

PRELIMINARY STANDARD PROGRESS REPORT OUTLINE *

Reporting UN Participating Organisation: United Nations Development Programme

Country: Lebanon

Programme/Project No. and Programme/Project Title: LRF # 13 / Youth Mobilization and Development in Beirut and its Suburbs.

Reporting Period: April 2008 – June 2010

I. PURPOSE

Project Summary:

The project aims at both rapidly implementing socio-economic recovery activities targeting the youth, as well as enhancing the capacities of institutions (local NGOs and CSOs) at the community level of Beirut and its suburbs, in identifying, prioritizing and implementing socio-economic activities in an autonomous manner.

This target includes youths residing in the disadvantaged areas of Beirut and its suburbs, building their skills to play a leading facilitative role in the development of strategically planned, locally-driven, partnership approaches to rebuilding livelihoods.

The overall objective of the project is to promote social equity and local stakeholders' empowerment through local employment recovery and livelihood opportunities projects in Beirut and its immediate suburbs.

Project Objectives:

The project will contribute towards three main objectives:

1. To enhance implementation capacities of local stakeholders (NGOs and CSOs) in identifying and providing direct services to recover sustainable livelihoods. Local stakeholders can then select and implement community projects for recovery of livelihood.
2. To provide skills training for unemployed youth and support job creation through employment/job search centre matching demand and supply. The centre will act as the enabling structure to create, enhance and develop skills and competencies of the youths.
3. To rehabilitate (through the trained youth) 2 underserved Beirut neighborhoods with a focus on the poor and multi-cultural neighborhoods after providing the youth with the proper training on how to enhance the socio-economic capacities for local communities.

Project Outcomes:

The project outcomes consist of:

- A network of qualified youths belonging to neighborhood committees and to Greater Beirut NGOs trained to participate in local community development projects
- A training manual serving as a reference for all members of CSOs on how to design, manage and evaluate development projects and programmes along with the methods of implementation.
- A labor market study developed to decide on the skills needed in the market and help in matching labor supply and demand.
- a database for the youth unemployed and jobs needed to try to match demand and supply is formed

- An employment creation center established to help unemployed youth finding a job and meet the labor supply market, and provide them with the adequate skills and competencies when needed.
- A participatory study developed to determine the 2 areas/ neighborhoods to be upgraded
- Two underserved Beirut neighborhoods rehabilitated by the trained youth

Project Linkages to National Priorities and Reconstruction Goals:

The Project is part of the Lebanon Recovery Fund Program that is initially addressed to recover Lebanon from the aftermath of July 2006 war. Most of the recovery projects post July 2006 war concentrated on areas outside Beirut. However, this project realizes that Beirut also has been greatly affected by the recent hostilities and hence, is in need of attention from the on-going development initiatives, especially for youth employment and mobilization.

The importance of including the capital of Lebanon, Beirut, in the development programs resided in the fact that besides being the most densely populated area, it is the city that encompasses the highest levels of social and economic injustices, crimes, abuses, social gaps and disparities, illiteracy and unemployment.

Youth unemployment increased as a result of the 2006 war and its aftermath effect on tourism and economic sectors. Unlike the previous wars, the July war has severely impacted the private sector and hindered its capability to respond and contribute to the recovery, rehabilitation and revitalization of the country. In this context, the project addresses reviving the human potential, especially youth, as well as mobilizing the local non-governmental organizations.

Moreover, the events that have occurred consecutively after the war turned the country into a deep crisis. Two years after the war, Beirut is still struggling with economic stagnation, political instability, sectarian unrest, all reflected in different forms of manifestations, reaching to the dreadful outburst of the capital in May 2008, which reminded the Lebanese citizens of the dark days of the 1975-1990 civil war.

The crisis, notably the sectarian clashes that took place in May 2008 has radically increased distrust among citizens. It highlighted a number of crucial political and humanitarian themes and made a major impact on Lebanese citizens notably the youth, leading to further deprivation, immigration, unemployment, etc. Unemployment is currently estimated at 25 percent of the work force, and the inflation rate is said to have been about 225 percent in the first nine months of this year. In addition, many factories and other businesses have been destroyed in the years of factional fighting, and foreign investment has dried up.

The aforementioned incidents and the repercussions highlight the significance and urgency for carrying this project further into immediate implementation for embracing the youth and creating social safety net in a vibrant positive atmosphere that is capable of participating in the development of their communities.

Finally, the Objectives of this project are also in line with the Social Action Plan's main objectives i.e.:

- (i) alleviate poverty and improve living standards;
- (ii) improve the role of NGOs in development; and
- (iii) encourage investment and other job-creating activities in the more deprived areas.

Project Implementation Partners:

International Partners: UNDP

National Partners: Hariiri Foundation for Sustainable Human Development (HF)

II. RESOURCES

Programme Budget (from the LRF Fund): USD 996,919

III. RESULTS

Regarding the achievement of three main objectives of the project, we were able to:

- Enhance the implementation capacities of 75 young volunteers (personal and community service) and 60 local stakeholders (NGOs and CSOs) in identifying and providing direct services to recover sustainable livelihoods.
- Provide skills training for unemployed youth, helping them finding a job and meet the labor supply market through the creation of a job creation center.
- Rehabilitate 2 underserved Beirut neighborhoods, namely Karm El Zeytoun and Sabra.

