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Understanding Livelihood Solutions Under Protracted Forced Displacement:

The Case of Homs Refugees Population in Lebanon

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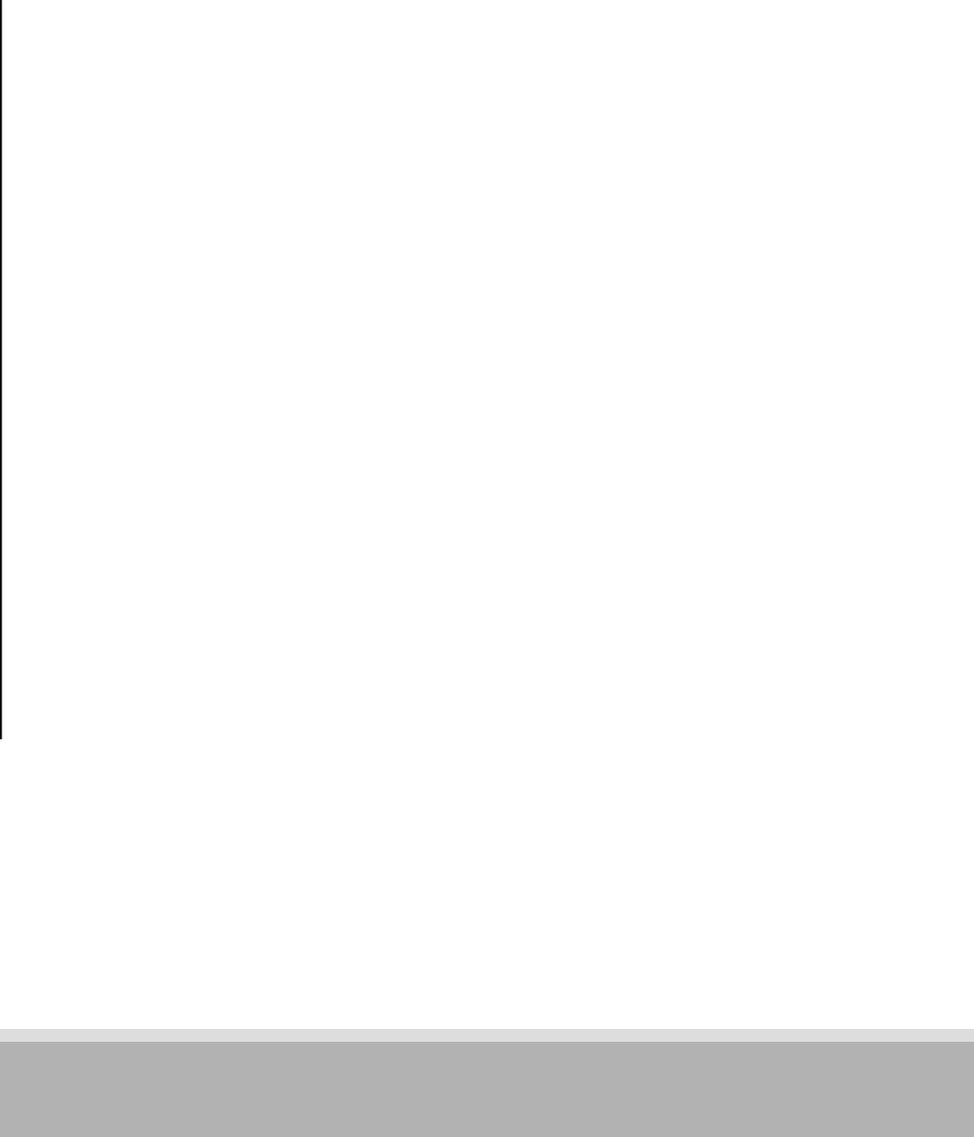
Introduction

- Lebanon's Syrian refugee per capita rate is around **30% of the total population**
- **Poverty, vulnerability, and food insecurity** have increased for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon due to the current **political and economic instability** coupled with the **covid-19 pandemic**
- “Understanding livelihood solutions under protracted forced displacement: The case of Homs refugees population in Lebanon” is a case study part of the “Guiding the restoration of conflict-sensitive agriculture livelihoods for Syrian refugees” project

