). |
| Al Majmoua | Promote sustainable development by improving the economic and social conditions of low-income individuals, especially micro-entrepreneurs, women and youth, through the provision of financial and non-financial services, all over Lebanon. Accordingly, Al Majmoua delivers life skills trainings, technical skills training, financial literacy trainings, entrepreneurship and social-enterprises incubation, women economic empowerment, individual business coaching, technical assistance, support for the formalization of businesses, employability services, in-kind grant support and access to finance. |
| Cooperative Society for Beekeeping in Neighboring Qaraoun | Cooperation and exchange of experiences in the field of beekeeping development, increasing production and reducing costs |
| Fruit Tree Cooperative Society | Cooperate through exchanging agricultural experiences such as fertilizers, pesticides and the operation mechanisms of modern advanced machines |
| Bekaa Milk Cooperative | Sell the products, cost reduction and quality improvement |
| Cooperative Society of Nahali Jabal Amel | Increase the scientific and technical competence of beekeepers and work to increase production in quantity and quality. Work on the marketing of production. Protect the natural environment and preserving biodiversity. Work to combat bee diseases. |
| General Agricultural Association of North Wadi Al-Taym | Help and cooperation |
| Livestock Breeders Cooperative in Green Zone | Helping livestock breeders and finding a suitable way to sell the production at affordable prices |
| Agricultural Cooperative for Fruit Trees in the Villages of Rashaya District | Helping farmers to improve their economic situation, reduce production costs, introduce mechanization, create jobs for women, sell agricultural production, and provide awareness and extension courses |
| Kokba agricultural cooperative | Helping farmers and provide them with job opportunities |
| Public Agricultural Cooperative in Qaraoun | Improving agriculture and improving the status of farms |
| Ajialouna Association | A decent life |
| Mentor Arabia | Increase youth awareness on the importance of prevention from risky behaviors Promote youth participation in social & human development Develop children and youth empowerment strategies & policies Build the capacities and life-skills of children, youth, parents, teachers & social workers Disseminate knowledge and best practices about children & youth related issues Forge strategic partnerships with local, regional & international related entities |
| Nimrin Social Club Association | Agricultural, cultural and sports development |
| Public Agricultural Cooperative in Salhiya | Reduce production cost and improve farmers' incomes |
| Agricultural Aid Association for Development and Services in Koura | Olive press and distribution |

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| Aydamon Agricultural Cooperative | New cultivation varieties, Agriculture production of good crops |
| Apple Growers Cooperative in Qubayyat and Karam Chbat | Helping farmers protect their land. providing the minimum amount of decent living and preventing them from leaving their land |
| Makhzoumi Foundation | Empowering citizens |
| General Agricultural Cooperative of Saksakia | Development and sustainability of agriculture, train farmers to increase their knowledge, Helping farmers with the means available to increase the level and quality of production |
| ABAAD- Resource center for Gender Equality | gender equality |
| Agricultural Cooperative in Jarjoua | Agricultural Cooperative Work Service |
| Nation Station | Food Security, Medical support, Energy support, Women's center, cultural |
| Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut | Linking scientific research and knowledge production to the national policies and strategies in Lebanon and the Arab world |

ANNEX 4: LIST OF INTERVIEWED ORGANIZATIONS

| Organizations Interviewed via Online Personal Interview |
|--|
| Environment and Sustainable Development Unit – American University of Beirut |
| Basmeh and Zeitouneh |
| Amel Foundation |
| Ruwad Al Tanmiya |
| George Frem Foundation |
| Akkar Agricultural Cooperative |
| Al Shouf Agricultural Cooperative |

| Organizations Interviewed via Online Survey |
|--|
| ABAAD- Resource center for Gender Equality |
| Agricultural Aid Association for Development and Services in Koura |
| Agricultural Cooperative for Fruit Trees in the Villages of Rashaya District |
| Agricultural Cooperative in Jarjoua |
| Ahla Fawda |
| Ajialouna Association |
| Al Majmoua |

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|--|
| Alawite Islamic Charity Association (AICA) |
| Apple Growers Cooperative in Qubayyat and Karam Chbat |
| Arcenciel |
| Aydamon Agricultural Cooperative |
| Basmeh and Zeitooneh for relief and development |
| Bassma |
| Beit El Baraka |
| Bekaa Milk Cooperative |
| Cooperative Society for Beekeeping in Neighboring Qaraoun |
| Cooperative Society of Nahali Jabal Amel |
| Fair Trade Lebanon |
| Farah Social Foundation |
| Fruit Tree Cooperative Society |
| General Agricultural Association of North Wadi Al-Taym |
| General Agricultural Cooperative of Saksakia |
| General agricultural cooperative organization in salhiye |
| Golden Valley coop |
| Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, American University of Beirut |
| Kokba agricultural cooperative |
| Lebanese Food Bank |
| Lebanese Food Bank Association |
| Lebanese League for Women in Business |
| Lebanon Reforestation Initiative (LRI) |
| Lebnene Ele |
| Livestock Breeders Cooperative in Green Zone |
| Makhzoumi Foundation |
| Mentor Arabia |
| MERATH/LSESD |
| Michel Daher Docial Foundation |
| Milk Production Cooperative in Kfarmashki and its neighborhood |
| Nation Station |
| New Voice |

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| Nimrin Social Club Association |
| Oumniati by children of Mary |
| Public Agricultural Cooperative in Qaraoun |
| Public Agricultural Cooperative in Salhiya |
| Rene Mouawad Foundation |
| Rural Entrepreneurs |
| SOS Children's Villages – Lebanon |
| Tabitha for relief and development |
| The Food Heritage Foundation |
| University of Saint Joseph |
| Young Women's Christian Association- Beirut |

ANNEX 5: LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS MOST RELEVANT TO LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY

| ImpOrg |
|---|
| 3aylteh 3ayltak, Afar from a distance, Men albi |
| AFDC, Rene Mouawad Foundation |
| Al Majmoua |
| Berytech, Idal |
| Cedars of care, جمعية التعايش والإثراء - بعلبك, Rans association - جب جنين |
| Chambers of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, Universities, relevant ministries |
| EU, WTO |
| Fairtrade |
| FAO, MP. Michel Daher, Ministry of agriculture |
| FAO, UNEP, MOE |
| FAO, UNICEF |
| FAO, WFP |
| FAO, WFP, Ministry of Agriculture |
| Food Banking Regional Network, FAO, WFP |
| Jibal, Avsi, Jouzourouna Bouzourouna |
| LFP, Qoot, anera |
| Ministry of Agriculture, FAO, Universities |

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|--|
| Ministry of Agriculture, Agriculture Cooperatives |
| Ministry of Agriculture, Unicef |
| Rene moawad foundation, natagri, USAID, world vision |
| Sugar Beetroot Cooperative, Directorate General of Cooperatives, Union of Cooperative for Credit |
| The Environment and Sustainable Development Unit at AUB, General Directorate of cooperatives |
| UN Women, Food Heritage Foundation at the American University of Beirut, UNDP |
| UNDP, USAID, EU |
| Usaid |
| WFP |
| WFP, Care International, AICA |
| WFP, FAO |

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