As far as capacity building of the youth is concerned, the project has succeeded in forming a network of 75 youth from different backgrounds. They were trained on both personal level (communication, administrative, and leadership skills, how to write a CV/portfolio, how to ace a job interview ...) as well as civic engagement/ community service level. In this regards, they were trained first on concepts of volunteerism & community service projects. Afterwards, they submitted project proposals and implemented 8 community service projects. Prizes and recognition were granted to them through:

- Certification ceremony: with prizes..
- Episode with Zaven: "*Sireh win Fatahit*"
- Road trip to Baskinta, incl/ team building activities

As far as capacity building of NGOs is concerned, the project has succeeded in enhancing the implementation capacities of 60 local NGOs in order to be able to move from "**charity work**" to "**sustainable development**". The aim was to empower them on how to prioritize the needs of their community, select and implement community service and development projects. As such, the process went through different phases:

- **Phase 1: Assessment Phase** (assessing the current situation of local NGO's, discover their abilities and needs, and setting the potential areas of improvement)
- **Phase 2: Designing a Training Program** (based on the results of the assessment). An agreement was made between the HFSHD, UNDP and MOSA (Capacity Building for NGOs Unit) to validate and promote the training manual developed on internal governance for NGO's. As such, several meetings were held with the NGO's to explore their capacities and potentials and to share with them their concerns in order to design the most efficient training on the topics of the training manual.
- **Phase 3: TOT Training:** aimed at forming a training unit capable of conducting training workshops related to the internal governance for NGO's.
- **Phase 4: Implementation Phase** (training 60 local NGOs on several topics related to "*internal governance for NGOs*"- strategic planning, legislative status of NGOs, proposal writing, volunteerism, networking,
- Budgeting...)

As a result, 60 NGOs were skilled on how to make the best use of their resources to grant the greatest benefit for the community they serve acting on global standards. Furthermore, they were able to network together in order to discuss how to best support each other in using the gained skills to generate new development strategies enabling them to shift from a charity perspective to a more sustainable development work.

As for the second component, that is job creation, a Labor Market Study was made with the American University of Beirut, identifying the majors mostly targeted by youth and matching them with the requirements of the local labor market, as guidance for the youth to find new job opportunities. In parallel, a business plan with an analysis of local labor demand and Supply was prepared to provide an overview of the labor market and identify what kind of professions or skills are required and profiles of unemployed youth. The business plan also studied the function of the JCC: guiding the youth and enhancing their skills to match the market's requirements:

- Assist job seekers whose skills are in excess market supply – or with no employable skills – to become employable or economically self-sustained
- Assist employers seeking skills in short market supply to recruit and habilitate promising candidates

Furthermore, the foundation organized **The First National Career Fair “Youth & Professions 2010”**, geared towards high school and first year university students. It brought together experts and students, to help the latter assess whether a given specialization is particularly suited to meet their interests, expectations and future aspirations. It has also provided detailed information about each occupation, academic requirements, job prospects and challenges. The fair successfully covered four different regions in Lebanon : Beirut, Zahle, Saida and Tripoli (April 15- May 14, 2010)

For the rehabilitation component, the foundation has partnered with the Center for Civic Engagement and Community Service (CCECS) and the Landscape Design and Ecosystem Management (LDEM) department at AUB, to conduct a community development project in the Karm El Zeitoun and Sabra neighborhoods in Beirut. The process also included the volunteered students in the needs assessment, drawing and implementation phases. At the same time the project team was able to form a committee from the targeted audience and stakeholders to be informed and participate in every step and to follow-up after the implementation.

Short-term Objectives:

- Mapping the open spaces
- Surveying the community activities of the neighborhood
- Choosing a site for intervention and implementation of a design that would foster community life and enhance the open space situation.
- Supervising and following-up closely the work implementation

Long-term Objective:

A comprehensive study of both areas in order to improve the life quality and livelihood of the community

The areas of intervention were chosen by the foundation, based on their level of poverty, marginalization, environment and livelihood deterioration, and the nature of the inhabitants in terms of coming from different backgrounds, sects and social status..

In Karm Al Zeytoun area, the phases included:

- **Phase 1:** a qualitative study of the neighborhood (history, land ownerships, socio-economic aspects, landmarks, street morphologies, identification of areas for intervention..)
- **Phase2:** design guidelines and development (green trail, link, street, plaza, stairs, open spaces in Ararat street)
- **Phase 3:** the implementation phase (stairs, planters, painting building’s facades, stone paving, lighting, church plaza design and paving, putting support base for tents, etc...)

Our aim was to upgrade the physical and social aspect of Karm Zeytoun, to boost the pride of its local inhabitants, fostering community life and enhancing the open space situation

Several success stories were registered, of which:

- Intention of the municipality to undertake the other stairs with the same approach
- Interest of the armenian community and notably Deputy MP Bakradounian and request to expand our work to Bourj Hammoud
- Reply of the political council of the Lebanese Armenian Community (in-depth review and analysis)

For the Souq of Sabra, our aim was to upgrade the area at the physical, social and program level, in an attempt to build a social safety network in the Souq, without changing the system and living pattern of the community. The areas of intervention include the re-organization of the souq and shops, paving and elevating the sidewalks to block sewerage problems, rehabilitating 22 retail shops’ facades and building uniform shelters, painting the surrounding buildings, lighting ..

Of the success stories encountered during the implementation:

- Formation of Sabra committee (to carry out, promote & sustain the project
- Getting the approval, support and concerns of end-users (owners, inhabitants, retailers, street vendors, ..)
- Media coverage
- Interest of other organizations and potential partners

IV. FUTURE WORK PLAN

N/A

LRF Report structure

Cover page




UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT GROUP
Lebanon Recovery Fund

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