LEBANON

Current State of Food Security in Lebanon¹

- Lebanon is highly dependent on imports to meet its domestic food requirements as it currently imports 88% of cereals it consumes, although it is a net exporter of fruits and vegetables (the value of agricultural imports over exports is 44%). Endowed with 37% of cultivatable arable land and rich agricultural resources, Lebanon's agricultural sector has great potential but also faces serious challenges, including land use management and sustainable water use. The agricultural sector in Lebanon is estimated to account for 4% of total GDP, 25% of employment, and for 80% of economic output in rural areas. The importance of agriculture to food security is not only through expanding availability of food, but also through supporting rural livelihoods as 40% of agricultural workers are below the poverty line.
- With the Syrian War in its 6th year, Lebanon has also faced the pressure of the loss of trade routes and sources and a huge influx of refugees that are highly vulnerable to poverty, unemployment and food insecurity. The pre-crisis unemployment rate in Lebanon was at 11% but since the Syrian crisis it is believed to have doubled, and youth unemployment is speculated to have increased by 50%. The poverty rate among Lebanese is at 32% and among Syrian refugees is at 70%. Syrian refugees are highly dependent on food aid and in 2015, only 11% of Syrians were considered food secure.
- During the 2007/2008 food price spike, the price of food to consumers rose by 18.2% and prompted government subsidization of wheat and bread. While the food price inflation is slowly declining, the impact on the food and nutrition security is still felt. The micronutrient levels of calcium and vitamin C fell by 16.3% and 2.8% respectively. Between 2004-2011 the amount of money required to sustain minimum caloric intake requirements over the course of a year increased by 75% and in 2015, 49% of Lebanese reported a tenuous ability to source sufficient food. The proportion of under 5 children that are undernourished is currently at 4.9%, and the prevalence of anemia is 24.2% among children and 26.8% among pregnant women.

POLICY LEVEL LEGEND

Ministry of Agriculture Strategy 2015-2019



The Ministry of Agriculture formulated and implemented this strategy in Lebanon at the beginning of 2015. The vision within MOA strategy states that "MoA adopts the principles" of good governance for the development of the agricultural sector in view of ensuring food security including food safety, reducing poverty and rural-urban migration, creating job opportunities, and increasing efficiency and sustainable use of natural resources". The focus of the strategy is laid out through the courses of action which are improving food safety an overall quality of products, increasing productivity and competitiveness, improving governance and use of resources, strengthening extension and education, strengthening research, developing the cooperative sector and mutual funds, developing the ministry's capacities, and responding to climate change impacts. The plan is extremely detailed as well, listing certain actions be taken for each course and goals set for each course of action as well. The policy is one of the most comprehensive the country has adopted. The objectives and the courses of action will ultimately serve the vision which is to ensure Food security. On the other hand, there is a Food security strategy within the LCRP Food security sector that is led by MOA and coordinated by FAO and WFP.



MoA and Food Security Sector strategies linked



- 1- Food Availability improved through in-kind food assistance and the development of sustainable food value chains.
- 2- Increase productivity and competitiveness of the Lebanese agricultural products
- 8- Responding to climate change impacts

- **2- Food Access** improved through food assistance and agricultural livelihoods.
- 3- Improve the good governance and sustainable use of natural resources
- 4- Strengthening agricultural extension and education
- 6- Development of the cooperative sector and mutual funds
- 7- Development of the MoA capacities

- **3- Food Utilization:** Improved food safety and nutrition practices through the promotion of consumption of diversified and quality food.
- 1- Improve food safety and quality of locally produced and imported products
- 5- Strengthening agricultural research and laboratories

- 4- Food Stabilization promoted through enhanced information on food security, coordination of agriculture activities and support of national institutions.
- 7- Development of the MoA capacities
- 8- Responding to climate change impacts

Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Industry Decree No.950/1

This decree was put into place by the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Industry in 2011. It has two components, the first being food safety that raises the standards of food safety and sanitation to meet international standards, specifically the Hazard analysis and critical control points and the Good Manufacturing Practices. The second component is environmental safety standards, meaning that there must be certain environmental norms met such as reduction in pollution and waste management. The benefits of such a policy are great which are increased exports, increased local purchases, reduce health risks (which can be translated to reduced health costs and improved labor with better health), improved control over inputs and products, improved competitiveness, and increased efficiency and productivity.

National Social Development Strategy-NSDS 2011



• The NSDS, elaborated by the Ministry of Social Affairs, has 5 key objectives for social development. It aims to improve access to health care, strengthen social protection, provide quality education, broaden employment opportunities, revitalize communities and enhance social capital. The strategy is expresses a vision for social development and poverty reduction intended to influence specific priority interventions.

