

**THREE-MONTH PROGRESS REPORT**

**LEBANON RECOVERY FUND**

**Reporting** **UN Participating Organisation:** FAO

### Country: Lebanon

### Project No. and Project Title:

LRF-14 OSRO/LEB/703/UNJ - Forest Fires Management, Prevention and Control and Damaged Forests Assessment and Rehabilitation

### Reporting Period:     1 October to 31 December 2010

**LRF-14 OSRO/LEB/703/UNJ: Integrated forest fires management – forest fires prevention, forest fires fighting (control) and damaged forests assessment and rehabilitation**

### I. PURPOSE

* **Main objectives and outcomes expected as per approved Project/Programme/project Document.**

The objective of the proposed programme is to create the enabling environment for the Government of Lebanon to address through its early recovery efforts: 1)the prevention of future forests fires; 2) the efficient fighting of fires when they occur; 3) updating the assessment of the ecological and socio-economic damage resulting from the July 2006 war as well as by the enormous fires that were erupted simultaneously and repeatedly during October 2007 in different parts of the country; and 4) the rehabilitation of forests that were damaged during the July 2006 war and recent environmental disasters to allow for re-access of rural communities to their land resources (woodlands, forests, etc.) through the alleviation of obstacles, such as demining.

* **Reference to how the programme/project relates to the national priorities and how it aims to support national reconstruction goals of Lebanon.**

The programme is part of the Ministry of Environment’s (MoE) National Campaign for the management of forests in Lebanon (prevention, control and rehabilitation) that has been recently launched in cooperation with the various partners and stakeholders. The main implementing partner for the project is the Association for Forests, Development and Conservation (AFDC).

* **A listing of the main international and national implementing partners involved.**

FAO’s partners include MoE, AFDC, Ministry of Agriculture and the Lebanon Agriculture Research Institute (LARI). The MoE and Ministry of Agriculture strengths include the policy and institutional capacities for sustainability of forest protection and conservation in Lebanon. AFDC has close community collaboration and is the leading NGO in forest development in the country and LARI provides technical assistance in finalization of fire fighting equipment for delivery under the project.

### II. RESOURCES

**This section includes total approved budget and summary of resources available to the programme/project from LRF and non-LRF resources, identifying earmarking if applicable.**

**Total Programme/Project Cost: US $ 2 600 000**

**LRF:** US $ 2 600 000

**Government Input:** US $ 0

**Other:** US $ 0

**Total: US $ 2 600 000**

**Budget: commitment and disbursement:**

The below budget reflects all expenditures up to 31 December 2010

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| **OSRO/LEB/703/LEB** |
| Item | Approved Budget (in US$): | EstimatedDisbursement/Commitment (in US$) |
| Personnel and travel: | 272 276 | 267,511 |
| Contracts: | 1 300 000 | 1 150 000 |
| Supplies/Commodities/Equipment | 805 000 | 711,880 |
| Miscellaneous/Other: | 52 724 | 49 087 |
| Agency Support Costs: | 170 000 | 100 790 |
| TOTAL: | 2 600 000 | 2,127,238 |

**Personnel and travel costs:**

FAO expenditures for personnel and travel cover relevant travel costs and costs for the forestry national consultant and technical backstopping missions from Headquarters on project implementation. Financial obligations for equipment to be purchased have been entered into by the Organization and will be delivered in 90 days (approximately April). FAO plans to maintain staff to complete this activity beyond the project end date and a request for extension to 30 May is being prepared to LRF.

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| **Item:** | **Approved Budget cost (US$):** | **Estimated Disbursement/Commitment (US$)** |
| Personnel and travel: | 272 276 | 267 511 |

**Contracts:**

FAO and AFDC entered into a contractual agreement valued at a total of USD 1 million for services under i) Letter of Agreement for the public awareness campaign and training and ii) Services Contract to undertake an assessment for land preparation and clearing, establish a tree nursery, reforest 85 hectares of damaged land, and manage rehabilitation of fire management infrastructure.

The letter of Agreement with AFDC consisted on two main component: Awareness campaign (2009) and eleven training sessions of training. Three of these session treated the Incident Command System and were given by the Unites States Forestry Service for the Cvil Defense, Army, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Environment... These training were helpful for all participants to coordinate together, they provided also additional knowledge to run the multi0-institutional operation room established by a previous project.

One training was assured for the Lebanese Air Force, and some officers participated to conference on aerial fighting in Canada. Two training were done for the municipalities.

Other training focused more on the field fighting, participants belonged to various organizations and institutions. The diversity of these participants regarding the location and institutions showed good communication and coordination among the institutions in fire fighting.