Objectives

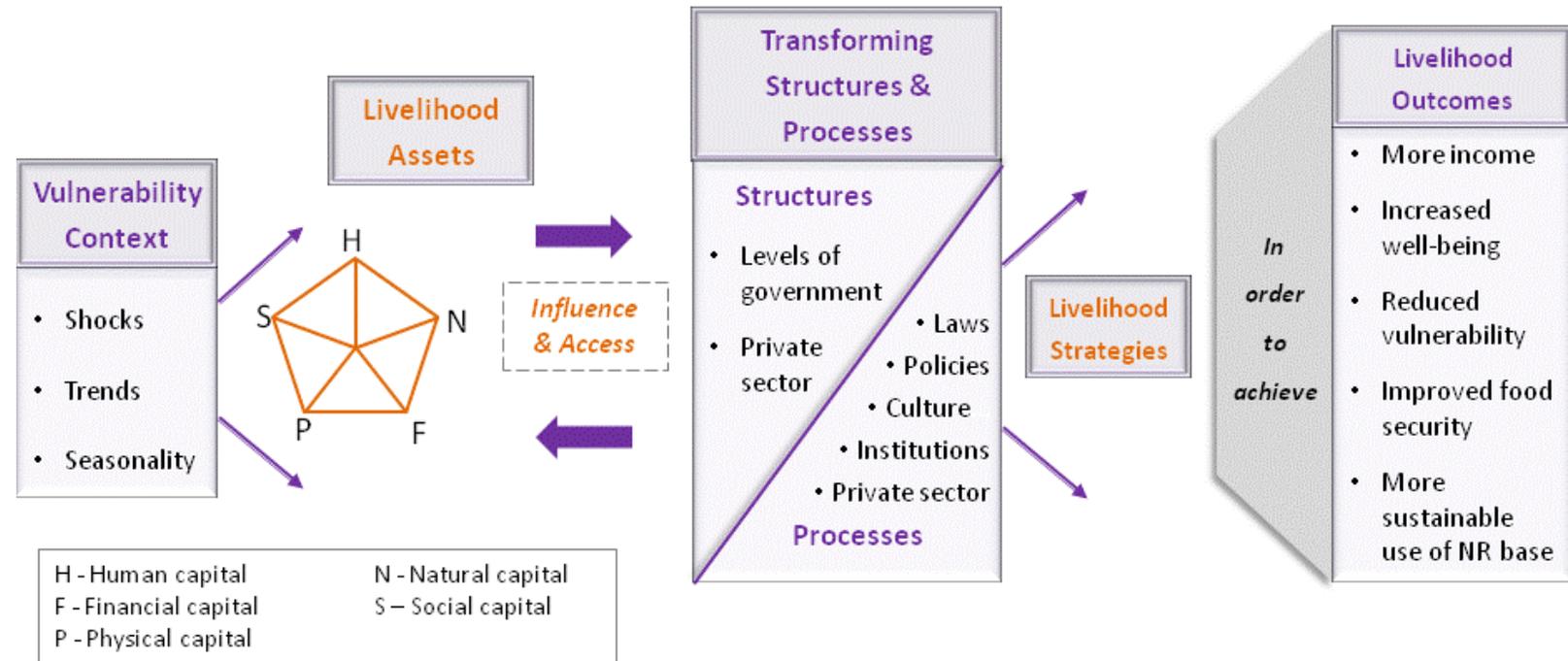
- Understand the **characteristics of the agriculture livelihoods programs** targeting Homs refugees and **their host communities** in Lebanon and to examine their **contribution to the sustainable livelihoods** of target populations
- Apprehend the **perceptions of the livelihoods' barriers for refugees' voluntary return to Homs** across the five agriculture livelihoods assets (Physical, social, natural, financial, and human) in addition to processes and institutional challenges
- Propose **Policy recommendations** to guide future agriculture livelihood interventions to benefit host communities and Syrian refugees (in Lebanon or in Syria after their voluntarily return)

