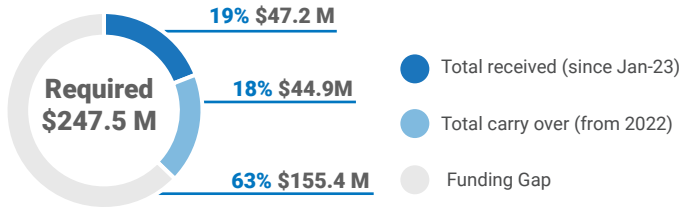




The End of Year dashboard summarizes the progress made by partners involved in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan and highlights trends affecting people in need. The Livelihoods Sector in Lebanon is working to: OUTCOME 1) Stimulate local economic growth and market systems to foster income-generating opportunities and decent and safe employment; OUTCOME 2) Improve workforce employability; OUTCOME 3) Strengthen policy development and enabling environment for job creation.

2023 Sector funding status

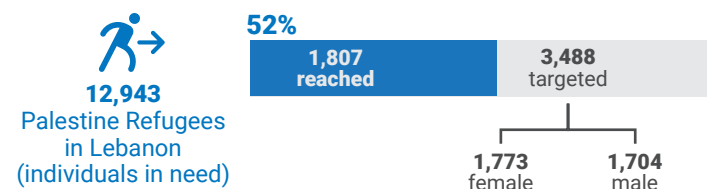
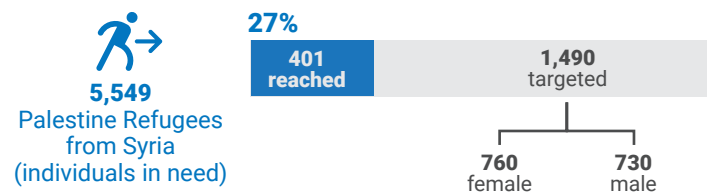
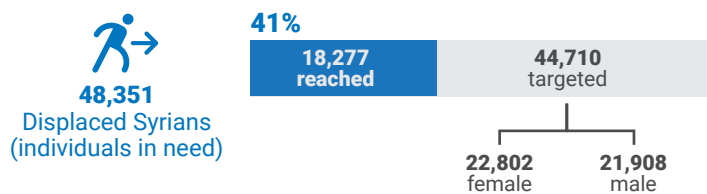
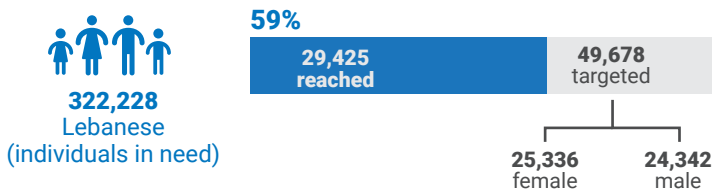
As of 31 December



