



PROGRESS REPORT

Reporting UN Organization	: United Nations Development Programme
Country	: Lebanon
Project No.	: 00072768
Project Title	: Recovery of Nahr El Bared Surrounding Lebanese Communities Affected by the 2006 and 2007 conflicts
LRF Signature date	: May 29, 2009
Project Start date	: August 2009
Project Timeframe	: August 2009 to March 2012
Reporting Period	: 1 January 2012 – 31 March 2012

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 was implemented in partnership with ILO and FAO. In particular, both UN agencies were 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 provided technical support and assistance to the design and implementation of the agricultural-related aspects of the project, including capacity building. ILO supported the implementation of the micro grant component, through its partnership with the local micro finance institution, Al Majmoua.

II. RESOURCES

Total budget approved USD	2,499,948.00
Total disbursements as of 31st of March 2011 USD	1,705,140.96
Commitments for next quarter USD	80,000
Available Balance USD	714,807.04

CATEGORY	TOTAL BUDGET USD	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
1. Personnel	235,400.00	213,262.91
2. Contracts	1,530,000.00	884,671.24
3. Training	285,000.00	283,458.81
4. Transport	4,000.00	1,563.33
5. Supplies and commodities	2,000.00	1,843.67
6. Equipment	80,000.00	83,386.10
7. Travel	80,000.00	34,752.57
8. Miscellaneous	120,000.00	90,651.05
Sub-total	2,336,400.00	1593,589.68
9. Agency Management Support	163,548.00	111,551.28
TOTAL	2,499,948.00	1,705,140.96

III. RESULTS

Progress in Project Implementation:

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

Greenhouses

The installation of the greenhouses started in January 2012 in Minyeh. Upon inspection of the materials installed, UNDP discovered that the contractor failed to comply with the technical specifications set in the contract meaning that if the contract was continued the farmers would get a

different type of greenhouses from that planned. In the interest of timely completion of the project, UNDP explored all options to ensure the compliance of the contractor with the technical specifications and the provision of the greenhouses to the targeted farmers. UNDP also remained in close contact with the 102 beneficiaries, in view of the expectations raised. However, in view of the contractor's persistent refusal to comply, UNDP terminated the contract in March 2012, and immediately proceeded with retendering with a deadline of March 29, 2012.

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.

The facility will be managed by the four selected cooperatives (two cooperatives from the Bkarzla village and one from Hosniyeh and Der Dalloum) and the municipality of Bkarzala was later added as an additional partner in this initiative, to ensure the long term sustainability of this activity.

The selected cooperatives and their 20 members attended the training on the production and use of the olive compost conducted in 9-10 and 16-17 November 2010. 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 for 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 olive compost will be sold to the farmers with a cost cheaper than the compost existing in the market. There is a high demand for such organic product in the North, and the estimated net profit per ton is USD 100. The project undertook a study of the proposed composting facility which found that the project is feasible and a worthwhile investment for the region. In particular, the feasibility study anticipated an average revenue per year of 56,000,000 Lebanese liras, which will increase by 16.6% for two consecutive years. In the most likely scenario outlined in the study, the profit made will be 37.8% and the investment will be returned in 4 years and 9 months, based on the production of 900 tons of compost by the cooperatives during this period.¹ Returns will be sufficient to cover human resource and maintenance cost which will assure sustainability of the project. As the organic product will be used for the olive composting and no mechanical equipment are required, the operational cost will remain very minimal and limited to the fees of the laborers and the tractor fuel costs. The feasibility study also covered most aspects of the business plan for the Olive Solid Waste Composting Facility, which will be further formalized with the cooperatives, once the facility is functional.

The permit which the four cooperatives requested was granted by the Order of Engineers at the end of January 2012. Unfortunately UNDP discovered that the permit was not in line with the technical drawings of the Olive Solid Waste Facility in February when a technical meeting was held to re-start the works. With technical support from UNDP, a new request was submitted on March 28, 2012, and approved in April 5, 2012.

¹ The study also looked at best and worst scenarios. The best case scenario is that the cooperatives will produce 1,125 tons making the profit 41% and the worst case scenario is that the cooperatives will only produce 675 tons reducing the profit to 33%.

