



## PROGRESS REPORT

<b>Reporting UN Organization</b>	: <b>United Nations Development Programme</b>
<b>Country</b>	: <b>Lebanon</b>
<b>Project No.</b>	: 00072768
<b>Project Title</b>	: <b><u>Recovery of Nahr El Bared Surrounding Lebanese Communities Affected by the 2006 and 2007 conflicts</u></b>
<b>LRF Signature date</b>	: May 29, 2009
<b>Project Start date</b>	: August 2009*
<b>Project Timeframe</b>	: <b>18 months</b>
<b>Reporting Period</b>	: <b>01 January 2011 – 31 March 2011</b>

\*Please note that, while the funds were released in August 2009, the Lebanon Country Office only received them by October 2009. Implementation only started from October 2009 onwards. The project document was revised and signed. Accordingly the end date is 28 February 2011.

### I. PURPOSE

#### **Project Summary:**

The main objective of the project is to promote the social cohesion through restoring and improving livelihoods, capacity building and local level dialogue. The project is designed to restore livelihoods of 2,000 vulnerable households (13,400 individuals) in 28 communities of North Lebanon who have sustained significant direct or indirect losses related to the Nahr el Bared conflict in 2007. Additionally, the project aims to provide a solid platform for development efforts in the area, by increasing local capacities of participatory planning, management and implementation of development programmes, as well as, promoting local level dialogue.

#### **Project Objective:**

#### **Project Outputs:**

1. Livelihoods of farmers, fishermen and SME owners improved through socio-economic interventions targeting training, technical and asset needs
2. Living conditions and livelihoods of communities improved through small scale infrastructure projects
3. Dialogue improved through local level interventions, particularly targeting youth

#### **Project Linkages to National Priorities and Reconstruction Goals:**

The project links to the priority “*National capacities of crisis prevention and recovery enhanced, including disaster management, mine action, youth and reconciliation and Lebanese-Palestinian dialogue*” of the UNDP Country Programme Document 2010-2014, specifically under Outcome 2 of the priority “*Living conditions and trust in Palestinian and Lebanese surrounding communities*”

*improved*. It also seeks to support the implementation of the national strategy for the reconstruction of Nahr el Bared, presented at the donor conference in 2007, where the Camp and its surrounding areas were presented as a single disaster area, so as to not differentiate the impact the crisis had on the Lebanese and Palestinians

#### **Project Implementation Partners:**

As per the project document, this initiative will be implemented in partnership with ILO and FAO. In particular, both UN agencies will be engaged in the implementation of the project output 2 “Livelihoods of farmers, fishermen and SME owners improved through socio-economic interventions targeting training, technical and asset needs”. In this respect, FAO is providing technical support and assistance to the design and implementation of the agricultural-related aspects of the project, including capacity building. ILO is supporting the implementation of the micro grant component, through its partnership with the local micro finance institution, known as Al Majmoua.

## **II. RESOURCES**

<b>Total budget approved</b>	<b>: USD 2,500,000</b>
<b>Total disbursements as for 31<sup>st</sup> of March 2011</b>	<b>: USD 1,037,445.77</b>
<b>Commitments for next quarter</b>	<b>: pending approval of the extension</b>
<b>Available Balance</b>	<b>: USD 1,084,802 USD</b>

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>TOTAL BUDGET (USD)</b>	<b>TOTAL EXP (USD) to Date</b>
<b>1. Personnel</b> (Incl. staff and consultants)	235,400 USD	236,051.45
<b>2. Contracts</b> (Incl. companies, professional services)	1,530,000 USD	633,624.45
<b>3. Training</b>	285,000 USD	
<b>4. Transport</b>	4,000 USD	
<b>5. Supplies and commodities</b>	2,000 USD	65,608.47
<b>6. Equipment</b>	80,000 USD	19,595.35
<b>7. Travel</b>	80,000 USD	6,323.45
<b>8. Miscellaneous</b>	120,000 USD	32,324.97
<b>9. Agency Management Support</b>	163,548 USD	43,917.80
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,500.000 USD</b>	<b>1,037,445.77</b>

## **III. RESULTS**

#### **Progress in Project Implementation:**

*Regarding project output 1 “Livelihoods of farmers, fishermen and SME owners improved through socio-economic interventions targeting training, technical and asset needs”*

##### *Olive Harvesters*

Based on the findings of the agricultural assessment, an action plan, consisting of the provision of assets and capacity building targeting farmers engaged in the green house and olive sector was elaborated and agreed upon with the Ministry of Agriculture with support from FAO. Green houses and

olives were identified as the most critical areas of focus, given the negative impact the Nahr el Bared crisis has had on these important productive sectors.

