

## **Food for Asset Program Narrative Progress Report**

**Implementer:** World Vision Lebanon

**Donor:** World Food Programme & World Vision Italy Collected Funds

**Project/Program:** Food for Assets

**Reporting Period:** October 2016 until December 2016

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## I- Introduction

### a) *Key features of operation*

World Vision Lebanon successfully implemented the WFP EMOP project over the period of three months, from October 2016 – December 2016. For this project, WV has partnered with 7 municipalities in Central Bekaa<sup>1</sup> with an aim to provide livelihood opportunities to 605 vulnerable WFP Syrian refugee beneficiaries and vulnerable Lebanese individuals through short-term cash-for-work activities. Activities aimed at cleaning the main water source in Kab Elias - Bekaa in order to promote cleaner water to the agricultural areas and cleaning the 37 Km main road leading Dahr El Baydar to Masnaa to prevent flooding.

#### *Project Start-Up and Planning*

During the first month of the project (**October 2016**), World Vision Lebanon was strongly coordinating the startup phase and preparation work with key stakeholders such as WFP (at the field and national level), Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa and the Municipality of Kab Elias. The start-up phase involved establishing a clear operational plan with the Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa and Kab Elias Municipality, regularly sharing updates with WFP and receiving implementation guidelines on beneficiary selection, payment modality and documentation, as well as targeting preparations for beneficiary identification and selection.

Moreover, WV contacted 4,279 Syrian vulnerable refugees and 69 vulnerable Lebanese that were identified by WFP. 491 Syrian vulnerable refugees attended the information sessions that included all the information related to the project goal, duration, and type of work and payment modalities. 386 showed interest in joining the project activities. Moreover, 14 other vulnerable refugees that did not attend information sessions at Nasser Club were provided with an on-site information session. Further to that, two vulnerable Lebanese attended the information session, however they did not express interest in joining the project activities. Further information on beneficiary identification and selection for both Syrian and Lebanese beneficiaries is provided in the below section as well as Section II Activities and Implementation part A.

#### *Cash-For-Work Implementation*

The implementation of the cash-for-work activities was initiated in mid-November 2016 until 31 December 2016. While the project aimed to target a 605 beneficiaries (both Lebanese and Syrians), 400 **Syrian refugee beneficiaries** were successfully targeted and participated in the cash for work activities. The cold and adverse weather in Central Bekaa during the months of October-

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<sup>1</sup> Namely in Kab Elias, Bar Elias, Anjar, Mreijat, Bwerij, Meksi and Majdel Anjar.

December 2016 posed a great challenge on many beneficiaries who did not wish to work under such harsh weather conditions. Therefore, this made it particularly challenging to attain a higher beneficiary target. Another factor that restricted beneficiary participation is the short duration of the cash-for-work intervention (one month and a half), as many beneficiaries expressed that, they are interested in longer-term employment to sustain a stable income.

One of the main project goals was to also target Lebanese beneficiaries in order to ensure that the project benefits both the refugee and host communities, which unfortunately could not be achieved. Thus, as explained above, WV took several actions to reach out to Lebanese individuals by screening the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP) lists that were provided by WFP and calling beneficiaries to Information Awareness sessions as well as conducting consultations with the municipalities. As a result of the above efforts, one of the key issues that was raised by both Lebanese individuals that were on the NPTP list and municipalities is that the Lebanese individuals were reluctant to participate in the project due to the type of work available, length of the employment opportunity and the culturally sensitive concern regarding working alongside Syrians and performing the same kind of labor. However, it was mentioned that they are willing to take part in future interventions that might offer different type of employment. Moreover, municipalities highlighted that another factor that affected the beneficiary selection is that the project solely aimed to target NPTP beneficiaries. For future interventions, they recommended WV to consider targeting beneficiaries that are not part of NPTP as the list does not capture all severely socio-economically vulnerable families in Bekaa and many are not receiving any type of assistance.

Therefore, as 400 Syrian refugee beneficiaries were reached, WV has requested WFP to transfer a total of USD\$ 53,340 to beneficiaries through the cash-for-work modality selected for this project. For a detailed account of achievement per activity and geographical location, kindly refer to Table 1.

Table 1.

	Zone A: Dahr el baidar to Mekse	Zone B: Mekse to Kascada Mall	Zone C: Bar Elias to Deir Zanoun	Zone D: Deir Zanoun to Masnaa
Road distance	7 KM	14 KM	8 KM	8 KM
Workers/Day (Average)	26	28	29	35
Workers/Day (Min/Max)	Min: 9 , Max: 38	Min: 16 , Max: 45	Min: 12 , Max: 49	Min: 18 , Max: 53
Number of days	23	28	25	25
This is the total amount of days allocated towards cleaning the road in the above-mentioned zones. They do not indicate the number of days worked per each cash-for-work beneficiary.				