2023 Population reached

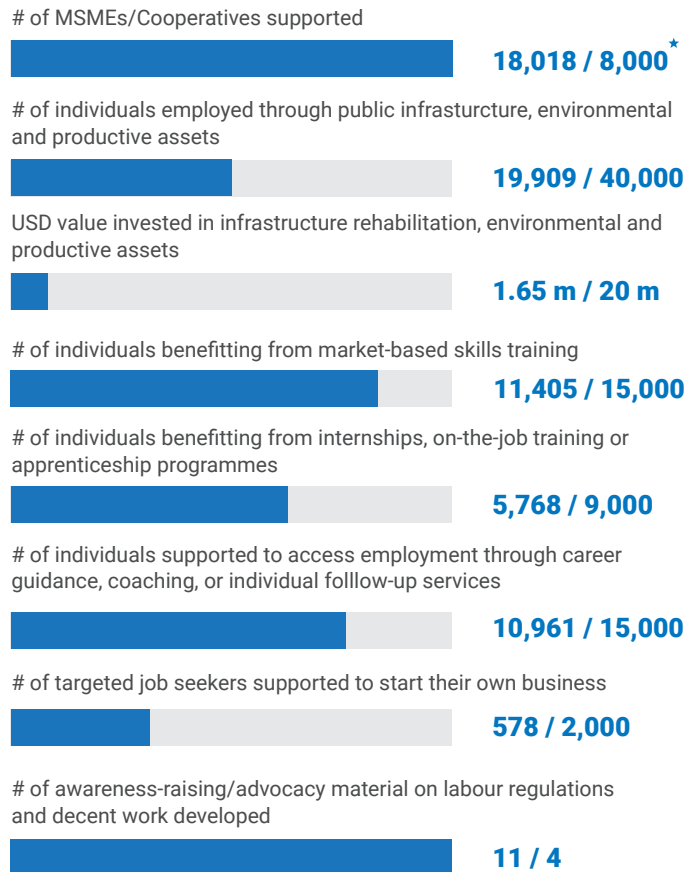


2023 Population figures by cohort



Progress against targets

Key achievements



Outcomes

Outcomes	LCRP 2016 Baseline	Jan - Dec 2023 Reached	2023 Target			
			SYR	LEB	PRS	PRL
OUTCOME 1: Total number of jobs created/maintained	494	18,018	10,400			
OUTCOME 2: # of job seekers placed into jobs	N/A	2,215	900	1000	30	70
# of targeted vulnerable persons engaged in home-based income generation	N/A	230	900	1000	30	70

*Population In need and targeted should be similar to the figures from the LCRP 2023 annual update
** 15,837 not disaggregated by cohort (Activity 1.1.1A)

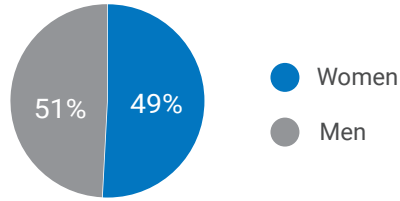


Analysis

Breakdown by age and gender

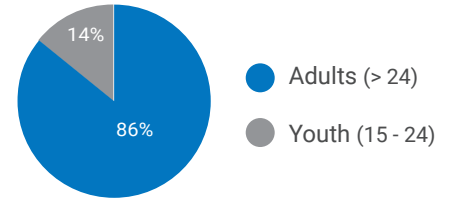
65,747*

Number of individuals reached by Sector partners by gender (Jan - Dec 2023)



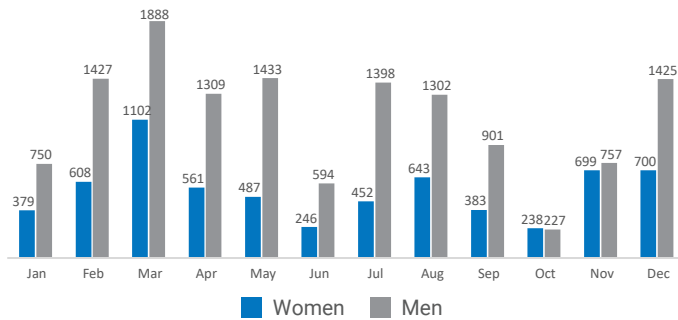
15,508

Entrepreneurs benefitted from business management training by age (Jan - Dec 2023)



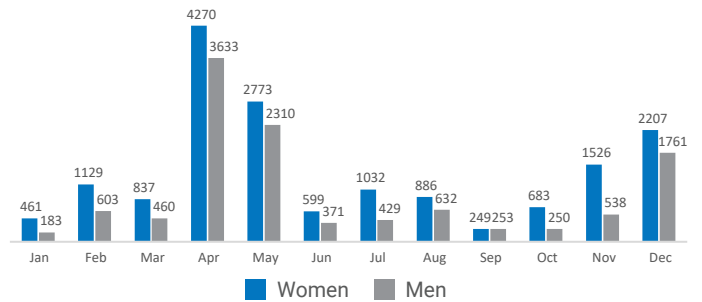
19,909

Individuals employed through public infrastructure, environmental assets and productive assets by gender per month (2023)



28,134

Number of beneficiaries receiving technical and soft skills training (market-based skills trainings, career guidance, awareness sessions and work-based learning opportunities)



SITUATION UPDATE:

In 2023, Lebanon grappled with enduring economic challenges despite a relative stability compared to previous years. The World Bank's projections reveal a significant contraction of the Lebanese economy by 40% between 2018 and 2022, with an anticipated additional contraction of 0.5% in 2023. The inflation rate has soared, reaching an intolerable 215% year-on-year increase in October 2023.