#### *Olive Harvesters*

Two olive producing agricultural cooperatives were identified based on an in-depth assessment of 8 agricultural cooperatives existing in the targeted area, with technical support from FAO. The selected criteria were defined as follows:

- The cooperative is active;
- The cooperative is already providing services (training on olive harvesting) to the cooperative members;
- The cooperative has the potential of increasing the membership;
- The board of the cooperative requires minimal training on organizational/managerial skills;
- The cooperative works with olive farmers.

A total of 28 harvesters will be provided to the two cooperatives benefiting a cluster of villages with at least 120 active farmers in the olive sector. The company was selected and the contract was signed on the 21st of March 2011. The olive harvesters will be delivered to the cooperatives within 45 days of the signature of the contract (5<sup>th</sup> of May 2011). Technical training sessions will be provided to the Cooperatives members after receiving the Olive harvesters during May 2011.

#### *Greenhouses*

The rehabilitation of the greenhouse crop production sector was identified as a priority area in the context of this intervention. To this end, UNDP will support 100 farmers in the surrounding municipalities with demonstration greenhouses. Priority for the beneficiary selection was given to farmers that have access to less than 20 wooden greenhouse structures and/or a combination of wooden and galvanized structures, with less than five galvanized greenhouses.

With the technical support of FAO, an improved green house design was prioritized over traditional green house models. The improved greenhouses are more sustainable and durable, and will increase both crop production and quality, benefitting the farmers through higher market prices and increased incomes. They also require less use of pesticides, with the additional benefits of producing healthier food and reducing potential negative implications on food safety and human health. Furthermore, this intervention will serve as a pilot to support the Ministry of Agriculture in elaborating the national strategy on greenhouses. Currently under development, the strategy may adopt this enhanced design to take advantage of its superior ability to reduce damages from *tuta absoluta* and other pests affecting greenhouse crop production in the Mediterranean region.

As the unit cost of these improved structures is higher than traditional green house models, the number of beneficiaries was necessarily reduced to 100 farmers. As the approach to be adopted to support greenhouse crop production in the context of the project was finalized in November 2010, the technical specifications were under development in December 2010 with support from FAO in order to initiate the procurement process.

UNDP initiated the procurement process for the greenhouses on the 3rd of February and the bid was closed on Friday the 24th of February. The technical evaluation was completed and the company selected. Signature of the contract is pending the approval of the no-cost extension.

#### *Capacity development*

To complement and maximize the impact of asset provision, the project envisages the implementation of a capacity development plan to support beneficiaries of this component. With technical support from FAO, and upon consultations with the Ministry of Agriculture, an initial capacity development plan was elaborated in December 2010, with a view to targeting i) extension agents of the Ministry of Agriculture located in the North and ii) olive and greenhouse farmers and cooperatives which will receive assets in the context of this initiative.

Capacity building for the extension agents include training on extension methodologies and

management (with a focus on communications and outreach with the farming communities in the targeted area) and on greenhouse/olive production through a 'training of trainers' approach. The extension agents are then supporting the training and field demonstration provided to the beneficiary farmers targeted by this initiative in order to transfer knowledge and good practices in the field of greenhouse and olive production.

The training programme was initiated in February 2011, starting with the extension agents. The Ministry of Agriculture appointed a focal point in the North to coordinate the planning and implementation of these capacity development activities.

Experts on integrated pest management (IPP), sustainable soil management (SSM), harvesting and post harvesting, communication and outreach with the farming communities were identified and recruited.

Training of Trainers for 16 extension service agents on IPP was provided during February 2011. The discussion and sharing of information and experiences from different countries regarding the green houses was very useful and the extension agents showed interest in the covered topics. Training on IPP and SSM was delivered during the month of March 2011 for 102 Greenhouse farmers (4 sessions) and 16 MoA extension service agents. Training on IPP and SSM is planned during April and May for 100 Olive farmers.

The following training sessions will take place in April and May 2011

- Training on cooperative concept and work will be delivered to Halba and Karkaf cooperatives as an introductor to the proper management of the Olive harvesters.
- Training for the Karkaf and Halba cooperative members on the management and organization of harvesters use
- Training on communication and farmers out-reaching targeting MoA extension services agents (4 sessions).