Methodology



Secondary review and Analytical Frameworks

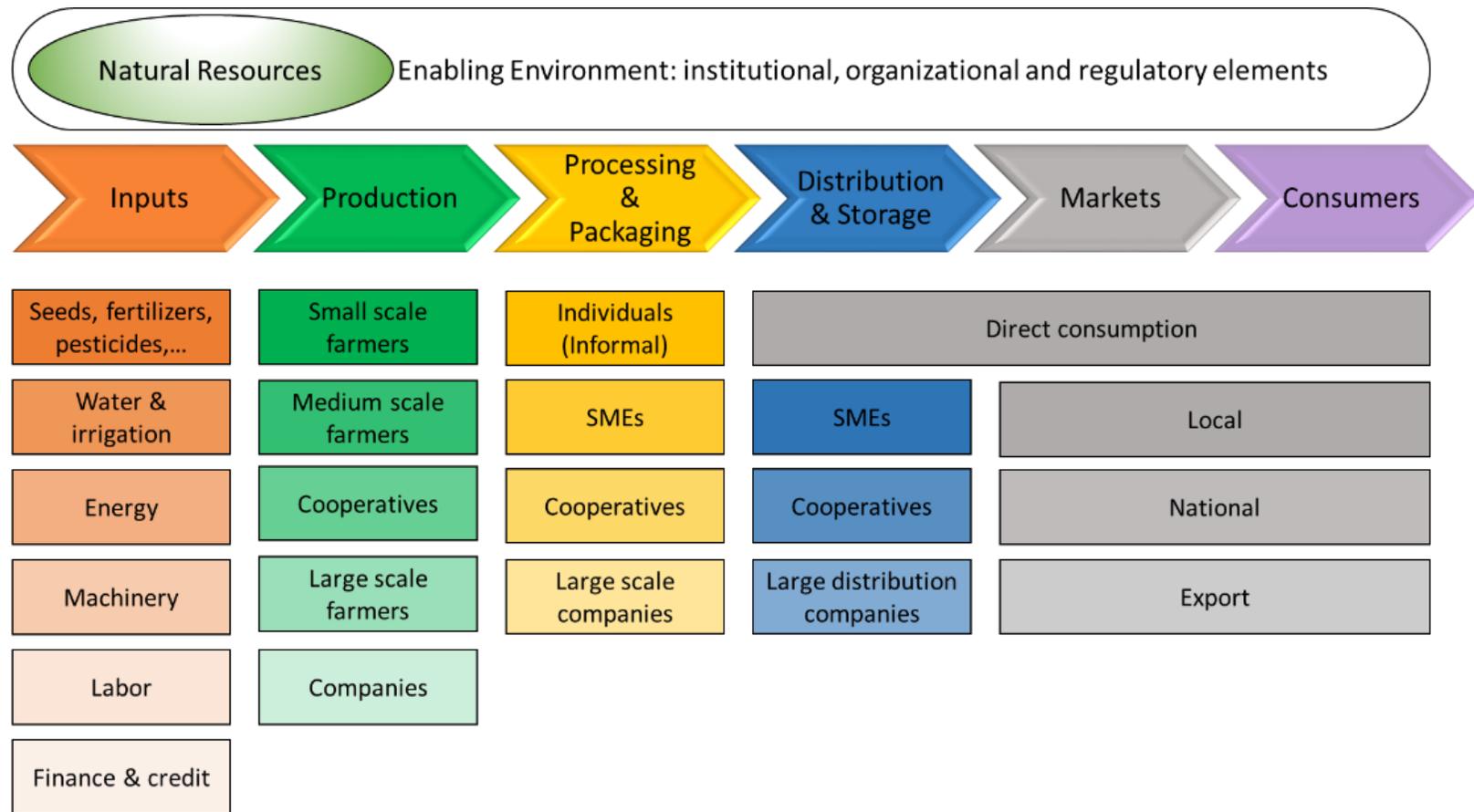
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FRAMEWORK



Source: DFID (1998)

Secondary review and Analytical Frameworks

Agriculture Value Chain Framework



Source: (Adapted from Duke Center on Globalization, Governance & Competitiveness - Duke CGGC)

Primary review

Survey on the perception of Syrian refugees from Homs

Regions	Akkar	Baalbeck	Minieh-Donnieh
Number of respondents	50	50	10
Total number of respondents	110		

Key Informants Interviews

Organization Type	# of KIIs
Public organization	1
Business Association	1
United Nations Agencies	6
Lebanese NGOs	7
International NGOs	7
Total KIIs	22

Focus Group Discussions

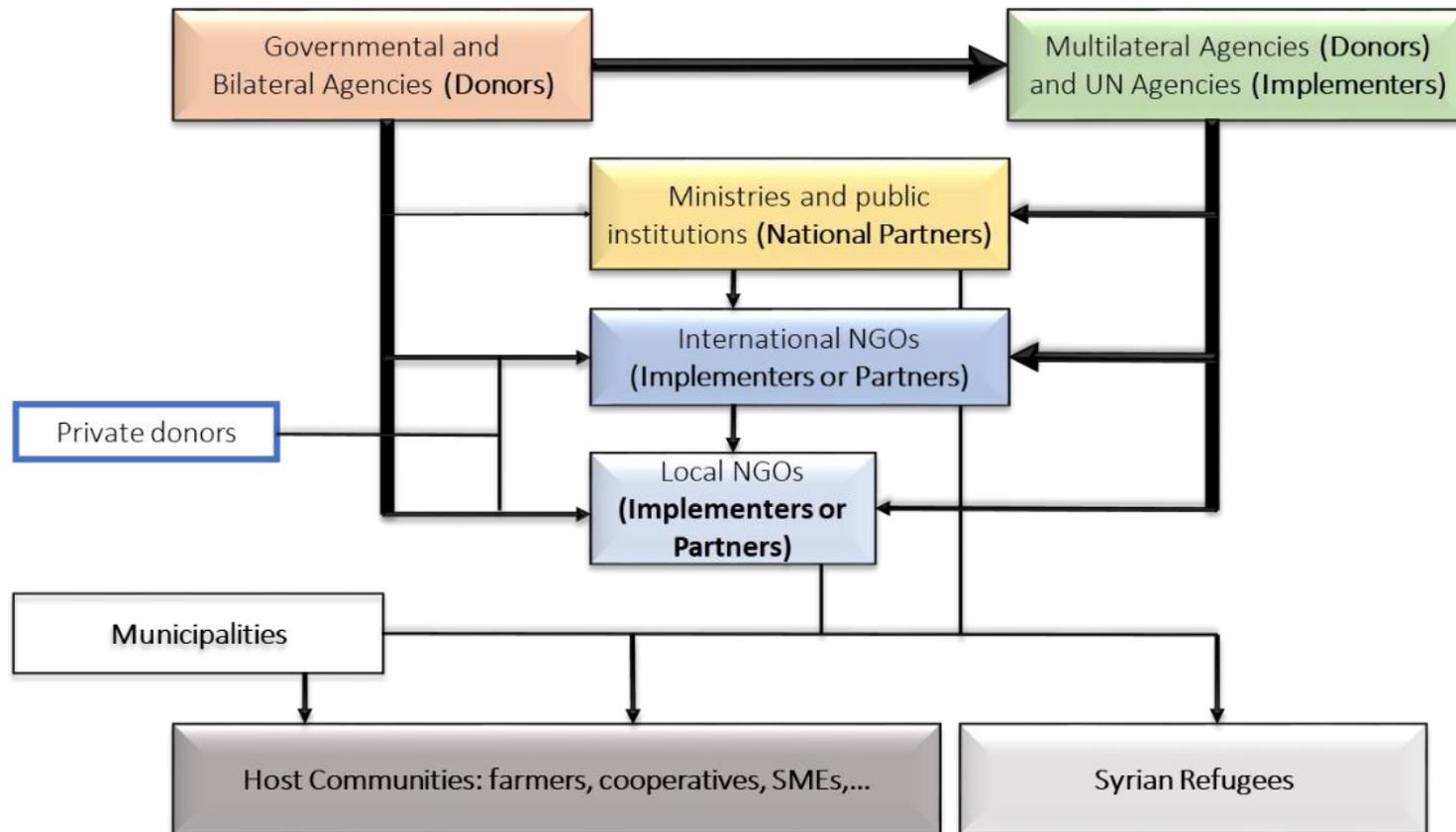
Regions	Syrian refugees from Homs	Lebanese farmers
Akkar	3	2
Tal Abbas and Halba (agricultural plain)	2	1
Aidamoun (mountain area)	1	1
Baalbeck	2	2
Ras baalbeck	1	1
Arsal	1	1
Total FGDs	5	4

