

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Reported progress was mostly concentrated in the first two outputs of the sector – access to income (490 beneficiaries) and employability (661 beneficiaries of skills training, but also career guidance, access to employment services, and internship schemes). Despite good progress, it should be emphasized that the sector is not only far off its targets on both counts, but also not on track to reach the same number of beneficiaries as last year. Throughout 2014, nearly 14,000 people benefitted from skills training, against only 2,600 so far this year. As for income generating opportunities (typically 200\$ additional income per beneficiary per month), the total number of beneficiaries reached this year is just over 3,000; against nearly 6,000 last year.

It should also be noted that beneficiaries of these activities remain quite gender unbalanced: while beneficiaries of income generating activities are predominantly males (80% this month), women are mostly involved in activities around employability (80% of beneficiaries in August). It is crucial to also increase access to income for women, in particular to prevent negative coping mechanisms such as child labour. This applies particularly for the Syrian community, where child labour is increasingly prevalent as a negative coping mechanism, particularly in the current harvesting season.

Activities are also ongoing in other areas of the sector but will require more time to show results. For example, 6 partners are currently supporting SMEs and cooperatives in over 30 different locations. This include projects to set up mobile markets in Beirut southern suburbs to support women cooperatives access retailers, to support the launching of businesses by youth entrepreneurs in Akkar. A project aiming at increasing the productive capacities and quality standards of MSMEs was recently completed by UNIDO and the Ministry of Industry in the Bekaa. 13 MSMEs received both equipment and capacity building to expand their production and better understand export requirement and opportunities – an estimated 1,500 household will benefit from the increased capacity of the businesses. Five interventions aiming at upgrading value chains are also under way. The continuous scaling up of these activities will be crucial for job creation in the most vulnerable areas.