The 2023 Multi-Sectoral Need Assessment (MSNA) sheds light on Lebanon's labor force dynamics. The labor force participation rate (LFPR) for the Lebanese population aged 15 to 64 is 58%, indicating active engagement in economic activities. However, only 48% of the identified labor force participants are employed, suggesting potential underemployment or unfavorable working conditions. Gender disparities persist, with women's LFPR increasing from 22.2% in 2022 to 32% in 2023, considerably lower than the 68% rate for men. This contrast underscores gender inequalities in education, employment, leadership positions, family responsibilities, wage discrimination, and cultural expectations.

Displaced Syrians face significant livelihood challenges, with 54% outside the labor force. Women's LFPR remains low at 19%, and agriculture and other services sectors are primary sources of employment, yet many struggle to meet essential needs. The unemployment rate is recorded at 7%, masking the impact of the low LFPR.

Palestine refugees in Lebanon (PRL) and Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS) also contend with high unemployment rates. PRL's LFPR is 45%, with a gender disparity in employment rates. Palestinian refugee women face structured inequalities, working in informal, gender-based violence-prone environments, and experiencing mobility constraints.

Economic vulnerabilities fuel negative communal relations, with 54% citing competition for lower-skilled jobs as the main driver for inter-communal tensions. The South experiences a notable increase in tension, reaching 65%. For the first time, economic competition is cited as the main driver for intra-communal tension by 60% of respondents in 2023.

Escalating conflict since October 8, 2023, in southern Lebanon leads to internal displacement, affecting 86,874 individuals, with women and girls constituting 52% of the affected population. This displacement compounds infrastructure destruction, income loss, and unemployment. Recovery efforts are underway, focusing on training and support for self-employment to empower affected populations, particularly women, fostering resilience and self-sufficiency for post-conflict stability.

In conclusion, Lebanon faces persistent economic challenges, reflected in labor dynamics, gender disparities, and communal tensions. The impact of conflict exacerbates these issues, necessitating comprehensive efforts to address economic vulnerabilities, gender inequalities, and support recovery for affected populations.



ANALYSIS OF ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SECTOR AT THE OUTPUT LEVEL

In 2023, the operational landscape of the sector underwent several transformations, primarily attributed to the economic stability commenced by the widespread adoption of dollarization in the market, including products and salaries. This shift in currency dynamics had a profound impact on various aspects of the sector, influencing key operational parameters and contributing to a more robust and predictable business environment. This became apparent as the activities supporting businesses exceeded expectations, while direct economic assistance through cash-for-work initiatives decreased. However, challenges continued in terms of informed programming, as partners continued to rely on local-level assessments, hindering the development of more cohesive projects with broader impact whether when supporting businesses or in building employment skills. Another, and more significant, challenge lay in the funding levels, which constrained various aspects of the programming. For example, the partners reached a higher number of businesses to support but the value of this support was reduced.

Output 1.1 – MSMEs strengthened to enable decent job retention/creation boost productivity and competitiveness: (target 8,000 vs. 18,018 achieved)

The exceeding of targets in this output demonstrates the relevance of a shift in focus. In previous years, the predominant activity was immediate economic support and recovery for individuals through cash for work. The current emphasis has transitioned towards providing more sustainable medium to long-term support for economic recovery and growth, with the assistance provided to businesses playing a pivotal role in enhancing the sector's overall contribution to stabilization, fostering economic stability and resilience, and a direct impact on employment, income generation, and overall economic well-being.