Results Analysis



Description and analysis of main programs interventions

International Aid flow and stakeholders involved in agriculture livelihoods projects



Between 2017 and 2019 79 local and international organizations (12 Donors & 67 implementing organizations) have been involved in Food Security and Agriculture Livelihoods projects targeting Syrian refugees and their host communities in Lebanon

Summary of Food Security & Agriculture and Livelihoods results for the period 2017-2019

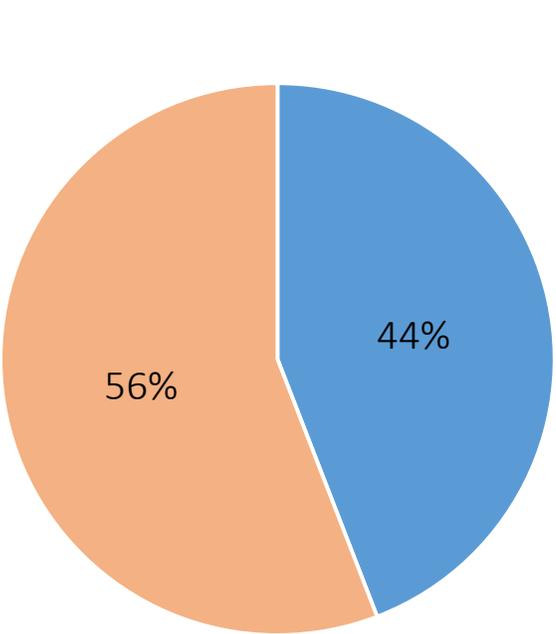
Food Security & Agriculture Sector	2017	2018	2019	Total
Received budget (in Million \$ US)	52	63	74	189
Number of partners	35	42	34	111
Number of farmers supported to promote sustainable agricultural and livestock production, energy and water conservation technologies, postharvest management, food losses and monitoring of plant and animal diseases	5,120	3,124	1,080	9,324
Number of people supported for employment in the agriculture sector	3,797	N/A	N/A	3,797
Number of individuals supported for seasonal agricultural labor/casual labor	7,526	11,072	11,153	29,751
Number of youth supported with employability skills training in Agriculture fields	N/A	2,269	1,960	4,229
Number of individuals supported with nutritional practices (trained + gardens)	5,783	5,573	9,551	20,907
Number of households with increased agriculture livelihoods opportunities	N/A	3,034	2,932	5,966
Number of beneficiaries supported in improved food safety and quality	N/A	5,573	9,451	15,024
Livelihoods Sector	2017	2018	2019	Total
Received budget (in Million \$ US)	64	66	93	223
Number of partners	40	56	60	156
Number of entrepreneurs who benefitted from business management training	4,040	2,114	1,878	8,032
Number of MSMEs/ Cooperatives supported through cash & in-kind grants	1,688	587	631	2,906
Number of targeted vulnerable persons enrolled in public work projects	6,529	10,819	17,433	34,781
Number of individuals benefitting from market-based skills training	36,410	24,093	17,370	77,873
Number of people benefitting from internships, on-the-job training or apprenticeship programs	5,856	2,913	4,817	13,586
Number of value chains valorized and/or being upgraded	9	0	36	45
Number of total number of job created/maintained	2,305	2,365	4,283	8953
Total received budget for Food Security & Agriculture and Livelihoods (in Million US \$)	116	129	167	412