Each beneficiary has worked for a period of 10 days or less in alignment to the Cash for Work Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) and the agreement signed between WV and WFP. For a detailed breakdown of total amount of days worked per beneficiary, kindly refer to Annex 3.	
	Cleaning of Kab Elias river
River Distance	3 KM
Workers/Day (Average)	22
Workers/Day (Min/Max)	Min: 9 , Max: 34
Number of days	25

### ***Main results during reporting period***

The specific objective of the intervention was to contribute towards ensuring that *the socio-economic condition of vulnerable refugee households is improved through labor-intensive work supporting the development of the agriculture sector in Bekaa Valley.*

Due to WV's long-term presence in Central Bekaa wherein the organization was involved in development work prior to the Syria crisis, WV was able to leverage its pre-existing relationship with municipalities and involve them from the very start in brainstorming sessions and consultations for the Food for Assets pilot project. Therefore, WV's Bekaa operations team closely coordinated with the Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa in order to ensure that any planned intervention is in alignment with the priority needs identified by the municipalities, wherein it seeks to address a gap in shared local infrastructures/services as well as address social cohesion. Based on its previous experience in working with municipalities, WV finds it extremely key for municipal bodies to play a role in not only supporting the interventions but also contributing towards their success in order to achieve a sense of ownership and involvement.

Therefore, WV selected the priority intervention of rehabilitating one of the main roads (from Dahr el Baydar to Masnaa) and Kab Elias River in Bekaa in consultation with its stakeholders. The intervention addressed one of the key problems that arose in the area each winter, which is the flooding of the roads due to the clogged water canals and the shortage of water supply faced by farmers who depend on the water from Kab Elias River.

Therefore, through its partnership with WFP and the Union of Municipalities and Kab Elias Municipality, WV reached out to vulnerable WFP Syrian refugee beneficiaries and NPTP Lebanese beneficiaries with an aim to address their food-insecurity status by providing them with a short-term cash-for-work opportunity. In return, beneficiaries would be paid through a 'top-up' cash assistance on their WFP/NPTP e-cards. As mentioned above, WV was able to target 400<sup>2</sup> Syrian

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<sup>2</sup> Reasons for under achievements of targets are provided in Section III.

beneficiaries who participated in the pilot project. As per Table 1 and Table 2, the beneficiaries completed the full operational plan of cleaning the road and river in order to achieve the overall project objective. Kindly refer to Table 2 below for a detailed description of the output level results achieved.

By the end of the project, WV received feedback from the involved municipalities and local communities that the project addressed a crucial need for the Bekaa residents. During follow-up meetings held with head of municipalities and the Vice President of the Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa, they specifically highlighted the following successes:

- 1) The project delivered a short term impact through provision of assistance to Syrian refugees in need of employment and food support; thereby addressing the needs of the refugee community in Bekaa.
- 2) The project achieved a long-term impact on the community through rehabilitation of the main road and river, enhancing road safety and prohibiting flooding during the adverse winter seasons as well as enhancing agricultural outcomes for farmers.

Overall and most importantly, this pilot project has tightened WV's partnership with the Union in Central Bekaa and its municipalities and has set the basis for a long term partnership to implement future Food for Asset interventions in Bekaa.

Table 2. Results Achieved per Output

<b>Overall objectives</b>	To contribute to the livelihoods of the host rural population and vulnerable refugee communities in vulnerable areas			
<b>Specific objective</b>	The socio-economic condition of vulnerable refugee households is improved through labor intensive work supporting the development of the agriculture sector in Bekaa Valley			
			<b>Target</b>	<b>Reached</b>
<b>Outputs</b>	Result 1 – 605 vulnerable HHs have improved their income through participation in labor intensive works (cash for work)	Output 1: # of people assisted per area	Zone A: 80  Zone B Road: 123  Zone C: 120  Zone D: 120  Zone B: river: 162	Zone A: 75  Zone B road : 84  Zone C: 79  Zone D: 95  Zone B river: 67
		Output 2: amount of money transferred per month	USD\$ 32,350	October 2016 : USD\$ 0  November 2016: USD\$ 17730  December 2016: USD\$ 35,610
	Result 2 – Physical assets of the local agricultural sector are improved	Output 3: # of community assets rehabilitated, improved or restored during project duration	2 (River main door and fences)	2
		Output 4: length and/or area of community asset improved or restored during project duration	40	40
		Output 5: # of municipalities collaborated with	7	7