The service contract consisted on the establishment of a forest tree nursery, implementation of forest fire infrastructure and reforestation. Most of the infrastructure is dine. However, delay was observed in the implementation of the heli spot due to the multi institutional coordination needed. In fact, the Helispot will used mainly by the air force, and technical specifications are needed in order to be acquainted for its use by helicopters. So, FAO and AFDC assured all the coordination with the local authorities and the army.

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| **Item:** | **Approved Budgeted cost (US$):** | **Estimated Disbursement /Commitment (US$)** |
| Letter of Agreement | 184 000 | 184 000 |
| Services Contract | 816 000 | 816 000 |
| Small Grants Programme | 300 000 | 231 600 |

In addition, FAO issued nine contracts through the Small Grant Programme implemented through the MoE for community level fire prevention and control activities.

In coordination with the Ministry of Agriculture, four Municipalities and five NGOs were selected as beneficiaries of this program.

Through an announcement, the Ministry of Environment called the NGOs and Municipalities for a Small Grant program. The announcement defined the objectives of the project, the priorities, technical requirement, the area, and criteria for the selection of beneficiaries.

The project proposals might aim at the restoration of burnt area, prevention, protection and fighting fires in high risk areas. was also one of the objectives. The Ministry of Environment provided also the list of high, medium and low risk fire map.

The priorities of the proposals were limited to fire prevention, fighting and restoration:

Fire Prevention:

- Maintenance of forest, cleaning and removing the grasses especially on the road sides and provision of the tools for the NGOs and municipalities. The applicant should request the Ministry of Agriculture officially for license when needed.

- Ensuring water sources for example maintenance of water ponds or build new ones, install water outlets near the forests

- Dense environmental awareness on forest protection and economical value at schools, universities and through the media. The awareness could be on forest fire, risk, prevention, fighting… These campaigns should be in the rural and risk areas and focus directly the local communities.

- Statistics or detailed and useful maps related to the integrated management of the green area (water, climate …). It should focus on the burnt areas. It is possible to cooperate with the Lebanese army.

- Increase the volunteers for the Civil Defense especially during the fire season.

Fire Fighting

- Ensuring primary tools for the NGOs and municipalities

- Training of volunteers for fire fighting

Restoration

- Reforestation of coniferous burnt areas

- Restoration or construction of nurseries for local species especially the endangered ones

The Ministry of Environment has also defined the technical requirements for the project. It should be for less than one year duration, meet the objectives of th small grant in a vulnerable area. The project should be classified as priority and should meet sustainable human development and correct environmental management. More attention will be given to pilot and new project ideas.

Beneficiaries were selected through two steps. The first step done by an administrative committee from the Ministry of Environment, it selected thirteen complete proposals out of twenty three proposals. The second step consisted to study the fourteen proposals technically and choose the beneficiaries. A technical committee formed from AFDC, Ministry of Environment, FAO and private sector was established by the Minister of Environment. According to the technical criteria, this committee selected nine beneficiaries for the small Grant Program.

Within the nine small grant projects, a lot of activities were achieved such as instalment of fire fighting infrastructure, building water reservoirs for fire fighting in three sites, reforestation, awareness, maintenance of forest...

Follow up from FAO and the Ministry of Agriculture sides is being undertaken. Frequent field visits were done to the project side. The achievement are really successful especially for from the impact side. The municipalities and NGOs provided additional funds to complete their projects or to extend them. The water reservoirs were built with a capacity exceeding the requirements in the service contracts in Daroun, Maknounieh and Bentael. The Municipality of Daroun extended the cultural and environmental tracks from three to seven km...

The small grant program was really the first step for the beneficiaries to start the implementation of fire fighting infrastructure. A budget was endorsed to maintain yearly this infrastructure.

The election of new municipal councils during June 2010 caused miscommunication with the municipalities due to the unavailability of the candidates. In addition, the new council was in most cases unaware about the project requested by the previous council. This lack of coordination among the old and new councils delayed the stating of some projects. This urge FAO to communicate with the new councils, present the project and urge the new council to sign the contract of small grant, it was really a difficult task to keep the new councils aware and informed about the procedure before the implementation of the projects.

**Equipment:**

As mentioned in previous progress reports, delivery for the following equipment was completed: fire fighting safety clothing, fire fighting manual tools and fire hose. Six pick up trucks were delivered during the fourth quarter of 2009. The supplies and equipment for the fire truck were delivered during the reporting period and retrofitting of the trucks with fire fighting accessories was also achieved during the last quarter of 2010.

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| **Item:** | **Approved Budgeted cost (US$):** | **Estimated Disbursement /Commitment (US$)** |
| Equipment and supplies | 805 000 | 711 88- |

It was agreed by the inter ministerial Forest Fire committee that the Forest fire fighting tools and hoses were delivered to the Civil Defense cause additional tools provided by other projects were delivered to NGOs and to the Ministry of Agriculture personnel. However, Bambi buckets were delivered to the Lebanese Air Force, these buckets were delivered on time with the beginning of the fire season and the use of new helicopters provided to the army..