These activities will be undertaken with technical support from FAO.

#### Women's cooperative

The component of providing assets to the women working on net rehabilitation in Bebnine has proven very successful. The provision of assets has been complemented with provision of training to run the cooperative the women formed with the assistance of the UNDP team. The women are already reporting that their incomes are increasing<sup>1</sup>, as they are now able to better manage their finances, better able to market their products, and are hence less vulnerable to middle-men activity. They have also increased their client base and are now better able to deal with larger orders. The women have been extremely happy with the equipment provided to improve their working conditions which has made working on knitting faster as well as more comfortable hence reducing adverse health effects they used to suffer from.

The establishment of the cooperative came in response to the initial assessment estimating that, at less than 1\$/hour, the income of these women used to be suppressed due to the role of middle-men who offer food and clothes in lieu of higher value cash payments. Five board members and the President of the Cooperative were elected by the women at the end of the year. In the lead-up to the establishment of the cooperative, members received capacity training on cooperative management (including preparation of the annual report to the government, accounting requirements and procedures as well as on member and volunteers mobilization). Continuous verbal feedback after each session was provided and in the beginning of each session a wrap-up session was held to confirm that the information given was well received and understood. Weekly meetings were held with women to follow-up on several issues regarding the establishment of a cooperative. The close coaching and application of the abovementioned topics at a later stage was significant and showed the evolution process of the members regarding the cooperative values and management services. All the women were attending regularly the training sessions and participating seriously by asking

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<sup>1</sup> The real impact of the support can be assessed in few months time. Until then the information given by the women remains anecdotal, although there are strong indications that these statements are true.

questions and sharing challenges. Overall, these training sessions were very successful and it was clear that they were complemented with the additional job-on training sessions held.

There are 120 women beneficiaries in the project, selected according to the following criteria:

- Are aged 18 and above working in fishing nets knitting in Bebnine village-Akkar;
- Live in Bebnine village;
- Are engaged in knitting, repairing fishing nets and making fishing clothes as their only economic activity;
- Are mainly family members of local fishermen;

Although the community of Bebnine is poor, the women agreed to contribute to the running costs of the cooperative in a clear demonstration of commitment. Discussions were also underway in November 2010 for UNDP to provide a grant to the newly established cooperative with initial investment costs, starting with the purchase of raw materials. This will be combined with ongoing support to develop a marketing plan for the cooperative, including the identification of clients in various areas along the coast of Lebanon as well as the development standing agreements.

Poor working conditions resulting in health problems is another serious issue faced by the women in Bebnine engaged in net rehabilitation. With the technical assistance of an international consultant from "Hopitaux Universitaires de Genève", options to make their work more efficient and to reduce adverse health effects were explored in a participatory manner. Procurement was undertaken for better lighting, seating and customized metal stands designed for hanging the nets while knitting. Together, these ergonomic improvements significantly improve working conditions, enabling more efficient production while reducing the strain on knitters' vision and allowing better posture. Best practices and exercises to improve the health conditions of the targeted women have been introduced and monitoring is being conducted through a group of women who piloted the introduction of the new working tools and approaches.

All the agreed items were provided for the women by end of March 2011 with the exception of the lighting items. The supplier of the lighting items faced some delays but will distribute the missing items by end of April 2011. A brochure outlining best practices and exercises to improve the health conditions of the targeted women have been designed and will be printed and distributed during May 2011.

In February 2011, UNDP provided the newly established cooperative a grant of USD 11,800. The grant covers the office rent fees, the equipment of the office, the salary of some of the staff, fees for buying a car for the cooperative and the fees of the first quantity of the raw material. A marketing plan for the cooperative was developed, to initiate the identification of possible new clients in various areas on the coast of Lebanon, and to develop standing agreements with those clients. Many visits to fisherman cooperatives were conducted to start marketing the services of the women cooperative, and some agreements were already signed. Other suppliers for the knitting sector were contacted and UNDP decided to support the women in purchasing the first quantity of the raw material. A marketing flyer for the cooperative was also designed and printed to be used during the visits to fishermen cooperative while marketing the services of the women cooperative. On-the-job training was also provided to 20 members of the cooperative. After each field visit of a specific task accomplished, an evaluation meeting was held with the concerned women to identify the positive and negative attitudes, behaviour noticed during the implementation of the marketing, and what could be done to improve performance the next time.