## **II- Activities/Implementation**

### ***a) Identification/selection of beneficiaries***

In order to ensure a holistic approach and increase food-security support of WFP e-cards beneficiaries that are in need dire need of additional assistance, WFP has supported WV in the identification of severely and highly vulnerable Syrian refugees benefiting from the food e-card assistance and living within or surrounding the targeted WV areas. The selection criteria of the refugees within this pilot project were based on the lists shared by WFP that included severely and highly socio-economically vulnerable refugees receiving WFP food assistance. Thus, after receiving the beneficiary lists from WFP, WV conducted outreach activities by calling all beneficiaries and inviting them to an information session in order to provide them with full project information – such as type of work, duration, payment rate and modality, etc. WV also used the briefing session in order to received and respond to any project inquiries by beneficiaries. Towards the end of the session, WV enrolled beneficiaries who were willing to participate in the pilot. Once they signed up to the project, all beneficiaries were provided with information leaflets that included key project information and contact details of WV. Once the project started, WV contacted the participants through phone calls in order to ensure that they will be present at the grouping location in order to be transported to the operations sites.

During beneficiary identification and selection, WV greatly appreciated WFP's support through the various coordination meetings and follow up sessions conducted to address any beneficiary targeting challenges that arose. As this type of pilot intervention ('short term cash for work') was particularly new to both refugee and host communities in Bekaa, the selection process was slightly more challenging than expected for the following factors:

1. The timing of the intervention which happened to be towards the end of the year caused many vulnerable refugees to withdraw due to the bad adverse weather in the Bekaa during that period (November 2016 – December 2016).
2. The short-term duration of employment and the daily wage rate was not attractive to some beneficiaries as they are interested in longer-term employment to sustain a stable income.

Moreover, the strong commitment and support from the Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa and Kab Elias Municipality greatly contributed to the project success. Staff assigned by municipalities greatly supported this project, respected operational deadlines and abided by the work policies, standards and schedules set by WV during the preparatory phase regardless of the new type of work and coordination that was needed from their side. In this light, WV has successfully contributed towards building the capacity of municipal staff in operational

management and the introduction of implementation standards and safety measures that ensured high quality programming.

***b) Implementation of project activities***

Table 3. Activity Achievements

Activity	Achievements
<b>Activity 1:</b> Identification of beneficiaries eligible to participate in the cash-for-work program (605)	Through close coordination with WFP, World Vision was able to ensure that the most vulnerable Syrian refugees are supported. Moreover, 4,279 vulnerable Syrian refugees and 69 vulnerable Lebanese were called and invited to the information sessions. However, 386 vulnerable Syrian refugees showed interest while none of the vulnerable Lebanese accepted to join.
<b>Activity 2:</b> Cleaning the main water source in Kab Elias in order to promote cleaner water to the agricultural areas	Throughout the project activities, the Municipal staff were in charge of supervising the teams of Syrian refugee beneficiaries. Moreover, World Vision through its daily field presence was able to support the field operations and ensured that all the workers are divided as per the operational plans agreed upon with the supervisors and that all onsite security tools have been made available and security measures are respected in order to ensure high safety standards for beneficiaries.  Moreover, WV was able to finalize the cleaning of the full road (37 KM) and river (3 KM) in less time than anticipated and with a less number of workers.
<b>Activity 3:</b> Preventing flooding by cleaning the 37 Km main road leading Dahr El Baydar to Masnaa	

Table 4. Activity and Challenges

Activity	Challenges
<b>Activity 1:</b> Identification of beneficiaries eligible to participate in the cash-for-work program (605)	WV and WFP maintained strong and regular coordination in order to ensure the smooth implementation of the project activities. The project also contributed towards achieving a strong partnership with the Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa and Kab Elias Municipality, which will definitely support future cooperation for other interventions. Despite great efforts from WV and WFP to achieve the target number of beneficiaries needed to implement



	the project activities, the cash for work approach was relatively new to the refugee and host population in Central Bekaa and due to some unfavorable and uncontrollable factors such as time limitations, weather conditions, short-term opportunity and daily wage rate, a total of 400 beneficiaries were reached. Despite the variance with the initial target number, WV considers the project achievement as a successful pilot. WV will build on this experience for future interventions, wherein outreach teams will have more time to conduct outreach work and target the needed number of beneficiaries.
<b>Activity 2:</b> Cleaning the main water source in Kab Elias in order to promote cleaner water to the agricultural areas	The weather conditions were among the main challenges that World Vision faced during the implementation of the activities especially that the Bekaa is considered to be most affected by adverse and harsh winter conditions in Lebanon.
<b>Activity 3:</b> Preventing flooding by cleaning the 37 Km main road leading Dahr El Baydar to Masnaa.	

