

SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Livelihoods sector is a key priority for the Government of Lebanon. In this respect, the Ministry of Social Affairs is leading a process to determine and refine the livelihoods sector strategy. This will be done in two phases, with first an internal governmental process between the different ministries, followed by a national workshop on livelihoods planned in March which will be opened to sector's members.

In the meantime, some livelihoods activities have started, although most partners are still developing their annual plans and programmes and results to date remain modest. In this respect, the ongoing activities of the sector are very much in line with 2014 livelihoods activities, focused on rapid income generation and vocational training: 169 vulnerable persons benefitted from rapid income generations, for a total of 1,163 workmen days created and 38 individuals benefitted from skills training.

New activities include supporting access to internship, on-the-job training and apprenticeship which reached 69 people. As for support to micro, small, and medium enterprises, IOM support to Lebanese returnees through small in-kind donations resulted in the establishment of 36 new micro-enterprises.

Despite all these various activities, the sector is in need of increased support throughout the year to achieve its objectives. This is especially true in light of the increase need to livelihoods support for vulnerable groups, particularly displaced Syrians. An assessment by Save the Children on displaced Syrians' needs, priorities and coping strategies in the winter season highlighted the lack of income of displaced Syrians, compounded by the simultaneous fall in income generation capacity caused by the seasonal fall in demand for temporary labour and the increase in household expenditure relating to winter needs. The study points out that access to income also has wider effects on displaced Syrian living conditions in Lebanon: when refugees have cash to spend, they are more respected in their host communities because of their purchasing power. However, displaced Syrians are still perceived as the main competitors for local jobs among host community residents, something they also sympathise with and acknowledge.