#### *Micro finance*

Following the NBC crisis, large numbers of businesses were totally or partially destroyed, thereby severely affecting all social and economic activities. As many Lebanese businesses operating in the surrounding areas of NBC suffered from the loss of income resulting from lack of access to the main trade routes and the interruption of labor supply, the collateral damage from the crisis extended far beyond the immediate direct destruction.

At the end of February 2011, 78 SME business owners had been supported through this project, to

recover businesses directly or indirectly impacted by Nahr El Bared crisis, as per the selection criteria outlined below. The loans were provided mainly to recover incomes of existing businesses although 13 loans were also given to establish new businesses. The average loan size for these 78 SME was USD 1,600.<sup>2</sup> The loans thus far have helped create 20 new jobs while sustaining 250 existing jobs. In an effort to target the most vulnerable groups, 47% of the loans have been provided to youth that were negatively affected by the crisis. Al Majmoua has also pre-screened over 20 new beneficiaries and is ready to disburse these loans if the extension to this component of the project is approved (the average loan size requested is USD 1,800 and the conditions of repayment are the same as with the previous loans).

In order to measure the impact of the initiative, a comprehensive baseline has been prepared (including information on income, profit and number of employees). A follow-up assessment is planned to be undertaken six months after disbursement of loans and will be complemented by a client impact study after one year.

The selection criteria for the beneficiaries of the micro loans were defined as follows:

- Residents of 28 communities targeted by the project;
- Lebanese entrepreneurs;
- 30 to 35% of women targeted;
- 20 to 33% of youth;
- 5% of loans given to new businesses;
- Businesses sustaining direct or indirect damages from the 2007 Nahr el Bared crisis, that could be divided into the three following categories: i) business completely destroyed, ii) businesses requiring additional support to sustainably recover after the crisis and iii) SMEs whose business practices and approaches may help improve Lebanese/ Palestinian relationships.
- Loans can be either individual and collective;
- Lebanese businesses supported in the context of early recovery interventions through grants;
- Loans will in priority but not exclusively target the following sectors: construction, furniture, car maintenance and food processing.

*Regarding project output 2 “Living conditions and livelihoods of communities improved through small scale infrastructure projects”*

#### *Agriculture Roads*

Grant were given to five municipalities, Karkaf (USD 62.000), Wadi El Jamous (USD 54.000), Qobbet Bchamra (USD 43.454), Hmaira (USD 55.800) and Borj El Arab (USD 43.360), to renovate six agricultural roads the municipalities in order to improve the farmers' access to their land and the access of the traders to the farmers. Farmers in these rural communities often struggle to access their own land due to the poor condition of local roads. Some land is accessible only by tractor, which many farmers do not own. The new asphalted roads will enable farmers to increase their incomes as the traders will have access to their harvest.<sup>3</sup> The agriculture roads works were started in all municipalities. Karkaf, Wadi Jamous and Borj el Arab municipality already finalized all works. Delays were experienced due to rain<sup>4</sup> but the works in Hmaira, Qobbet Bchamra will be finalized by end of April 2011. The UNDP engineer was closely following –up through regular field visits and meetings and coordination with the municipalities and the contractors. After each agriculture road was renovated, the UNDP engineer approved the works confirming that planned works were appropriately implemented. The local communities have greatly appreciated the agricultural roads that now provide improved access to the agricultural fields.

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<sup>2</sup> The individual loans were given for a period of 6-24 months with small interest rates, for loans below USD 3,000 the interest rate is 1.5%, for loans between USD 3,000 and USD 5,000 the interest rate is 1.4%, and for loans between USD 5,000 and USD 10,000 the interest rate is 1.3%.

<sup>3</sup> Most of these farmers are either olive farmers or greenhouse farmers.

<sup>4</sup> Every time it rains the works have to be stopped approximately for ten days.

### *Olive Solid Waste Composting Facility*

A comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment was undertaken to design and implement an Olive Solid Waste Composting Facility, benefiting four cooperatives in the targeted area. The identification of the four cooperatives was based on an in-depth assessment of 8 agricultural cooperatives existing in the targeted area, with technical support from FAO. The criteria for selection included:

- The cooperative is active;
- The cooperative already provides services (different types of training related to olive harvesting) to the cooperative members;
- The cooperative has the potential of increasing the membership;
- The cooperative's board has minimal needed organizational/managerial skills;
- The cooperative works with olive's farmers;
- Cooperatives operating within the same cluster of villages;
- Cooperatives' boards and members are willing to use compost in their fields.