Throughout the year, partners facilitated support for 18,018 businesses, predominantly through access to financial resources (93%) and cash grants (5%). However, the sustainability of the impact was limited, attributed to the relatively low amounts disbursed to businesses (averaging to 650 USD per business), as indicated by partners. This highlights the need for a more comprehensive and substantial approach to ensure sustained support for businesses in the future. Of the businesses receiving support, 49 per cent were reported to be owned by women, while four per cent were reported as owned by men. The discrepancy of reported gender distribution may be due to partners' incomplete reporting, stemming from the complexity of identifying the gender of business owners, particularly in cases where businesses have multiple owners.

Businesses supported were predominantly micro-businesses (50%) and small businesses (46%), showing the focus on supporting enterprises with limited scale and resources, as a strategic approach to address the specific needs and challenges faced by smaller businesses within the supported community.

The reports also indicate an almost equal geographical distribution of activities. The North stands as an exception, benefitting from only nine per cent of the activities, while the South, Bekaa, and Beirut-Mount Lebanon received 25, 32, and 34 per cent, respectively. A total of 15,508 individuals benefitted from business management trainings, of which 51 per cent males and 49 per cent females, with a commitment to gender equality through fostering entrepreneurship.

Output 1.3 – Vulnerable men and women have access to tempo-

rary employment in productive public infrastructure and environmental assets that have a local economic impact: (target 40,000 vs. 19,909 reached)

To address immediate income generation needs, efforts were dedicated to labour-intensive programs, e.g. for the enhancement of public infrastructure, productive and environmental assets. Beyond the direct livelihoods' objective, these initiatives played a dual role, also contributing to social stability through covering basic services and activities that municipalities are no longer able to deliver due to their financial challenges, such as the rehabilitation of retaining walls and cleaning of solid waste.

Under this initiative, a total of 106 villages across the country benefited from the various improvements: the construction of 417 retaining walls, the cleaning of 56 kilometres of roads (with a focus on solid waste collection), and the maintenance or reforestation of 428 hectares of forests. The impact of these efforts was significant, with more than 300,000 working days being generated. On average, each beneficiary experienced 40 days of employment through these programs. The financial investment totalling USD 1,615,000, underscores the commitment to continue providing rapid economic support to the most vulnerable while contributing to sustainable infrastructure.

In terms of participation, a diverse group of 19,909 men and women actively engaged in cash-for-work activities. Among them, 10,867 were Lebanese (55%), and 8,893 (45%) were displaced Syrians, reflecting a collaborative effort to address the needs of both local and displaced communities. The overall female participation rate reached 33 per cent, indicating a noteworthy contribution from women. Notably, the highest concentration of female participants was observed in the productive assets segment of the initiative. Despite achieving a notable level of women's participation, with 25 per cent in public infrastructure assets and 39 per cent in environmental assets, it remains a challenge to obtain a higher percentage, e.g. the preference of women for roles that do not demand significant physical strength. This preference is often shaped by societal expectations and cultural norms that discourage women from engaging in traditionally male-dominated or physically demanding sectors. To address these challenges partners employed several approaches such as promoting gender inclusivity by actively encouraging and welcoming the involvement of women in these sectors. Additionally, efforts have been made to enhance access to pre-training programs, ensuring that women have the necessary skills and knowledge to work in these fields. A critical aspect of the intervention involves fostering supportive work environments, which includes assigning female supervisors or field workers to oversee and monitor the progress of works.

Output 2.1 - Vulnerable men and women have strengthened and appropriate technical skills to match the needs of the job market: (target 15,000 vs. 11,405)

Market-based skills training is of paramount importance as it directly addresses the dynamic demands of the job market. By building the practical relevant skills it enhances the employability of individuals, positioning them to meet the needs of businesses. 11,405 individuals actively participated in training programs, with a notable emphasis on gender inclusivity—57 per cent females and 41 per cent males. The beneficiaries represented diverse nationalities, with 56 per cent being Lebanese, 39 per cent displaced Syrians, and four per cent Palestine refugees in Lebanon.

