



Joint Programme 2022 Annual Progress Report

SDG Financing Portfolio - Component 1

Cover page

UNCT/MCO: Lebanon

Reporting Period: 1 January - 31 December 2022

JP title: Gender Responsive National Budgeting and Private Investing for SDG2-Zero Hunger

Stakeholder partner: Parliamentarians; National Government;

Thematic SDG Areas: SDG localization;

PUNOs: UNDP, FAO, UN Women

Top- up received as part of DEM: No

Total estimated expenditures: US\$ \$ 201,956.0

Total estimated commitments (including expenditures): US\$ \$ 499,516.0

Gender Marker: Gender-transformative (for example, the JP explicitly aimed to address the structural and root causes of gender inequality, such as by combining social protection with community dialogues and economic empowerment activities that aim to shift gender social norms and power relations)

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Executive Summary

Despite the ongoing crisis, the main achievement are the following:

- A consultant was hired by UNW to provide an analysis of the current budget law (2022) from a gender perspective and to suggest concrete recommendations to mainstream gender into the budgeting process and is taking the Ministry of Agriculture as a pilot ministry.

- The consultant hired by FAO continued the work on compiling the existing documents and studies available at the ministry of Agriculture in Lebanon to perform the activities related to analysis of public expenditure reviews as well as gender responsive budgeting.

In addition, a methodology for an assessment survey was drafted and shared with FAO concerned Officers in Rome. The aim is to collect quantitative and qualitative information with organizations/institutions involved in projects related to the agricultural sector.

- The 3 UN Agencies held a meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture focal points of the UNJP as informative session and to better understand the needs and priorities of the ministry in the context of the ongoing crises with

regard to the implementation of the activities within the remaining timeframe of the project.

- UNDP and UNW created a platform to engage newly elected parliamentarians and create an advocacy group within parliament to discuss issues related to socio-economic development, gender, budgeting and other.

Annual Progress

Overall JP self-assessment of 2022 progress:

Not satisfactory (majority of expected annual results not achieved; over 3 months delay in implementation)

Overall progress and key developments to date (3 key JP milestones)

Despite the challenges referred to in section 10. Below, the three agencies collaboratively worked for furthering progress on the JP:

For instance, UNDP held several meetings with the Ministry of Finance with the purpose of initiating related activities, but the Ministry- suffering a severe shortage in human resources- was not responsive. Also, UNW's did not receive any buy-in from the Ministry of Agriculture. Still, more meetings are to take place soon to explore possible options. UNW had planned to analyze previous budgets from a gender perspective and draw recommendations to ensure that budgets and financing in Lebanon are gender sensitive. UNW also started negotiating with Bassel Felihane Institute (BFI) a knowledge center at the Lebanese Ministry of Finance that expressed their interest to partner with UNW and the project to push forward this agenda.

Similarly, over the previous periods, UNW attempted to ensure that any forthcoming recovery plans in Lebanon are gender responsive, including the importance of making sure gender responsive budgeting is mainstreamed, through developing an open letter to the IMF which included a set of recommendations which aim to ensure that any forthcoming recovery must be gender responsive. The letter was sent on behalf of the ambassadors of Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Finland in Lebanon and the Head of UN Women in Lebanon regarding a Gender Responsive Recovery for Lebanon.

Over the period, UN Women continued to mobilize partnerships through meetings with parliamentarians, women and child parliamentary committee, and consulted with newly elected female MPs, MOA and BFI to ensure gender responsive support is provided. And in the next reporting period UNW is hiring a consultant and will be working closely with BFI to conduct the following:

- Develop a report analyzing the current budget law and prospects of mainstreaming gender into the Lebanese budget system while taking the Ministry of Agriculture as a pilot ministry
- Develop and provide training from report findings to be conducted and provided to line ministries, including MoF and MoA, as well as identify trainees and provide a write-up of training results
- Support the development of Communications material based on report results, including main takeaways, lessons, key messages, and others
- Organize exchange workshop with parliamentarians presenting results of reports and case studies from countries who have successfully implemented GRB

Also, UNDP and UNWomen brought together the newly elected women parliamentarians to provide an open space for discussion and debate national concerns, mainly the socio-economic challenges and budgeting process.

UNDP is refocusing its interventions to cater for mitigating the food security risks threatening the country, particularly after the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, and the resulting hike in food prices and the massive shortage in supply mainly in wheat. Also, through other programmes and projects, UNDP works on addressing the implications of the crisis on civil servants, with the aim of finding solutions to sustain critical functions of the government and improve the capacity of the government counterparts.

In parallel, the FAO consultant, initiated work on SDG2 public interventions inventory development (projects, investments) and most specifically that related to the implementation of activities under its output 3.1 "Develop a Financing Strategy for Gender Responsive SDG2 in the Context of the National Agricultural Strategy 2021-2025", and towards the foundations of the output 3.2 "A Public-Private Dialogue SDG2 Forum is Established to Mobilize

SDG2 Finance Mobilization/Leveraging Options.

The consultant will support the establishment of a specific inventory of public investments and development projects for SDG 2, aimed at improving the capacity to plan, coordinate and monitor public interventions in the areas of food and nutrition security & sustainable agriculture.