	Social	Human	Natural	Physical	Financial	PIP
% of projects targeting the SLF assets/components	63%	67%	22%	48%	81%	41%
Intervention characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support to cooperatives •Promotion of social cohesion between refugees and host communities •Linkages between humanitarian and development stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Training sessions •Vocational training programs •Knowledge and skills transfer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Land reclamation •Sustainable landscape management •Reforestation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Irrigation canals building and rehabilitation, •Agricultural roads, •Assets distribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Financial incentives for FFT and FFA participants •Market access facilitation and support in produce sales •Grants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support for different ministries and public institutions, •Support for local NGOs, •Labor and working conditions improvement

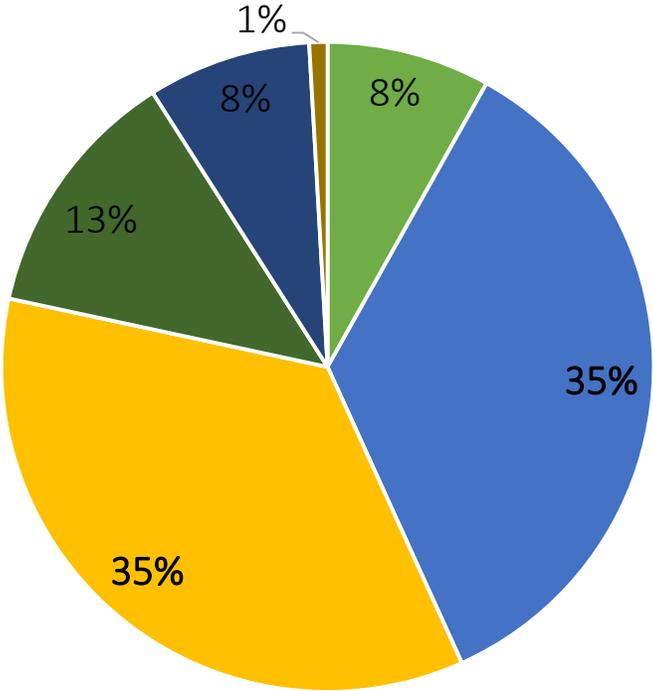
Agriculture livelihoods projects integration in the Sustainable Livelihoods Framework

