

Project assessments of selected projects under the Dutch Development Approaches to Forced Displacement in Jordan and Lebanon 2016-2021

Annex to IOB Evaluation

Between Prospects and Precarity

An evaluation of Dutch assistance to refugee reception in the Syria region (2016-2021)

Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, March 2024

Table of Contents

Jordan	3
Project 1 UNICEF – Catch-Up Education Jordan.....	3
Project 2 Eco Consult – Hydroponics Agriculture and Employment Development Jordan	5
Project 3 Spark – Improve Employment Opportunities in Jordan	8
Project 4 Princess Alia Foundation – Sustainable Education through Renewable Energy in the Governates Affected by the Syrian Crisis	11
Project 5 GIZ – Trade for Employment (T4E).....	14
Lebanon	19
Project 6 UNICEF – Fostering Economically, Personally and Socially Active Youth	19
Project 7 FAO – Water and Agriculture.....	22
Project 8 Berytech Foundation – Smart Agri-Food Innovation Hub / Agritech.....	25
Project 9 UNDP – Lebanon Host Communities Support (LHSP).....	28
Project 10 ESFD – Boosting Economic Growth and Job Creation	32
Project 11 ABAAD – NASEEJ Protection and Mitigation of Gender Based Violence in Lebanon	34
Project 12 UNHCR – Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance in Lebanon and Jordan	37
Project 13 War Child – The Future is Ours.....	40
Additional projects Lebanon.....	44
Project 14 ABAAD – NASEEJ 2 Improving Prospects for Refugees and Vulnerable Host Communities.....	44
& Project 15 COVID-19 ABAAD Lebanon Response (<i>*adaptation of NASEEJ 2 to COVID-19</i>).....	44

Jordan

Project 1 UNICEF – Catch-Up Education Jordan			
Project characteristics			
Project name	Support to the Government of Jordan to Realize the Jordan Compact Commitments on Education (Catch-up Classes, Drop-out, Makani, Hajati and Nashatati Programs)		
Project number	29365		
Country	Jordan		
Budget	EUR 14 million (Initial budget: EUR 7 million, Top up: EUR 7 million in 2018) <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 60 million in Jordan to support in the accommodation of refugees in Jordan (2016-2017)</i>		
Project partner	UNICEF (Jordan Country Office)		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Out-of-school children (aged 8-12 years) - Out-of-school adolescents and youth, aged 13-20 years and (6-18 years) - Children with disabilities - Teachers at public schools - Ministry of Education 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 October 2016	1 October 2016
	End date project	30 September 2018	31 March 2019
	Duration	2 years	2 years and 6 months
Main theme	Education, social cohesion		
Donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was a silent partner. The project was co-funded by Canada, France, Germany through KfW, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom.		
Overall objective To ensure sustained quality of educational services for children and youth impacted by the Syria crisis.			
Outcome All vulnerable out-of-school children, at increased risk of child labour, exploitation, early marriage, and other forms of abuse, are provided with quality learning opportunities and support.			
Main project goals			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Catch up Classes and Drop-out Programmes (part 1)</u>: To fill in the gaps under the Non Formal Education (NFE) program stream, targeting out of school children, regardless of their nationality, between the ages of 8 and 12 years (Catch up classes) and 13 and 21 years (Drop-out classes), who have been out-of-school for more than 3 years and who are not eligible for formal education due to age limitation and current regulations. • <u>Top-up</u>: Supporting the Makani and Hajati programmes to prevent the closure of some of the Makani centres and to provide cash assistance to vulnerable families to ensure that they can buy necessary school equipment. • <u>Makani project</u>: To provide Learning Support Services (LSS) by which learning achievements can be improved and children keep enrolled in formal schools. For children who are not eligible for certified formal education, the Makani centres provide literacy and numeracy skills building sessions. • <u>Added value of project</u>: To build a bridge between the formal and informal education system. 			
Assessment			
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment		
Relevance + Program addressed needs of out-of-school children, mainly refugee children; there were no clear gender indicators; program was sensitive to local challenges; there was no balanced support, yet focus was on those who were	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Needs addressed</u>: In 2016, around 81,000 refugee children were out-of-school in Jordan. The programmes were responding to the needs of out-of-school children (8-21 years old) by providing informal education services, cash assistance and after-school activities. These activities helped to strengthen children's knowledge and skills (and thus education level), which could enable them to (re-)enter the formal education system. Moreover, the most vulnerable families received cash assistance through the Hajati project, which provided them with an incentive to send their children to school instead of sending them to work. The after-school and social activities provided were available to the entire community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Education (MoE) for project implementation and planned to hand over the project after completion. Therefore, the program included a capacity building component to strengthen public education services and to ensure that MoE would be able to continue project activities after the project ended. - <u>Gender focus</u>: The programmes served both boys and girls, yet the proposal did not set clear gender indicators. UNICEF provided disaggregated data for #number of boys/girls and information on the background of the participants which was a request by the MFA NL. 		