Procurement for the facility was finalized and the works were initiated in December 2010. The Olive Solid Waste Facility will be managed by the four cooperatives. In parallel, four technical training sessions were conducted with the selected cooperatives and their 20 members to strengthen their skills base on the production and use of the compost. At the end of each session, evaluation was undertaken in a form of a group discussion with the farmers to get their feedback. They all mentioned their need to additional on-the job training sessions when the facility is in use. The trainees also appreciated that the trainer clarified and corrected some confusing information the trainees had acquired from previous training on olive and olive composting. The facility will be finalized one month after the approval of the extension to the project.

### *Waste Water Treatment Facility*

The municipality of Bkarzala has completed the sewage network works in the village. However, the municipality lacks an adequate waste water treatment method. Currently the waste water ends up in the fields of two neighboring municipalities, damaging the existing water table, releasing unbearable odors and attracting large quantities of insects. A detailed study was undertaken to establish a facility that would be used for the sewage treatment and would simultaneously provide clean water for irrigation purposes. A consultant is recently finalizing the technical specifications and the invitation to bid. The procurement process remains pending the approval of the extension.

### *Slaughter House*

A grant of USD 67,000 for construction (civil works) and USD 18,333 for the laboratory equipment was provided to the Municipality of Halba to upgrade the slaughterhouse which the municipality had built on its own initiative. The slaughterhouse in Halba will directly benefit 25 butchers in the area by improving their working conditions and increasing the value of their products. The benefits of the slaughterhouse will be far reaching, with indirect beneficiaries including all residents in the Shafat union of municipalities who will have access to better quality meat as consumers. The slaughterhouse in Halba was in very poor shape and did not provide the local butchers with the minimum conditions to butcher meat in an efficient or hygienic manner. The new slaughterhouse was built close to the meat bazaar in a strategic effort to reinforce linkages with the Akkar community of butchers (starting with 25 butchers in Halba) and to strengthen the value chain of the meat market in the region, and to provide more competitive prices to customers. Following consultations with the municipality and other key stakeholders and a series of technical assessments, it was determined that technical improvements were required to meet minimum hygiene and operational standards and to reach its full productive potential for the targeted area. Based on the existing structure of the facility, support was provided to improve the infrastructure of the slaughterhouse and to equip a laboratory for quality control. Improvements supported by UNDP follow the FAO guidelines and standards. In particular, improvements at the hygiene level required provision of laboratory equipment for medical tests that will be undertaken by a veterinarian that the municipality has committed to hire as soon as the laboratory equipment is delivered.

The civil works for the slaughterhouse were finalised on 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2011. The procurement for the laboratory equipment was finalised but the company providing the equipment experienced delays in the delivery of few items. The company has agreed to finalize the delivery of the equipment by the end of April 2011.

*Regarding project output 3: Dialogue improved through local level interventions, particularly targeting youth*

Most of the activities under the youth component were finalised during 2010.

A youth perception survey targeting Lebanese and Palestinian youth from the NBC/Beddawi camps and the surrounding 28 municipalities was undertaken to provide a baseline and a future guide to design peace building interventions primarily targeting youth in the region. The survey a) provides a quantitative description on intergroup perceptions and relations; b) identifies the variables that are most relevant to addressing negative intergroup perceptions; and c) identifies the variables that are most likely to improve life satisfaction in each community. The youth participating in the perception survey are between 18-25 years old. Out of the 800 Palestinian participants, 50.1 per cent of the youth were male and 49.9% of the youth were female. Out of the 800 Lebanese participants, 52.3 per cent of the youth were male and 47.7 per cent were female. The below tables show the different education levels by participant:

Distribution of the educational level of the Palestinian respondents

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Elementary and Below	66	8.3
Intermediate	240	30.0
Secondary	206	25.8
Vocational	112	14.0
University	152	19.0
Higher education	2	0.3
Refused to answer	22	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Distribution of the educational level of Lebanese respondents

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
Elementary and Below	65	8.1
Intermediate	233	29.1
Secondary	206	25.8
Vocational	85	10.6
University	177	22.1
Higher education	9	1.1
Refused to answer	25	3.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>100.0</b>

A series of focus groups were conducted and relevant academic literature associated with intergroup relations and perceptions was reviewed in an effort to develop a relevant survey instrument to survey the following: prejudicial attitudes, life satisfaction, domain specific life satisfaction, perceived intergroup distance, attitude favorability, perceived threats, contact quantity and quality, perceived responsibility and blame, trust, religiosity, and preferences for specific intervention projects. A representative sample of youth from Lebanese and Palestinian communities was involved. A multi-stage probability sampling procedure was used to select 800 participants from the Palestinian Refugee Camps of Beddawi and Nahr el Bared, and 800 participants from the 28 municipalities of the 2nd and 3rd ring of the NBC.

