

## COVID-19 Crisis Response

### Food parcels distribution in 38 ITs in the Marjayoun area – Southern Lebanon

#### Activity report

Recently the situation in Lebanon has been one of the most complex of its already turbulent history. Since summer 2019, in a few months the country has witnessed a deep economic crisis, the largest popular protests ever and a consequent political crisis. All of this led Lebanon to default on its debt for the first time in its history. It is in this already complicated context that the COVID-19 pandemic reached Lebanon, on February 21, 2020.

While on a sanitary level Lebanon managed to contain the spreading of the contagion and keep a reduced number of affected people, the necessary measures taken by the government had however dire consequences on the Lebanese economy and population. Among the most affected there are the numerous Syrian refugees living in the Country. For many of them, the strict restriction of movement and the closing or halting of most productive activities meant losing their only source of income, worsening their conditions of vulnerability. This means, among other effects, a reduced access to food. This has been particularly true for the refugee population of the **Marjayoun area**, where are located the vast majority of the more than 6700 refugees spread in 111 Informal Tented Settlements registered in the southern Nabatiyeh governorate, who are normally employed in the agricultural sector of the region.

As part of this governorate, the cadaster of Marjayoun is, due to its history and its proximity with the border with Israel, amongst the most vulnerable of Lebanon. AVSI is working there since the end of the 2006 war, when it stepped in to support the rehabilitation of the water management system of the Plain of Marjayoun, for around one hundred of Lebanese small farmers. With the arrival of the refugees from Syria in 2011-12, AVSI scaled-up its interventions with the support of many international actors, national agencies and private donors.

As part of its emergency intervention within the COVID-19 response in Lebanon, AVSI, thanks to a funding of **8.000€** provided by SUPPORT Internationale V.E., organised a **distribution of food parcels to vulnerable Syrian refugee households in this area**.

After a quick assessment and planning process, which included the preparation and distribution of **vouchers** to the selected families, AVSI field staff performed the distribution between **April 13 and 14, 2020**. The activity reached **209 Syrian households in 38 settlements**, distributing a total of **228 food parcels** (1 parcel for up to 10 people, 2 parcels for families of more than 10 people). The **composition** of the parcels was based on the updated guidelines defined by the Food Security and Agriculture sector of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), in collaboration with the Faculty of Health Sciences, Center for Research on Population and Health at the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

The items indicated in the guidelines are meant to cover the needs for a month. Due to both logistical restraints and the aim of reaching the highest number possible of families, it was decided that the parcels distributed would include **goods that nominally should cover 2 weeks**. However, since most of the families include low numbers of people or include many children, whose food needs are reduced, **the goods distributed will cover longer than two weeks** (see attached supporting documents for the list of products included).

The **selection** of the ITSs followed mostly the **cluster division defined by the UNHCR** for the COVID-19 response, being most of the ITS within the cluster 5, assigned to AVSI for multi-sectoral intervention. Due to this, 21 of the reached ITSs received also the COVID-19 awareness and hygiene sessions provided by AVSI at the beginning of the crisis. In addition, it was decided to proceed also in the two ITSs where AVSI has been implementing the **“ON-THE-JOB AGRICULTURAL SKILLS TRAINING” project** during this year in partnership with SUPPORT, **Ain Arab Marjeoun001 and Aamra007**. Other selection criteria were the **dimension** of the ITS and their **geographic location**, in order to optimize the distribution.

### Pictures



**Map of distribution**