<p>most in need of support; lack of information on social cohesion component.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Sensitive to local realities</u>: UNICEF addressed barriers of accessibility to education for vulnerable children in Jordan (mainly vulnerable females and children with disabilities that were subject to child labour and early marriage) by setting up around 60 new centres that provided non formal education services. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project activities that continued after project completion adapted to the online learning modality when COVID-19 hit (e.g., online classes). However, as mentioned during the IOB field visit, children preferred face-to-face classes (E.g., internet connection was not always working, which resulted in drop-out among students). - <u>Balanced support</u>: Overall, the program did not provide balanced support given that the aim of the program was to support out-of-school children regardless of their nationality. Syrian refugee children were the largest group of participants (average: 88% for the Catch-up program; 49% for the Drop-out program; 57% for the Makani learning centre program; 91% for the Hajati program; and 3% for the Nashatati program). - <u>Social cohesion</u>: IOB did not find detailed information on whether the project contributed to improved social cohesion in local communities. UNICEF mentioned that it sought to promote social cohesion, positive engagement, and prevention of violent extremism through life skills education in public schools. However, no data was presented on whether these life skills activities contributed to enhanced social cohesion in local communities.
<p>Effectiveness + Most targets were achieved or overachieved; UNICEF did improve access to informal and formal education for children, but not for all children; cash assistance was an effective tool to offer protective measures against harmful coping mechanisms; program bridged gap between informal and formal education, yet refugees mostly participated in second shift classes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level</u>: Although most of the intended targets were achieved, and some targets were even overachieved, UNICEF did not reach all targets set (e.g., the number of children enrolled in drop-out classes or the expected percentage of children that were re-integrated into the formal system). Moreover, UNICEF was not able to sustain the Hajati program at the intended scale and had to rationalize the resources. - <u>Outcome level</u>: The programmes contributed to better access to and quality of education services in host communities and refugee camps in Jordan. They hereby contributed to bridging the gap between the formal and informal education systems. However, not all out-of-school children were provided with quality learning opportunities and support. - The Hajati program included the element of cash-based assistance. An independent evaluation conducted at the end of the 2018-2019 school year, showed that the Hajati program was effective in promoting education and the overall socio-economic wellbeing of children, and in offering protective measures against harmful coping mechanisms, incl. child labour and early marriage.¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge: the communication with families that received cash assistance was not effective and limited in the beginning of the Hajati project. Hence, UNICEF switched to sending messages of a more general nature, aimed at providing information to families on additional support available to guarantee children’s school attendance. - The Nashatati after school program has been open to the whole community (thus all people who leave in a certain area, incl. refugees), and thus facilitated social interactions within the communities targeted. However, as the final report shows, only 3% of Syrian refugees were involved in the Nashatati program. Therefore, IOB questions whether this project played a major role in enhancing social cohesion. - <u>Gender targets</u>: The program targeted 50/50 girls/boys. The final report underlines that by establishing drop-out centres in more locations and allowing for flexibility in the time of the sessions, more children, particularly girls, have been able to access the programme. - However, the rather ambitious planned outcome (all vulnerable out-of-school children at increased risk of child labour, exploitation, early marriage, and other forms of abuse are provided with quality learning opportunities) has not been reached. In fact, the vulnerability assessment of 2020-2021 showed a decline in school attendance among Syrian children in Jordan (70% in 2018 to 65% in 2021). - <u>Refugee participation</u>: Although the program did enhance access to public formal schools, the limited capacity in these schools to accommodate Syrian refugee children resulted in most Syrian refugee children being taught during second shift classes. Moreover, because of capacity issues in school buildings and unavailability of transportation, camp children were not included in public (out-of-camp) schools.
<p>Coherence -/+ Reference to host country policy, yet lack of references to coordination with other interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy</u>: The program aligned with the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) (priority areas: REF 3.4; 3.5; 3.9), which includes an education sector objective of ensuring quality educational services for children and youth impacted by the Syria crisis. The program cooperated directly with a government agency, notably MoE. Moreover, the program was aligned with the No Lost Generation initiative in the Syria region. - During the field visit, IOB learned about the involvement of ILO in the program. ILO fabricated career guidance manuals.