The main findings of the report were that contact in all its dimensions significantly affects prejudice perceptions in both Lebanese and Palestinian samples. Furthermore, positive contact emerged as the strongest predictor of prejudice reduction in both Lebanese and Palestinian samples. Both Palestinian and Lebanese youth identified income satisfaction as the most prominent predictor of life satisfaction scores, closely followed by leisure satisfaction. Interestingly, none of the inter-community variables were significant, indicating that inter-community relations are not relevant to life satisfaction scores in both communities.

Two main limitations were reported: i) Self-presentation biases, i.e. as in any survey report, participants are likely to present themselves in as positive a light as possible. Yet, the strength of the findings and the presence of obvious prejudicial attitudes reduce some of this concern; ii) Temporal validity, as the data was collecting in the weeks between December 2010 and January 2011 the results reveal a one-time snapshot of youth's perceptions during that time frame. The continuously unfolding socio-political events in Lebanon are likely to affect inter-community perceptions, and thus changes over time are possible.

Project Outputs	Activities	Indicators	Status
<b>Output 1:</b> Livelihoods of farmers, fishermen and SME owners improved through socio-economic interventions targeting training, technical and asset needs	1.1 Designing and conducting assessments focusing on fishing and agriculture sectors	220 farmers benefiting from socio-economic interventions	Achieved
	1.2 Building capacities of fishing and agriculture cooperatives and enhancing their productivity	250 participants in the different training sessions	Achieved
	1.3 Training cooperative members and management on organisational, managerial, finance skills and assets	120 women provided with assets to improve their working conditions	Achieved
	1.4 Providing assets to fishermen and farmers and building their managerial and technical capacities	120 micro loans provided to SME business owners	On Track (80% completed)
	1.5 Conducting in-depth assessments of competitiveness in the agriculture and fishing sectors		Achieved
	1.6 Coordinating with other livelihood actors on the field with the aim to harmonise interventions		Achieved
	1.7 Providing business management training to SME's		Achieved
	1.8 Establishing a Women's Committee for the catchment area		Achieved
	1.9 Distribution microfinance loans through a local partner		Delayed (65% completed)

<b>Output 2:</b> Living conditions and livelihoods of communities improved through small scale infrastructure projects	2.1 Planning and implementing infrastructure projects with Municipalities through a participatory approach. 2.2 Training municipalities on infrastructure maintenance and financing of maintenance 2.3 Constructing and completing planned infrastructure projects	4 infrastructure projects completed	On track  On track  On track
<b>Output 3:</b> Dialogue improved through local level interventions, particularly targeting youth	3.1 Conducting youth dialogue sessions 3.2. Identifying target groups 3.3 Planning and completing 5 small scale youth projects in a participatory manner (including both hardware and software initiatives) 3.4 Organizing youth camps	60 youth actively participating in activities	Achieved  Achieved  Achieved  Achieved

### Implementation Constraints and Lessons Learned:

Some challenges were faced during the project implementation phase, leading to unforeseen delays in project implementation. They include:

1) *Municipal elections:* Progress in the project implementation was slowed considerably by the municipal elections that took place at the end of May 2010. The electoral campaigns started a month before the elections and most of the old municipal leaders were engaged in them. After the elections, formation of the municipal boards and committees was postponed until early July 2010. Municipal elections also led to significant changes in the councils of several municipalities, resulting in the need to build new relationships with the new authorities and to re-discuss the priorities previously established. This meant that, in practice, many of the activities related to the identification of infrastructure projects and the livelihoods needs were put on hold for a period of three months.