Geographically, the market-based skills training initiatives were dispersed across various regions at different levels of participation. Notably, 48 per cent of the beneficiaries were in the Bekaa followed



by 32 per cent of beneficiaries in the North, reflecting a higher concentration and perhaps a greater demand for market-relevant skills in that locale. In the BML region, 12 per cent of beneficiaries engaged in the training programs, while the South region saw a lower extent of participation, accounting for nine per cent of the overall beneficiaries. This regional distribution demonstrates the relevance of tailoring programs to meet specific needs and demands in each area, ensuring a more targeted and effective approach to market-based skills development. The observed programmatic gap in the South, attributed to funding constraints, highlights the need for additional resources to address regional disparities and promote comprehensive skill development initiatives.

The focus on entrepreneurship within these initiatives not only enables individuals to secure employment but also empowers them to initiate and manage their businesses, fostering economic independence. To this aim, a total of 3,023 beneficiaries received support to launch their businesses, encompassing both home-based and non-home-based ventures, with 71 per cent being females. This signifies a concerted effort to promote gender inclusivity and economic self-sufficiency by providing individuals, especially women, with the tools and resources needed to establish and run their own businesses successfully.

Output 2.2 - Career guidance, awareness raising sessions, job matching, and work-based learning opportunities offered to female and male job seekers: (target 15,000 vs. 16,729)

Career guidance, job matching, and work-based learning play integral roles in shaping a successful and fulfilling career path. Career guidance serves as a crucial resource, equipping individuals with the essential insights needed to make well-informed decisions regarding their future professions. This guidance takes into consideration their unique interests and skills, offering tailored advice that aligns with their personal strengths. Furthermore, it extends beyond advice by empowering beneficiaries with the knowledge and tools to independently seek and identify opportunities. By building self-reliance in navigating the job market, career guidance not only facilitates wise career choices but also fosters a sense of autonomy and proactive engagement in the pursuit of professional growth and success. Job matching ensures that individuals relate to employment opportunities that closely align with their qualifications and career aspirations, leading to enhanced job satisfaction and productivity. Lastly, work-based learning, including internships and apprenticeships, allows individuals to gain practical experience and apply theoretical knowledge in real-world scenarios, contributing to the reduction of skills gaps in the workforce. Collectively, these components contribute to increased employability. 16,729 individuals benefitted from the activities under this output with 61 per cent of the beneficiaries being females. The high rate of women reached, demonstrates a deliberate effort to provide targeted support and opportunities for women. It implies that the initiatives are not only attracting a diverse audience but are also successful in engaging and benefiting women, contributing to a more balanced and equitable workforce.

Output 3.2-Policies, strategies and plans supporting job creation, MSMEs and livelihoods developed to improve the business eco-system:

In 2023, the Livelihoods sector initiated a collaborative effort with various partners to establish the Social and Solidarity Ecosystem (SSE) task force. This initiative, led by the sector in conjunction with ongoing projects supporting social enterprises nationwide, saw the participation of additional Livelihoods partners throughout the year. Emphasizing the sector's firm commitment to localiza-

tion, the Lebanese Social Enterprises Association (LSE) has been given the critical responsibility of overseeing the formation and development of the SSE task force. This entrusted role reflects a dedication to ensuring the sustainability, continuity, and effective leadership of the effort in promoting social and solidarity economy initiatives. The task force, primarily composed of local organizations, particularly social enterprises, focused on refining the existing SSE Governance Model, aligning it with the evolving landscape of social and solidarity economy. In the coming year it will work on developing a joint, fundable Ecosystem Action & Advocacy Plan (EAAP) in line with Lebanon's aid frameworks and international resolutions¹.