Homs refugees' perception: Survey results and analysis



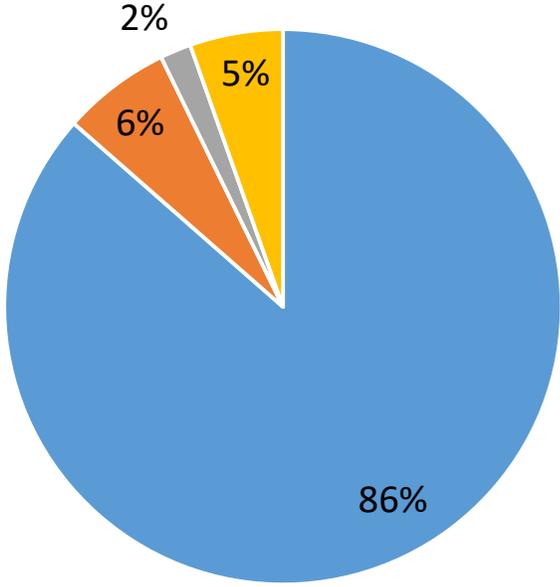
■ Male ■ Female

Gender



■ 18-25 ■ 26-35 ■ 36-45 ■ 46-55 ■ 56-65 ■ 65+

Age

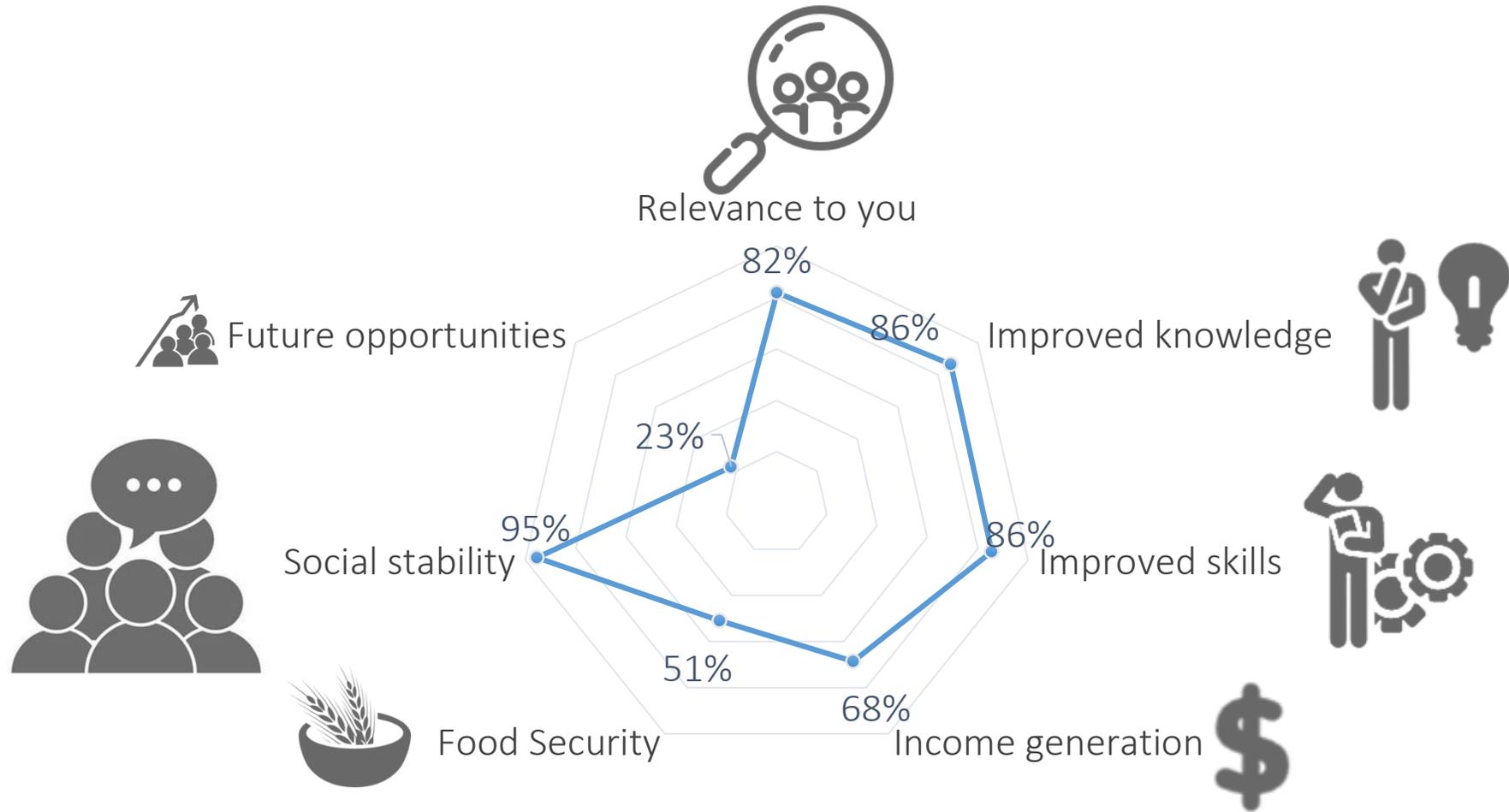


■ Married ■ Single
■ Divorced ■ Widowed

Marital status

Characteristics of FFA and FFT activities implemented in Lebanon between 2017-2019

Characteristic	FFT	FFA
Training topics/assets and field work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Greenhouse and open field practices: composting, soil preparation, seedlings production, grafting, pruning, organic agriculture, pest management, drip irrigation, fertilization, hydroponics ● Value chains and crops: aromatic plants, apples, tomato, grapes, pepper, leafy greens, cucumber, eggplant, zucchini, melon, berries, livestock, cut roses, beekeeping ● Food production: fruits drying, carob and pomegranate molasses, pickles, jams, tomato paste, grape leaves, cheese, ● Fruits and vegetables packaging ● Soap production ● Agriculture marketing ● Entrepreneurship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Construction of Irrigation canals ● Cleaning of irrigation canals ● Installation of irrigation systems ● Weeding in agricultural fields ● Fruit trees cultivation ● Reforestation and forests thinning ● Hiking trails cleaning
Duration and frequency	<p>1 to 2 months</p> <p>8 to 12 days per month</p> <p>4 to 5 hours per day</p>	<p>2 to 4 months</p> <p>10 to 20 days per month</p> <p>6 to 8 hours per day</p>
Average incentive paid per person	5,000 LBP per hour	



Refugees' perception on projects' impact

Challenges and needed support to enroll in agriculture after the voluntary return to Syria