2) *Definition of the approach to support greenhouse crop production sector:* With respect to support to greenhouse crop production, the initial agreement with FAO which provided technical assistance to UNDP in this area was to provide farmers affected by the crisis in the region with assets to upgrade their existing greenhouses. The original beneficiaries target estimated 700 farmers with lost greenhouse assets. However, following a FAO technical mission in November 2010, and based on additional consultations, it became clear that the traditional greenhouse model is unsustainable, entails low yields and is highly prone to the spread of plant diseases and pests, thus having significantly less impact on food security. To provide a similar structure would have little or possibly negative impact on greenhouse crop production. Therefore, the methodology agreed as a result of the technical assistance mission was to identify 100 poor farmers and install an upgraded version of the greenhouse. These greenhouses, which FAO has successfully installed in Lebanon under a previous LRF project in the South, have proven to be highly appreciated by the farmers, more sustainable and durable than the previous model. The experience demonstrates the improvements possible in crop production and quality, higher market prices and increased incomes, reduced need for pesticides and therefore reduced levels of toxins in the food supply leading to better food safety and health outcomes. Finally, food security and nutrition at the household level are enhanced. While important in the medium and long term, this change in the proposed methodology led to delays in the finalisation of the technical specifications for the procurement of assets for green house production.

3) *Low rate of loan disbursement:* The rate of loan disbursements in the context of the micro credit component of the project, implemented by ILO in partnership with Al Majmoua, has been slower than expected for a number of reasons. First, there has been some reluctance on the part of business owners affected by the NBC crisis to consider micro credit options, as many benefited from grants in the aftermath of the NBC crisis and expressed their preference for continued support in the form of grants, as compared to micro credits which one must pay back. Secondly, the implementing NGO

partner Al Majmoua experienced problems related to staff retention, in view of increasing pressures from the communities to adopt Islamic micro financing approaches. However, steps have been taken to address the above challenges, in close collaboration with UNDP and ILO, to meet the disbursement target. At the end of February 2011, this number had reached 78 businesses and the project is moving ahead quickly.

4) *The rainy weather delayed the finalization of the agriculture roads.* The weather has now improved and all the works will be finalized by the end of April 2011.

5) It should be noted that the project has been forced to freeze implementation for a considerable period of time pending a response on the no-cost extension request. This may serve to reduce the impact of investments already made as well as drive up costs and raise the risk of unmet expectations, adding to the increased urgency of completing the work plan.

### Key Partnerships & Collaboration

- Letter of agreement with FAO, whereby FAO will provide technical assistance in the design and implementation of the interventions on the agricultural component that UNDP will be taking forward.
- Letter of agreement with ILO for the micro-finance component which will be undertaken with Al Majmoua.
- Grant agreement with Municipalities of Halba, Wadi El Jamous, Karkaf, Deir Amar, Hmaira, Borj El Arab signed
- Collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture formalized through exchange of letters.

### IV. FUTURE WORK PLAN – pending approval of the extension

KEY MILESTONES	April				May				June			
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
<b>Output 1: Livelihoods of farmers, fishermen and SME owners improved through socio-economic interventions targeting training, technical and asset needs</b>												
Activity 1.1 Designing and conducting assessments focusing on fishing and agriculture sectors												
Activity 1.2 Building capacities of fishing and agriculture cooperatives and enhancing their productivity												
Activity 1.3 Training cooperative members and management on organizational, managerial, finance skills and assets	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Activity 1.4 Providing assets to fishermen and farmers and building their managerial and technical capacities												
Activity 1.5 Conducting in-depth assessments of competitiveness in the agriculture and fishing sectors												
Activity 1.6 Coordinating with other livelihood actors on the field with the aim to harmonize interventions	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Activity 1.7 Providing business management training to SME's												

Activity 1.8 Establishing a Women's Committee for the catchment area																			
Activity 1.9 Distribution microfinance loans through a local partner	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X											
<b>Output 2: Living conditions and livelihoods of communities improved through small scale infrastructure projects</b>																			
Activity 2.1 Planning and implementing infrastructure projects with Municipalities through a participatory approach.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X											
Activity 2.2 Training municipalities on infrastructure maintenance and financing of maintenance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X											
Activity 2.3 Constructing and completing planned infrastructure projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X											
<b>Output 3: Dialogue improved through local level interventions, particularly targeting youth</b>																			
Activity 3.1 Conducting youth dialogue sessions																			
Activity 3.2. Identifying target groups																			
Activity 3.3 Planning and completing 5 small scale youth projects in a participatory manner (including both hardware and software initiatives)																			
Activity 3.4 Organizing youth camps																			

**Adjustments to strategies, outcomes or outputs:**

N/A