Six trucks were purchased, four of them were delivered to the Civil Defense and two will be delivered to AFDC as per the project document. But, AFDC will deliver them to the municipalities of Andaket and Dmit where the forest areas are highly vulnerable, ,these vehicle will be used by the Municipalities and AFDC unit in the field.These trucks are the first low capacity trucks to be used by the Civil Defense. These vehicle are characterized by the small capacity (They are useful in narrow roads and they can access closer to the fife during the operation. The receipt of these trucks were undertaken in collaboration with the Civil defense.

The specifications of the equipment were established in coordination with the Ministry of Environment, Civil Defense, Lebanese Army and FAO.

**Other costs (General Operating Expenses, and Miscellaneous):**

Expenses under “Other”, which groups budget lines such as general operating expenses, miscellaneous and overhead costs are indicated below.

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| **Item:** | **Approved Budget cost (US$):** | **Estimated Disbursement/Commitment****(US$)** |
| Other: | 52 724 | 49 087 |

### III. RESULTS

**Outcome:**

Supporting early recovery and alleviating poverty through improved forest fires management (prevention, control, assessment and rehabilitation) and their associated benefits to environment and rural communities.

**Immediate Objectives:**

1. Adoption and implementation of preventive measures aiming at forests protection from fires and other risks. Adoption and implementation of control measures aiming at efficient forest fire fighting.
2. Adoption and implementation of control measures aiming at efficient forest fire fighting.
3. Assessment of the cost of environmental degradation from forest fires.
4. Assessment and rehabilitation of forests in areas that suffered from the July 2006 war and October devastating fires.
5. Restoration of livelihoods generated from the sound and sustainable use of forested trees (longterm).

**Outputs:**

Output 1: *Prevention*

Establishment of fire breaks, forest cleaning and clearing, promotion of research and development related to forest fire prevention.

Output 2: *Control:*

Software and hardware tools for fire fighting supplied and maintained

Output 3: *Assessment & rehabilitation*

Ecological and socio-economic losses from forest fires assessedand best restoration techniques for damaged forests identified, implemented and monitored

Output 4 awareness and capacity building:

Targeted public awareness and knowledge increased and strengthened for issues related to forests fire prevention, forest fires fighting, and damaged forests rehabilitation. Capacity building for local municipalities, communities and stakeholders on issues related to forests fire prevention, forest fires fighting, and damaged forests rehabilitation.

**Main activities undertaken and achievements:**

Truck accessories for retrofitting six pick up trucks purchased under the project into fire trucks have been purchased and delivered to the Civil Defense in Lebanon.during the last quarter of 2010.

Under the training programme carried out by AFDC, training on forest fire fighting techniques for the staff of the municipalities in Baabda Metn Region was conducted in December 2010. The training focused on forest efficiency, causes of forest fires and increased awareness of how to reduce fires. The role of the municipalities in the forest fire management was a main subject in this training.

FAO is currently finalizing a legal framework review on forest fires and identify gaps, contradictions and recommendations with forest law in Lebanon. A workshop will be undertaken during the next reporting period.

Under the Small Grants Programme, FAO entered into contractual agreements with nine beneficiary organizations that will carry out activities at the local and community level for forest fire prevention and control. The total value of these agreements is valued at USD 231 600. These contracts consist on building water reservoirs, fire lookout, maintenance of forest, creation of buffer zones and reforestation activities.

**Implementation constraints, lessons learned from addressing these and knowledge gained from evaluations and studies that have taken place during the reporting period.**

* Current general political and security situation.

**Key partnerships and inter-agency collaboration: impact on results.**

* Close collaboration with MOE as the main national counterpart is continuous.
* Close collaboration with MOA on the development of the restoration plans for the targeted areas.
* Close collaboration with AFDC as main implementing partner

**Other highlights and cross cutting issues pertinent to the results being reported on.**

The project activities and agreement modalities with AFDC are now underway and more details on implementation will be reported on in the next progress report.

### IV. FUTURE WORK PLAN

Action plan proceeding as per established workplan approved at the last Project Steering Committee Meeting. The main activities for next reporting period are the following:

* Planting of seedlings by end of the project;
* Organizing a workshop on legal issues
* Proceeding with the nine small grant projects
* Finalizing the infrastructure activities

**Indication of major adjustments in the strategies, targets or key outcomes and outputs.**

* Due to unforeseen elections in June 2010 in the municipalities which the Small Grants Programme was to be undertaken, the programme was delayed by four months. FAO has already entered into financial obligations with nine beneficiary organizations, the activities and disbursements for these activities will go beyond project end date. A request for project no-cost extension to 30 May 2011 is being requested.

**Estimated Budget required (including any major funding shortfalls).**

Currently no funding shortfall is foreseen.