

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

Progress in the month of August was concentrated around youth activities. Partners took advantage of the summer months to organize summer camps and other recreational/cultural/sport activities to engage youth – 147 youth joined these activities in August. Other notable progress of the sector includes support to municipalities, in particular the start of a programme to support the Union of Municipalities in Tal Abbas – Akkar. This included setting up six participatory mechanisms in the Municipalities of the Union to facilitate the identification of priorities by the municipality, as well as providing capacity support to 9 municipalities (12 municipal officials trained so far). This programme will help address a gap of the sector coverage in the Akkar governorate, where the Western part of Akkar was less covered.

In total, the sector has helped set up 144 consultative forums at the local level to improve participatory local governance, involving 1,800 host community members. 251 municipalities and 11 Unions are receiving capacity support, notably in terms of staffing support, technical assistance to improve service delivery and conflict management. Actual capacity development for municipal officials remains limited, with 221 local officials trained so far this year, or less than one per targeted municipality. This is an area where additional funding is necessary to ensure sustainability of the progress made.

Only one new community support project was completed in August (the renovation of a public garden in Bar Elias, to be used by local schools, associations and by the municipality), which is well below the average of 15 new projects in previous months. 55 other projects are currently under implementation and will be completed by the end of the year in Bekaa (29), South&Nabatieh (12), Akkar (5), North (4), and Mount Lebanon (5). Moreover, a comparison between last year and this year's implementation and community support projects and support to basic services illustrates the shift in the approach of the sector towards larger-scale projects: while the total number of projects implemented this year is much lower than last year (117 so far for 2015 vs 242 from Jan-Aug 2014), the investments in host communities through these projects is 50% higher this year (US\$7.6m invested vs. \$5m last year). On average, projects implemented this year to reduce tensions and alleviate resource pressure in the most vulnerable localities are therefore three times bigger.