National Water Sector Strategy 2010



• The Ministry of Energy and Water prepared the NWSS in 2010, and it was formally endorsed by the Council of Ministers in 2012. The strategy articulated 7 key objectives: (1) Maximizing the potential and improving the quality of surface water resources, (2) Improving the management and protection of groundwater resources, (3) Fulfilling deficits through groundwater and/or surface water, (4) Ensuring proper and continuous access to high quality water supply, (5) Providing adequate quantities and quality of water for irrigation, (6) Increasing coverage of wastewater collection networks and treatment capacities, and (7) Optimizing current wastewater treatment processes and sludge disposal.

Food Security Analytical Matrix

Policies



Program-level Legend

National Social Security Fund

A social security programs that acts as both an allowance for poor families and a medical insurance program. It dictates exactly how much of a percentage of the employees income must be contributed, outside the income, towards family allowances, medical coverages, and severance pay. It also has different facets of coverage such as family size, education, and how much the employee is liable for. This is essentially a social security program, however it probably does not make up for the job situation in Lebanon where most people and families depend on expats for income. The main problem with social security is when it is not targeted properly in a manner that will ensure efficiency and proper usage without abuse.

Greater Beirut Water Supply Augmentation Project

A project that commenced in 2014 that is between the Council for Development and Reconstruction, Ministry of Energy and Water, Beirut and Mount Lebanon Water Establishment, and with funding from the World Bank. The project calls for construction of the Bisri Damn, conveyer pipelines to the existing Joun reservoir and other concerned areas, two hydropower plants, and the expansion of the Ouardaniyeh Water Treatment Plant. It is meant to increase the water supply and quality of water towards Beirut and Mount Lebanon Governorate. The project seems rather promising as there has been some widespread water shortages (though not necessarily due to lack of water) and would produce some jobs. The project is really promising especially considering that the governorate has experienced public water shortages and had to fill up water supplies from private suppliers or go without.

• The Emergency National Poverty Targeting Program Project



The program has been in action for a long time and consistently been renewed and is implemented by the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. It is funded by the Trust Fund for Lebanon and with additional funding from the Lebanon Syrian Crisis Trust Fund which both consist of funds from multiple donors and are managed by both the World Bank and Government of Lebanon. The program supports high poverty populations in Lebanon and the influx of Syrian refugees in said areas with e-cards in order to purchase food. The additional funding is due to the influx of Syrian Refugees possibly exacerbating poverty. This has been Lebanon's foremost social safety net and the current program will run until end of 2017 and be up for renewal, though it will probably be renewed as it has always been.

• Hilly Areas Sustainable Agriculture Development Project



The project was put into action in 2014 and is implemented by The Green Plan, an arm of the Ministry of Agriculture, and funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the OPEC Fund for International Development, and the Lebanese Government. The purpose of the project is to improve water and soil management, quality and quantity for agricultural products, market services, and capacity of stakeholders and farmers. The areas the project assists are areas that have high-incidence rate of poverty, were severely struck by the July 2006 conflict, have low agricultural production rates, are prone to desertification, and hilly areas with a water harvesting crossed with a potential to develop high value crops. The project has two components, the first is water and soil conservation which aims to build farmers capacity and establish more water sources with easier access. The second component is to offer farmers technical support through service centers providing market guidance, counseling services, marketing services, packing, storing, refrigerating, and more. With the theme of environmental stability it is hard to imagine this project is not directly in line with the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Industry Decision mentioned previously.

