

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Progress in the livelihoods sector remain in line with those noted in March, with activities concentrated on providing rapid-income generating activities and support to employability, and results slowly emerging in the newer areas of work of the sector. In addition, partners' reports show a definite increase in the coverage of the sector. Nine partners reported livelihoods activities in 47 cadastres in April, the highest numbers to date.

An improvement of results to date is also visible in new strategic areas of the sector: 19 new MSMEs and cooperatives received support this month, through technology transfer (6) and start-up cash grant and business support package (13). Similarly, the work of the sector in terms of policy support and development to public institutions is also accelerating, with 14 local workshops organized in Akkar over the month of April to support employment policy and labour market strategy.

Yet, all these emerging results do not drastically change the overall situation of progress in the sector which remain limited and far off target. The area of Tripoli remains a critical gap, with only two partners reporting results in the entire North Governorate, while a recent ESCWA study showed that 57% of Tripoli residents are deprived and 26% extremely deprived.

In addition, while activities related to rapid income generation and skills training remain the most important of the sector, they have actually slowed down compared to previous months: there were only 176 beneficiaries of rapid income generation activities and 327 beneficiaries of market based skills trainings in April against 766 and 547 respectively in March. This is due to some major programs of partners closing down due to a funding gap, and to the difficulty of others to bring their respective programmes to scale and the unclear legal framework for refugees to access work.

Finally, there has not been any significant update at the national level on livelihoods related to a new national livelihoods policy. The Ministry of Social Affairs is consolidating inputs from other ministries on the national government livelihoods strategy. In the meantime, it seems that the current restrictions placed on Syrians registered as refugees with UNHCR regarding access to employment are causing a labour shortage in some sectors, with the media, partners, and various agricultural syndicates all reporting a lack of labour force in the agriculture sector.