#### **Focus Group Discussion Reports with:**

- 1- Vulnerable Syrian refugees who participated in the road cleaning
- 2- Vulnerable Syrian refugees who participated in the river cleaning

After conducting the Focus Groups Discussions, findings revealed that the top-up provided for the beneficiaries was extremely needed and supported them in fulfilling major needs especially in covering part of their debts and securing additional nutritional needs. Findings also reported that all beneficiaries interviewed as part of the FGDs requested an increase in the daily wages and longer-duration of the cash-for-work activities in order to secure a more stable income. Additionally, the Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa mentioned that the project implemented was a success especially that they did not see any flooding on the roads and that the cleaned river will help the farmers of Central Bekaa during the coming season.



or restored during project duration;	
<b>Output # 5:</b> Number of municipalities collaborated with for the implementation of CfW projects.	<i>7 municipalities</i>
<b>Output # 6:</b> Number of garbage bins distributed.	<i>11 garbage bins were distributed along the cleaned roads in order to encourage the citizens and passengers to use them instead of throwing garbage in the canals.</i>

### ***c) Monitoring activities- Issues and trends***

Throughout the project duration, World Vision Lebanon's operations team was following up closely through daily and regular on-site field visits in order to operational standards are respected and monitor the quality of work done by the beneficiaries and the municipalities. WV also ensured that any issues or trends are captured, recorded and shared with WFP.

Based on the field monitoring and the focus group discussions, World Vision identified a trend of beneficiaries dropping out from the work. After holding some discussions with the beneficiaries, WV was informed that the rate of the wages and the weather conditions were the main reasons behind beneficiaries' decision to drop out. Furthermore, during the focus group discussions, findings reported that the top-up assistance provided by WFP through the pilot project was extremely beneficial for the refugees and helped them in addressing their food insecurity and deepened vulnerability during the winter season. The beneficiaries also reported that they are in need of additional interventions that can help them in securing additional income. Beneficiaries expressed that the implementing agencies should consider increasing the wages to at least USD\$ 20 and that the work should have a longer duration.

#### **Indicators on which CP should report:**

World Vision has conducted through its M&E unit two focus group discussions. The first FGD was conducted with the beneficiaries who worked on cleaning the road and the second one for the beneficiaries who worked on cleaning the river. Moreover, two M&E staff supported WFP in the FGDs and three staff from the operations team were involved in the monitoring of the activities.

### III- Challenges /Lessons learned/Recommended Actions

Challenges	Lessons learned	Recommended Actions
Identification and Selection of Beneficiaries	The identification and selection of beneficiaries should be provided with a longer duration and should include additional outreach sessions in order to increase the likelihood of reaching the target by initially reaching out to a higher number of beneficiaries.	WV recommends having more time in conducting the outreach activities needed to insure that the requested number of beneficiaries is selected.
NPTP and Lebanese Beneficiary Inclusion	The approach towards the NPTP/Lebanese beneficiaries should be deeply analyzed in order to ensure that the activities proposed are accepted by the local community and that the NPTP/Lebanese beneficiaries are included in type of activities they would participate in.	<p>In order to solve the core issue behind the non-participation of NPTP beneficiaries, WV will conduct consultation meetings with the Union of Municipalities of Central Bekaa and the Mayors of the targeted municipalities in order to identify the needed approach to ensure the inclusion of NPTP and non-NPTP beneficiaries.</p> <p>Moreover, WV recommends having a more sensitized approach through municipalities and local communities that will help in giving them ownership of the project and encourage their participation.</p>
Harsh weather conditions	As a pilot project, WV had to conduct the project activities within the proposed timeframe that fell during the winter season in an extremely cold region of Lebanon. As this was taken into	According to the findings from the focus group discussions, WV will take into consideration the weather conditions and the adjustments to the working hours depending on the weather as well as providing

	consideration during the design phase, WV invested great efforts in ensuring that the operational plan is designed to end as early as possible to avoid carrying on any activities in January 2017.	the needed equipment to ensure that beneficiaries are kept warm during the winter season.
Wages	Wages should be provided after conducting a field assessment that highlights the wages of refugees in comparison with what is offered as per sectoral guidelines.	Based on the discussions with beneficiaries, WV recommends extending the working hours to 8 working hours per day.  Additionally, WV recommends to increase the daily wages for cash for work projects from USD\$ 15 to USD\$ 20 as recommended by the beneficiaries in the focus group discussions in order to reach an equal pay with what is provided by private employers.

Despite WV highlighting key challenges in the monthly reporting, as this project was of a short-duration no concrete actions could be taken. WV recommends the following for future interventions:

- Increasing the daily wages of the beneficiaries
- Extending daily working hours from 6 hours to 8 hours
- Providing longer-term cash-for-work opportunities
- Targeting vulnerable Lebanese families who are not part of the NPTF and who are referred by implementing partners
- Targeting vulnerable Syrian refugees who are not receiving WFP food assistance



*Picture 1: Garbage bins before sending them to the villages.*



*Picture 2: Cleaning the roads in Central Bekaa Union*





*Picture 3: Picture from the river (Before and After)*



*Picture 4: Drainage hole (before and after)*