The remaining civil works to be accomplished include finalization of the concrete works, the installation of the hangar and the prefabricated office unit. The total budget allocated for this activity is USD 260,792 USD (including the civil works, provision of raw material and equipment as well as the technical supervision of the works). After the finalization of the civil works, on the job training will be delivered to the cooperatives in order to manage the unit.

Since the olive byproduct will be mixed to other plant and animal byproduct with very low water content, liquid residue will be minimal. In addition a drainage canal was implemented surrounding the unit to retain all extra liquid that may result from the composting process and will gather them in a treatment tank.

Approximately 200 farmers will benefit from the olive compost during the first year of the functioning of the facility which will reduce the environmental impact of the olive waste as well as the cost of buying the organic compost for which there is a large demand in the area.

Project output 2 "Living conditions and livelihoods of communities improved through small scale infrastructure projects"

Waste Water Treatment Facility

Following the finalization of the environmental impact assessment and the feasibility study in November 2011, UNDP requested the municipality to confirm their ability to obtain a permit for the facility before proceeding with the request for no-cost extension. The municipality confirmed in late February 2012 that a permit will not be granted by the Ministry of Water and Energy to undertake the above works, as the installation of the Bkarezla waste water treatment is part of the CDR master plan. This activity will therefore not be implemented as part of this project.

Following the request of the LRF chair to support the Bkarezla municipality in changing the main sewerage and storm water pipeline at the end of March 2012, UNDP is assessing the feasibility, time frame and costs of this request and will inform the LRF committee accordingly, following the assessment.

Project output 3 "Dialogue improved through local level interventions, particularly targeting youth"

All activities were finalized in 2011. As a summary, the below activities were undertaken with youth within the framework of the project:

- A 'sport for peace camp' gathering 75 Lebanese and Palestinian youth was organized. The camp aimed at providing conflict prevention skills through technical sports skills and creating mixed-Lebanese/Palestinian teams.
- A 2 day sport tournament gathering mixed football team created in the sports camp was conducted;
- A two-day workshop gathering 22 Lebanese and Palestinian young men and women conducted. Attendees were provided with conflict prevention and networking and leadership skills;
- Mountain trail activity gathering 20 young Palestinian and Lebanese men and women was conducted. The objective was to provide an agreeable environment for youth to exchange and be trained on conflict prevention and resolution skills.
- A youth perception study on Lebanese/Palestinian relations was undertaken.
- The Lebanese Palestinian cine club was supported through provision of training and equipment. Technical and organizational training was provided in order to better support the cine club members to run a cine club
- The Lebanese Palestinian Choir gathering 35 Lebanese and Palestinian young men and women was provided technical support.

Project Outputs	Activities	Targets	Status
Output 1: 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	250 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	150 women benefited from the cooperative trainings and activities among those 120 women were 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	Achieved
	1.5 Conducting in-depth assessments of competitiveness in the agriculture and fishing sectors	102 farmers provided with greenhouses	Pending
	1.6 Coordinating with other livelihood actors on the field with the aim to harmonise interventions		
	1.7 Providing business management training to SME's		
	1.8 Establishing a Women's Committee for the catchment area		
	1.9 Distribution microfinance loans through a local partner		
Output 2: 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.	Olive Solid Waste Composting Facility	Pending
	2.2 Training municipalities on infrastructure maintenance and financing of maintenance		
	2.3 Constructing and completing planned infrastructure projects		
Output 3: Dialogue improved through local level interventions, particularly targeting youth	3.1 Conducting youth dialogue sessions	60 youth actively participating in activities	Achieved
	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		

Implementation Constraints and Lessons Learned:

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

- 1) The implementation of the greenhouses faced unexpected delays. It is anticipated that the process of award of contract will be completed by the last week of April and completion of all contracted works by end of September 2012. UNDP requested a no-cost extension to the Steering Committee of the LRF, given the impact of this project component on the livelihoods

of the farmers and their communities, the expectations raised and the fact that the experienced delays in the implementation were beyond the control of UNDP.

- 2) As mentioned above, the implementation of the Olive Solid Waste Facility also experienced unexpected delays which were beyond the control of UNDP. The no-cost extension requested also includes the finalization of the above initiative.