Referral trends:

The Livelihoods sector received only one per cent of the total 152,446 referrals made in 2023 nationally, with the highest share of referrals in Mount Lebanon (31.5%) and the lowest in Nabatiyeh (1.2%). This geographical discrepancy is not unconventional as it is the natural result of the funding geographical gap which is leading to a lower number of partners operating in Nabatiyeh. Of these referrals, 29.7 per cent were accepted, 29 per cent were acknowledged and 29.9 per cent received no feedback. The reason of referral rejection, which constituted 11 per cent of total referrals, was mainly due to the referred not meeting the eligibility criteria (72%).

Mainstreaming activities:

Throughout 2023, the above illustrates the sector's proactive and collaborative approach, particularly in the areas of gender inclusion and partnership with the Protection sector. In terms of gender, the sector's gender focal point actively engaged in a Training of Trainers (ToT) focused on Gender and Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Humanitarian Action. This training represented an upgraded version of the existing Gender in Humanitarian Action (GIHA) training, integrating a GBV layer and incorporating sector-specific examples and tip sheets for a more practical approach. The Livelihoods sector's gender focal point played a crucial role in shaping and refining the sector's gender action plan, to be integrated into the sector's plan for 2024.

With the Protection sector, collaborative initiatives materialized in the form of the Integrated Protection Programming with Livelihoods initiative. A joint discussion in the Protection Working Group facilitated the sharing of success stories and insights derived from this integrated approach by participants from both sectors. Valuable practices and recommendations highlighted include the necessity for multi-year funding to support integrated programming efforts, for more substantial and sustained impact on the ground. The resulting paper titled "Integrated Protection Programming with Livelihoods: A Joint Protection & Livelihood Partner Discussion" will inform discussions on joint programming in 2024, recognizing the significance of aligning protection and livelihoods initiatives for the benefit of affected communities.

Also under Protection, the sector continued focusing on enhancing data collection and reporting on persons with disabilities who participated in its activities. Consultations continued with the child protection sub-sector to address children's engagement in the labour market, with a resulting set of guiding questions aims at helping partners in better identifying and targeting caregivers of children engaged in labour. This stems from the theory of change suggesting that if care givers of children engaged in labour are, themselves, provided with Livelihoods opportunities, then they will no longer need to send their children to work.

Sector partners participated in the Conflict Sensitivity and Do No Harm trainings held by the Social Stability sector to minimize negative impacts.

¹ Such as the GA resolution on SSA.



Finally, Livelihoods partners actively participated in two training sessions organized by the Environment Task Force focused on Natural Resources Management and Solid Waste Management, directly relevant to the cash-for-work activities undertaken by the

sector. This collaborative effort illustrates the commitment of Livelihoods partners to align their initiatives with environmental best practices, promoting sustainable livelihood interventions.

KEY CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SECTOR TO LCRP OUTCOME AND IMPACTS

In alignment with the objectives outlined in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), a significant impact has been achieved through various initiatives. Under Strategic Objective One, which focuses on ensuring the protection of vulnerable populations, the Livelihoods sector contribution was through the participation of 17,707 individuals in sessions centred around decent work conditions and labour law regulations. This inclusive effort targeted entrepreneurs, employers, employees, and job seekers, enhancing their knowledge of laws safeguarding them against workplace exploitation.

Labour-intensive programs, the "cash for work" initiatives, played a pivotal role in contributing to Strategic Objective Two of providing immediate assistance to vulnerable populations. By generating immediate temporary income, these programs addressed the

immediate needs for income of the affected communities. Moreover, under Strategic Objective Three, support service provision through national systems, the labour-intensive programs contributed to building and rehabilitating public, environmental, and municipal infrastructure, such as solid waste management campaigns, reforestation efforts, and retaining wall rehabilitation. These services represent components that many municipalities are currently unable to deliver due to the financial challenges they encounter.

Strategic Objective Four, aimed at reinforcing Lebanon's economic, social, and environmental stability, saw a substantial contribution through services provided to businesses. A total of 18,018 businesses were supported, with a focus on stimulating local economic growth and fostering income-generating opportunities.