	Challenges	Support
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Assets they owned are destroyed and/or stolen (home, water pump,...) •No diesel available for the water pump and for electricity •Lack of availability of agricultural inputs and beekeeping material to start working in agriculture •Destroyed irrigation infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ensure energy supply needed for agricultural work •Install solar energy panels for wells and irrigation pumps •Supply of agricultural equipment and inputs •Rehabilitate irrigation canals
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Collective and community work does not exist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Encourage collective work and rebuild social cohesion and trust
Natural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Water availability •Their previous cultivations have been removed and/or people are occupying their land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Rehabilitated water well •Ensure smooth transitions between the people using the lands nowadays and the landowners coming back
Human	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lack of knowhow in agriculture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Deliver more training on vegetable production and agriculture in general and ensure that illiterate people are given the time and attention needed to make sure they acquire the necessary skills
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •General economic challenges in Syria •Lack of savings and money to relaunch activities •Transportation costs from the farm to the wholesale market are high 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Seed money to support in relaunching agricultural production •Support in marketing their agriculture produce and establishing wholesale markets closer to their villages
Institutional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Corrupted system in Syria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Establishing organizations and farmers' cooperatives. •Ensure farmers' freedom in choosing what they want produce •International organizations should follow up with the people directly and not with local institutions and /or implementers. This in fact, will let people share their needs and the donors will be able to implement more targeted projects

Key Informants Interview Results

Distribution of headline outcomes of agriculture livelihoods projects mentioned by KI in terms of Livelihood assets

Financial	Physical	Social	Human	Natural	Institutional
2	3	8	6	7	6








Distribution of headline outcomes of agriculture livelihoods projects mentioned by KII in terms of Value Chain nodes

Input supply	Production techniques	Post-harvest & processing	Access to markets
4	9	2	3

According to the KIIs, the economic returns of the projects are related to

- **Creation of seasonal, part time, and permanent jobs** for both Lebanese and Syrians
- **Increased volume of sales** for some farmers and cooperatives (e.g. Women cooperatives who were able to create proper branding and improve their market linkages)
- **Increased value of sales** due to the improved quality of the final produce
- **Increased income for farmers** who participated in land reclamation activities
- **Reduced production costs** related to the improved supply of local seedlings, and/or local compost, and the proximity of local suppliers (e.g. the seedlings nursery project in North Beqaa and the Composting project in the Shouf Biosphere Reserve)
- **Induced economic impact with new investments** done by farmers or SMEs in advancing their agricultural or food processing techniques, based on what they learned from the projects

According to the KIIs, the lessons learned from agriculture livelihoods projects are

- **Partnerships between international and local organizations** can improve the efficiency of the projects. Local organizations can deliver fast impactful results with minimum resources. As for the international organizations they can bring their expertise, especially in terms of scaling up the interventions and meeting donors' requirements.
- **In depth needs assessments and value chain studies** are very important to be conducted before or during projects design.
- Importance of **more effective networking** amongst international organizations to avoid overlaps, integrate different interventions in a **harmonized framework (such as the SLF)**.
- The **duration of FFT and FFA activities can be extended** to allow better knowledge transfer and to guarantee more balance between theoretical and practical sessions.
- **Difficulty to reach out to some beneficiaries' groups** (some Syrian refugees are constantly on the move) and **inconsistent selection criteria** (there is no baseline list for Lebanese farmers and producers that can be provided by any local or national governmental or non-governmental entity)
- The selection criteria of FFT projects beneficiaries takes into consideration the vulnerability level **without considering the background of the beneficiary and his/her interest in the training topic.**

Focus Group Discussion Results- Lebanese Farmers

Critical challenges and problems of the agriculture livelihoods activities as perceived by Lebanese farmers

Physical	Social	Natural	Human	Financial	Institutional
N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inefficient understanding of the local social dynamics • Weak cooperation between development organizations • Lack of trust between International NGOs and farmers due to previous unsuccessful experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic agriculture is not possible in Lebanon due to the land size and land proximity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate selection of beneficiaries, especially those who come to training sessions not out of interest but for the money incentive • Mixing beginner farmers with experienced farmers in the same training sessions • Some farmers are not open to agriculture engineers and experts' advice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market access is difficult and pricing is not fair for the farmer • Value of the LBP has deteriorated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market competition with products imported from Syria • Middlemen dominance in the wholesale market • MoA distribution of pesticides and fertilizers criteria are tough to abide by

Recommendations for future agriculture livelihoods activities proposed by Lebanese farmers

Physical	Social	Natural	Human	Financial	Institutional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Introduction of new varieties as aromatic plants and diversifying their production. •Establishing processing units for <i>Mouneh</i> production •Supporting farmers with agricultural inputs (seedlings and organic manure) •Establishing of nurseries in village clusters that can secure local good quality and affordable seeds and create job opportunities •Installation of solar panels to reduce energy costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing efficient cooperative and improving the cooperatives by laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm products diversification to reduce market shocks and protect agro-biodiversity • Introduction of new value chains like aromatic and medicinal plants • Reinforcement of the Lebanese sheep and goat herd • Reinforce the production and use of Organic manure where possible to overcome the increase in prices of imported fertilizers' (paid in dollars) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provision of training on: how to extract seeds and replant the next season, production of wood pellets from olive oil waste, improvement of packaging, how to increase productivity and reduce production cost (on the field trainings, not theoretical) •Farmers need to be open and abide by experts, agriculture engineers and extension services advices •Provision of awareness on composting •Provision of capacity building to guide farmers on what to grow, and when (all farmers in Akkar plain grow the same crops) •Re-gain youth interest to engage in agricultural activities especially with the current high levels of unemployment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support in marketing and access to markets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Reinforce and improve the MoA governance •Increase the MoA budget and provide financial support to farmers to cope with the economic crisis and keep on producing •Implement projects with local NGOs that are involved with communities and who are more aware of the Lebanese context •Coordinate with COOPs and municipalities to have long-term impact on a community level: COOPs should specify prices, promote seasonal crops and guide each farmer on what to grow and what is the quantity needed