Program- level Legend continued

• Wheat Farmers Subsidy

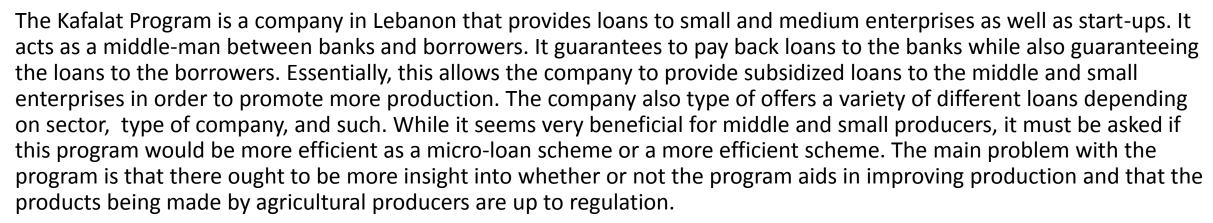


The wheat farmers subsidy has been in place since the founding of Lebanon and is meant to support local wheat farmers and encourage production as Lebanon is highly dependent on grains. It also serves to shield wheat farmers from the ever fluctuating commodity price of wheat. It is controlled by the Directorate General of Grains and Beetroot Subsidy. It obviously also serves beetroot farmers though in recent years it has become more of a focus on wheat with Lebanon's Food security coming into question and its dependence on grain imports. The directorate is an arm of the Ministry of Economy and Trade. Essentially the government agrees to buy the wheat from farmers at a unified price, to be determined, and sells it at international price standards. The unofficial agreement between the government and the wheat millers is that the subsidies kick in once the price of wheat exceeds 290\$ per bushel, which is around 60 lbs. This is meant to keep prices stable. The subsidy has been in play almost since the founding of Lebanon and is very much in line with the Ministry of Agriculture Strategy, although it may be better to negotiate lower prices of grains with trade partners in order to make sure the subsidy is beneficial and to make sure that the subsidy is actually beneficial to consumers not just producers.

Agri Plus Program



Kafalat Program



Food Security Analytical Matrix

Programs

| | Target | | Funding | | Monitoring | | Achievements | |
|--|--------|----------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------|--------------------|----------|
| | Local | National | Local Pri/Pub | Internatio nal | Data Type Qal-Qan | Indicators | Partial Success | Complete |
| Availability Agricultural Development | | | | | | | | |
| Availability Overseas Investments | | | | | | | | |
| Availability International Cooperation and Trade | | | | | | | | |
| Availability Investment Programs in Food Security | | | | | | | | |
| Access Social Safety Nets | | | | | | | | |
| Access Price Control/Subsidies | | | | | | | | |
| Utilization Diets and Nutrition | | | | | | | | |
| Utilization Food Safety | | | | | | | | |
| Stability Capacity Building | | | | | | | | |
| Access Infrastructure and Resources | | | | | | | | |
| Stability Strategic Reserves | | | | 1 | | | | |
| Stability Early Warning System- Markets and Droughts | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Stability Food Security Monitoring Program | | | | | | | | |

Institution Abbreviations

- MoA—Ministry of Agriculture
- MoSA—Ministry of Social Affairs
- NSSF—National Social Security Fund
- CDR—Council for Development and Reconstruction
- MoEW—Ministry of Energy and Water
- MoET—Ministry of Economy and Trade
- BMLWE—Beirut and Mount Lebanon Water Establishment
- CoM—Council of Ministries
- Mol—Ministry of Industry
- MoPH—Ministry of Public Health
- FSLC—Food Safety Lebanese Commission
- LARI- Lebanese Agriculture Research Institute

- FAO—Food and Agriculture Organization
- WFP—World Food Program
- GP—Green Plan
- IFAD—International Fund for agricultural development
- OFID—OPEC fund for international development
- IDAL—Investment development authority of Lebanon
- UN—United Nations
- UNDP—United nations development program
- UNHCR—United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- WTO—World trade organization
- LIBNOR—Lebanese Norms and standards institutions
- CCIA-Chambers of Commerce Industry and Agriculture

Food Security Analytical Matrix Institutions

| | Acronym of Institution | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|------|--------|------|-------|--------|-----|--|--|--|
| Agricultural Development | FAO | GP | IFAD | OFID | MOWE | | | | | |
| Overseas Investments | | | | | | | | | | |
| International Cooperation and Trade | IDAL | MOET | LIBNOR | CCIA | | | | | | |
| Investment Programs in Food Security | | | | | | | | | | |
| Social Safety Nets | FAO | UN | UNDP | WTO | MOSA | МОРН | WFP | | | |
| Price Control/Subsidies | MOA | MOET | | | | | | | | |
| Diets and Nutrition | FAO | FSLC | WFP | | | | | | | |
| Food Safety | FAO | FSLC | MOA | | | | | | | |
| Capacity Building | FAO | UNDP | IDAL | | | | | | | |
| Infrastructure and Resources | IFAD | OFID | GP | MOEW | | | | | | |
| Strategic Reserves | UNHCR | UN | UNDP | WTO | WFP | UNICEF | | | | |
| Early Warning System- Markets and Droughts | FAO | LARI | WTO | UNDP | UNHCR | MOA | | | | |
| Food Security Monitoring Program | FAO | WFP | | | | | | | | |
| Infrastructure | BMLWE | CDR | MOEW | | | | | | | |