Main Challenges, adjustments and lessons:

In March 2022, the project was extended till end of June 2023. Over the reporting period, new political and socio-economic developments emerged that hindered progress on the joint programme, despite several attempts by partner agencies to initiate activities with the Government counterparts. Since May 2022, and following the general elections, the Government assumed a caretaker role. Until the preparation of this report, no new government has been formed and the political deadlock has deepened further as the mandate of the Lebanon's president came to an end On October 31, 2022, resulting in prolonging the institutional void.

During the same period, the socio-economic situation continued to deteriorate. Massive depreciation in the local currency triggered a sharp inflationary trend that resulted in massive losses in the purchasing power of the public sector employees. Also, the working conditions of public sector agencies are deteriorating affecting the functionality of these agencies. Productivity is reduced to minimum as public sector employees are reporting for 1-2 days per week, because of low real wages, high transportation costs, in addition to the unfavorable working conditions (low access to electricity, internet, and office supplies). The situation triggered several strikes by the public sector employees, calling for the improvement of their overall conditions. Within this political and economic context, the budget process is completely halted. Budget 2022 was quickly approved by the parliament in September 2022, and published in November 2022 without elaborate internal discussions at the level of the government that has been in a caretaker status since May's parliamentary elections — i.e., with limited execution powers.

Against this reality, the Government agencies, acting as key counterparts in the programme implementation are not being responsive, under the title that they are short on resources and they are not able to handle the daily work due to the deteriorating working conditions.

The joint programme will continue to face serious challenges affecting the achievement of the expected results, including:

- The continuous deterioration in the economic situation and its direct impact on the productivity and functionality of the public sector, such as low real wages, high transportation cost, and deteriorating working conditions in the workplace (no electricity, internet, and office supplies)
- The delay in forming a new government and in electing a new president which affects any decision-making related to the programme activities and progress
- The expected delay in the budgeting process

SDG Acceleration

Target 2a – The programme is in the process of building an inventory of public investments and development projects for SDG 2, aimed at improving the capacity to plan, coordinate and monitor public interventions in the areas of food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture.

Target 16.6-The programme is in the process of developing ana analysis of the current budget law and prospects of mainstreaming gender into the Lebanese budget system while taking the Ministry of Agriculture as a pilot ministry

Updates on SDG financing framework

	Assessment Diagnostics	Monitoring	Governance
Inception phase	Financing Strategy	Review	Coordination

Descriptions on progress by INFF building blocks

Inception Phase:

Assessment & Diagnostics:

Financing Strategy:

Monitoring & Review:

Governance & Coordination:

Annual Reporting on Results

JP contributions to the Joint SDG Fund's global cost of living crisis

Next steps, scaling and sustainability [400 words]

The JP is currently consulting with government and the fund on way forward given the current context and difficulties in country.

Priority Cross-cutting Issues

Cross-cutting results/issues

The programme worked on empowering female parliamentarians to better understand the crisis context, its impact on the wider population and on understanding the budgeting process as a way to promote equality and economic growth.

How did the JP apply the Gender Marker

The JP is Gender-transformative (for example, the JP explicitly aimed to address the structural and root causes of gender inequality, such as by combining social protection with community dialogues and economic empowerment activities that aim to shift gender social norms and power relations). Evidence, data collection and analysis (e.g. gender assessments of programmes; policy briefs, costing for scale-up of social services); Policy dialogues, advocacy (e.g. direct inputs to national policies, strategies, laws, including women's and girls' rights groups in coordination mechanisms);

Focus on LNOB cross cutting principles

Human Rights	Persons with disabilities	Youth	Environmental and social standards
No	No	No	No

Strategic Partnerships, Documents and Communications

How did the JP facilitate collaboration with diverse stakeholders in the SDG financing space

The programme managed to create partnerships with the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Agriculture. Despite the disabling environment governing the country and the severe shortage in human and financial resources available to these institutions, they are trying to engage by prioritizing activities to help overcome the emerging difficulties, mainly in terms lack of access to domestic and international resources. A plan of action was achieved with the Ministry of agriculture that gained buy-in at the ministerial level.

Also, the programme managed to bring together parliamentarians from different political backgrounds and formed a safe space to discuss emerging developments to better equip these parliamentarians with analytical background for scrutinizing the general budget.

Donor and Strategic events attended by JP in 2022

JP steering committee/ programme board meeting	Strategic partners/ donors event	Closing meeting/ event
No	No	No

JP contribution to SDG Financing

Drafted a bill, strategy, and/or approved a law increasing the fiscal space for the policy focus	Produced financing, costing, diagnostic and feasibility analyses as a basis to invest or increase spending on the SDGs	Improved efficiency (cost savings) in the management of programmes/schemes	Improved effectiveness of (value for money; social impact of \$1 spent) sector investment on the SDGs	Drafted policies/regulatory frameworks or developed tools to incentivize private sector investment on the SDGs	Structured financial instruments (public, private or blended) to leverage additional funding	new instruments or private additional funding
No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Main capacity building activities supported by the JP that allowed people to expand their knowledge on SDG Financing and INFFs

No similar activities were implemented yet