CHALLENGES, RISKS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Towards the end of the year, the Livelihoods sector conducted a reflection workshop with a dual focus: identifying challenges faced by partners and contributing insights to shape the 2024 LRP (Lebanon Response Plan) Livelihoods sector strategy.

Partners expressed concerns about the low disbursement amounts of financial resources, particularly for medium-sized businesses, despite the high number of businesses reached. This was attributed to limitations in available funding and donor priorities. Partners advocated for increased, longer-term funding to better meet the needs of businesses. To enhance effectiveness, a shift from generic training to tailored technical training (coaching) aligned with each business's specific needs was recommended. Addressing employability skills, partners emphasized the impor-

tance of localized activities to overcome access challenges which might be imposed by local authorities' restrictive measures limiting individuals' mobility.

Job placement obstacles led to a recommendation for closer collaboration with sector partners supporting businesses and increased outreach to businesses. Strengthening partnerships with the private sector, hampered by a lack of specialized resources, emerged as a key priority for the upcoming year.

Finally, sharing assessments among partners to prevent duplication, avoiding inefficient financial resource use, and adapting to national-level market assessments were highlighted as essential for improved planning.

CASE STUDY

The Inspiring Journey of the STAND Project

In the face of one of the deepest economic depressions in modern history, the STAND project, a collaboration between Al Majmoua and CORUS, is one of these many projects that stands as a testament to human resilience and the spirit of entrepreneurship in Lebanon.

From May 2023 to September 2023, the project embarked on a mission to support micro-entrepreneurs. As the economic storm raged, bringing with it inflation, currency devaluation, and a halt in lending activities, these entrepreneurs found themselves battling for survival. STAND stepped in to support them.

The project's impact was profound. A total of 805 micro-entrepreneurs were empowered through access to financial and non-financial services delivered by Al Majmoua. The financial education trainings, a prerequisite for receiving a subsidized loan, enhanced their financial and management skills ensuring that the entrepreneurs are equipped with the necessary knowledge to use the loan wisely and productively.

The project disbursed 805 loans with an average loan amount of USD 460 at zero percent interest. This financial support, coupled with the training, allowed these micro-entrepreneurs to invest in their businesses, sustain their operations and create new jobs.

One success story is the one of Bassam G., a 62-year-old man who owns a modest mini-market in Damit-Mount Lebanon. Despite his physical disability and the economic crisis, Bassam was able to make necessary repairs and renovations in his mini market allowing the business to survive.