Focus Group Discussion Results- Homs Syrian refugees

The headline outcomes and achievements of the agriculture livelihoods activities Syrian refugees have participated in are:

- Introduction of new topics and **increase the Syrian refugees' knowhow**, but there were no practical sessions implemented in most projects
- The agriculture related projects provided them with the **desire to venture in agriculture** however only on a small scale in their home gardens, or balconies
- Training benefits and practices were **limited to household consumption**, especially for the people who were able to practice what they learned from “Mouneh” production or agriculture practices inside their settlement when possible or in their rented home gardens when available
- One organization provided their beneficiaries with one month **paid internship** after the training which insured a month income for the participants

Recommended projects/activities to support Syrian refugees' re-involvement in agriculture production when they voluntarily return to Syria

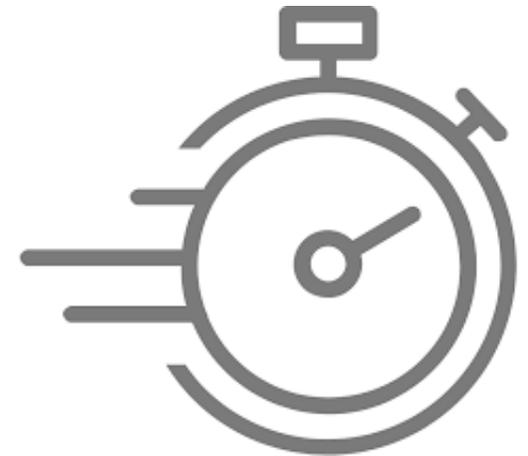
Physical	Social	Natural	Human	Financial	Institutional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Support in input supply at reduced prices for seeds, seedlings, fertilizers, etc. •Improve agricultural mechanization and introduce new technologies to increase productivity •Rehabilitation of wells and irrigation canals •Installation of solar panels to cut on diesel costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Guarantee safety and security, and reduce social tension among communities who stayed in Syria and those who left during the war 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ensure access to water and fair distribution of resources •Ensure access to lands destroyed during the war and help farmers to replant their orchards •Revitalize the sheep herd and support livestock production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provision of practical trainings in fruits and vegetables production using more advanced methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Provision of seed money funding to rebuild the destroyed physical assets 	N/A

Policy recommendations



Policy recommendations – Short Term

1. Tailor skills development and knowledge transfer
2. Ensure beneficiaries' inclusion, and adopt specific profiling and selection procedures
3. Improve coordination mechanisms
4. Establish solid partnerships and empower grass-rooted organizations
5. Adopt local sourcing of food items when possible
6. Conduct Economic Impact Assessments and cost-efficiency measurements
7. Balancing the SLF assets



Policy recommendations – Long Term

1. Provide institutional support and advocacy
2. Find complementarities between humanitarian support and development dimensions
3. Local/Regional Economic Development approach and Integrated Territorial Development
4. Market system approach and competitive value chains
5. Private sector involvement and investment for import substitution to reduce production cost
6. Integrate the SLF framework into the livelihoods projects



Short term vs. long term - Towards Sustainability

- Move from short term emergency interventions into medium to long term economic growth and a comprehensive sustainable development plans
 - **Short term:** urgent need supports to ensure livelihood stability
 - **Medium term:** improve local economies, employment generation and income creation
 - **Long term:** conceive integrated and comprehensive economic growth by empowering the national systems and policies that are essential in order to sustain the short and medium term responses
- Sustainable interventions are the ones that expects **national and local and development of local stakeholders' capacity**
- Livelihood projects need to aspire for sustainability by guaranteeing that outcomes are **compatible with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**

Conclusion



- Needs Assessments of the targeted population
 - Value Chain Assessment
 - Needs Assessment for VC stakeholders and Market Study
 - Coordination meetings with local NGOs, International NGOs working on the same VC to share their work (avoid overlaps) and share their lessons learned
- Defining the rationale and justification of the intervention
 - Determine the direct and indirect beneficiaries
 - General and Specific Objective
 - List of results and activities
 - Set a work plan
- Reach out to beneficiaries who participated to the needs assessments of the targeted population (not through "chewich")
 - Implementing project activities
 - Monitoring and Evaluation of the project activities and outcomes
- Study impact assessment of the project in economic value and in the level of information assimilated from the training by the participants

Thank you



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