



LEBANON:

Strengthening job creation and creativity in the agro-food sector in Lebanon through technology transfer and skills training.

Context

The Syrian crisis, on-going since 2011, is still having significant impact on neighboring countries, especially on Lebanon where the impact has been immense. In October 2016, the Government of Lebanon (GoL) estimated that the country hosted 1.5 million Syrians who had fled the conflict in Syria.

The resulting influx of Syrian refugees to Lebanon has strained the country's infrastructure as well as the economy resulting in a surge of inflation, unemployment and poverty. Some 200,000 Lebanese have been pushed into poverty and some 250,000-300,000 have become unemployed, in particular youth, with the overall unemployment rate doubling to about 20%.

In February 2016, the Lebanese Government, presented a unified plan organized in an ambitious five-year programme, which puts a major focus on creating economic opportunities and jobs. This project, representing one of the main pillars of the UNIDO Country Programming Framework aims at developing the agro-industry value-chains; a cornerstone of the country's industrial economy which represents 18.2% of the total economic activities.

Strategy

Since 2011, UNIDO has been supporting the agro-industrial sector through the Community Empowerment and Livelihoods Enhancement project (CELEP). Through the three phases of the CELEP, 82 MSMEs and 25 agricultural cooperatives were directly supported by specialized equipment, civil works and capacity building development and more than 5000 Households benefited indirectly from the project activities. This project will be the first focusing on product development, introduction of creativity tools and innovation for the Zaatar Value chain.

This project will mainly consist of:

- (i) Bringing innovation through product development, packaging and labeling
- (ii) Introducing new technologies to improve the Zaatar cultivation and manufacturing processes
- (iii) Improving the workplace and the quality of products
- (iv) Capacity building development with special focus on women and youth
- (v) Facilitating market access on national and international levels

Targeted beneficiaries

It is estimated that around 200 employment opportunities will be created in the targeted regions of Lebanon:

- ▶ 18 Agro-based MSMEs and 8 Food-processing Cooperatives will benefit from technology upgrading, civil works, product development in terms of culinary innovations, branding and packaging based on national and international standards, technical trainings and capacity building in areas related to GHP, GAP, GMP, business and marketing, and visibility and market access initiatives.
- ▶ 1500 rural communities will have access to better services and technologies. This represents about 5000 people or families through the participation of 8 agri-cooperatives.

Expected Outcomes

- ▶ Contribute to the development of a more capable rural community organization by improving the production/productivity of the selected beneficiaries.
- ▶ Enhance the marketing capabilities of the producers.
- ▶ Support the producers in accessing local and global markets.
- ▶ Reduce potential tensions between host and displaced communities.

At a glance

Goal: To spur economic growth and employment opportunities by improving the competitiveness and value addition of the agro-industrial sector in Lebanon.
SDGs: SDG 1 (No poverty), SDG 5 (Gender equality) and SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure)
Theme: Poverty Reduction and Peace-Building
Budget: Euro 1,103,630
Donor: Italy
National Counterpart: Ministry of Industry (main) and Ministry of Agriculture
Executing Agencies: UNIDO
Project Sites: North, South, Mount Lebanon
Duration: 54 months (2017-2022)