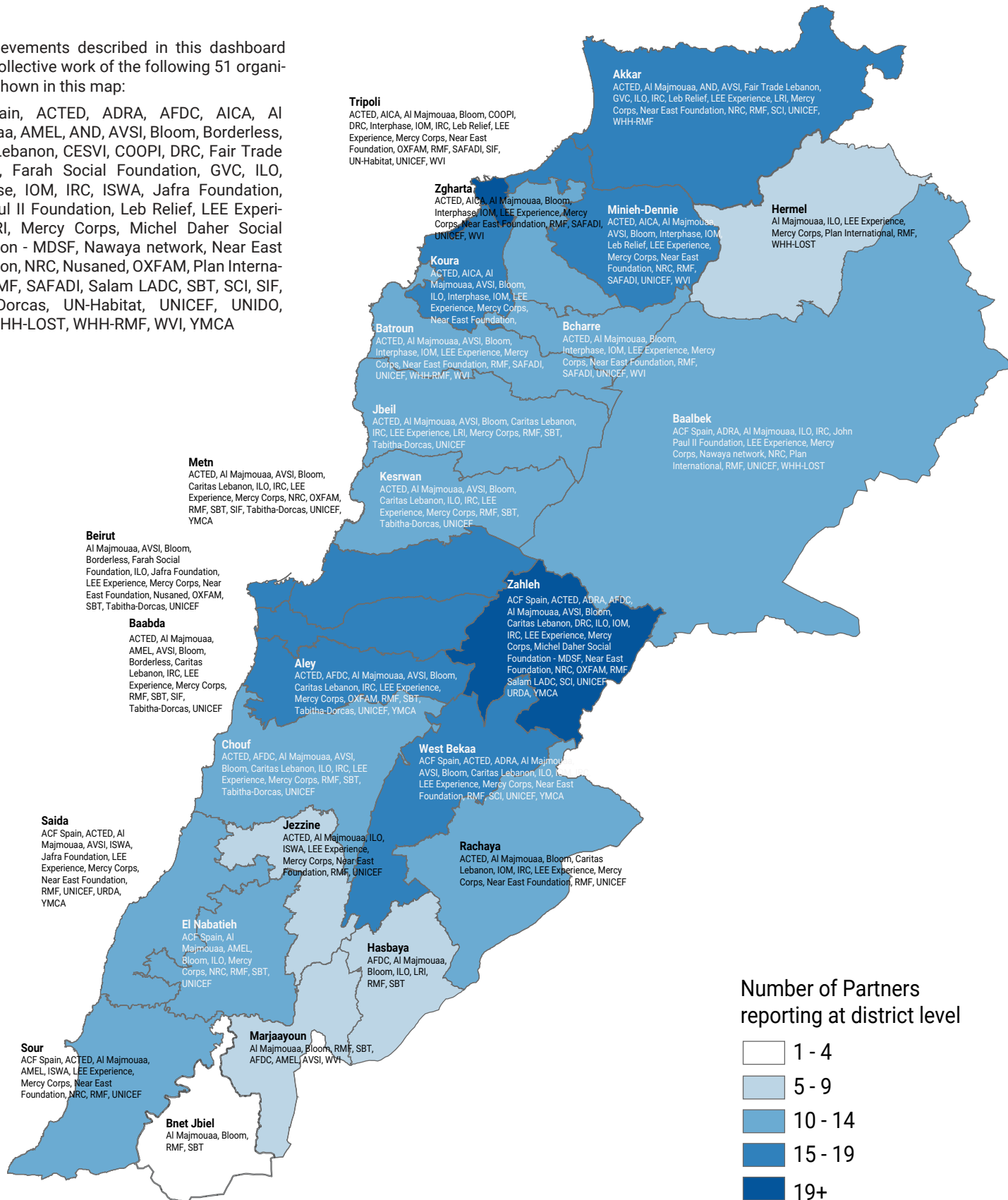
The STAND project has demonstrated that with the right support and resources, micro-entrepreneurs can not only survive but thrive in challenging economic conditions. It serves as a model of how targeted interventions can foster resilience, promote development, and drive economic recovery at the businesses level that also benefited the broader community. The success of the STAND project underscores the potential and promise of Lebanon's micro-entrepreneurs and the critical role they play in the country's economic fabric.



Partners by district

The achievements described in this dashboard are the collective work of the following 51 organizations shown in this map:

ACF Spain, ACTED, ADRA, AFDC, AICA, Al Majmouaa, AMEL, AND, AVSI, Bloom, Borderless, Caritas Lebanon, CESVI, COOPI, DRC, Fair Trade Lebanon, Farah Social Foundation, GVC, ILO, Interphase, IOM, IRC, ISWA, Jafra Foundation, John Paul II Foundation, Leb Relief, LEE Experience, LRI, Mercy Corps, Michel Daher Social Foundation - MDSF, Nawayya network, Near East Foundation, NRC, Nusaned, OXFAM, Plan International, RMF, SAFADI, Salam LADC, SBT, SCI, SIF, Tabitha-Dorcas, UN-Habitat, UNICEF, UNIDO, URDA, WHH-LOST, WHH-RMF, WVI, YMCA



Note: This map has been produced by UNDP based on maps and material provided by the Government of Lebanon for Inter Agency operational purposes. It does not constitute an official United Nations map. The designations employed and the presentation of material on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.