¹ UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, Florence, ‘[The Difference a Dollar a Day Makes – A Study of UNICEF’s Jordan’s Hajati Programme](#)’, May 2021).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Furthermore, IOB found limited information on the coordination and synergy sought with other donor interventions.
Efficiency + UNICEF had the experience and in-country systems needed; NCE was approved by MFA NL; project management was challenged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The appraisal memorandum underlined UNICEF's experience and in-country systems that were required for the implementation of the proposed activity. Channelling funds to UNICEF was furthermore advisable as UNICEF held good relationships with the Jordan government. It also had adequate and reliable monitoring and accountability mechanisms in place. - Following the latest financial overview, the overhead costs were around 13,4% (these include costs such as personnel, supplies and commodities, equipment, travel, and general operating costs). UNICEF transferred around 86,6% in grants to its counterparts. - There has been a no-cost extension (NCE) of 6 months, because of a budget top-up and an extension of another contribution to UNICEF. - Challenges regarding the project management were lengthy governmental procedures and demanding requirements to approve implementing partners and to open centres.
Sustainability - There were various challenges during the follow up of the project; lack of financial sustainability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local ownership: UNICEF cooperated directly with MoE so that they take over and continue with the program after program completion. However, the MoE dealt with various challenges during the follow up of the project, such as limited quality of curriculum and lack of awareness about the problems concerning drop-out by students, like child labour and early marriage. Moreover, the ministry's mandate did not allow for cooperation with community-based organisations (CBOs). Therefore, the ministry did not have a community mobilization unit and was unable to keep CBOs involved and monitor their work. Nevertheless, CBOs were important local partners to reach the project's target group. - Funding constraint: There was limited capacity to scale up interventions due to funding constraints. Besides, Non-Formal Education programmes have high running costs.
Quality of design +/- Overall realistic and logical results and indicators; stakeholder analysis was based on existing information instead of assessments at the project level; partnered with local organizations and government agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Realistic results and output indicators: Objectives and indicators were in general well described in terms of numbers. Although UNICEF collected data on registration, enrolment and attendance of students, there was no information provided about whether children learned something in the class and whether they developed themselves. Assessing learning outcomes by incorporating such result indicators would be useful. - Besides, result 5 included a social cohesion component, which was not clearly illustrated in the indicator. Therefore, it is unclear how social cohesion is facilitated and measured. - Stakeholder analysis and needs assessment: The appraisal memorandum underlined that the proposal carefully highlighted the target group. There was no stakeholder analysis conducted for the project, yet UNICEF made use of existing studies on schooling and informal schooling opportunities, impact assessments on the educational system in Jordan as integrated in the JRP and Jordan Compact, and statistics by UNICEF on out-of-school children. However, during the field visit, IOB learned about the change in age for the target group of Drop-out classes. The project partner mentioned that the age of children that were able to enter the drop-out program changed (initially it was 13-18 than it became 12-20) to avoid a one-year gap with the Catch-up program (children with the age of 8-12). - Implementing partners: During project implementation, UNICEF cooperated with INGOs and CBOs, this helped UNICEF to reach the most vulnerable children, as these organizations were closest to the local population. - Government cooperation: UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) to make use of the existing public education system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges of working with a government agency: Capacity building of MoE took time. Thus, when UNICEF handed the project over to the MoE, the ministry was not yet able to lead the project on its own. During the transition phase, there was no clear leadership (who is the lead partner – UNICEF or MoE?). This resulted in lack of coordination and no clear communication.

Project 2 Eco Consult – Hydroponics Agriculture and Employment Development Jordan	
Project characteristics	
Project name	Hydroponics Agriculture and Employment Development Jordan (HAED-Jo)
Project number	29549
Country	Jordan (areas between Jordan Valley and highlands)
Budget	Total project budget EUR 12,771,790 <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 60 million in Jordan to support in the accommodation of refugees in Jordan (2016-2017).</i>
Project partner	Eco Consult
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (Mostly Jordanian) Farmers - Jordanian and Syrian agricultural workers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National agriculture agencies (e.g., export associations) - Local and Dutch research and education institutions - Community-based organisations (CBOs) 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 November 2016	1 November 2016
	End date project	31 December 2019	30 June 2022
	Duration	3 years and 1 month	5 years and 8 months
Main themes	Employment and livelihoods, agriculture, and water sector		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective			
A more competitive Jordan greenhouse sector, which can provide more long-term jobs for both the Jordanian domestic workforce as well as Syrian refugees. Jordan's horticultural sector will be exposed to Dutch horticultural technology which should result in a stronger Jordan - Netherlands horticultural institutional and business partnership.			
Project goals			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create job opportunities for Syrian refugees and Jordanians in farming production and the associated value chain businesses. • Improve food security and reduce risks associated with insufficient food assistance to Syrian refugees by improving productivity and sustainability of the horticulture sector in Jordan. • Sharpen technical skills of Jordanians and Syrians in production and throughout the value chain and enhance research and advisory capacity. • Create partnerships among Dutch and Jordanian businesses, including producers, suppliers, and traders. • Develop and disseminate knowledge on new systems, farming practices and technologies among Jordanians and Syrian refugees that are better suited for the climate in the region. • Create alternative livelihoods in agriculture in the host communities and provide additional income to individuals and families through adopting household and community units/kits for production. • Open new opportunities for women and youth in the sector. 			
Assessment²			
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment		
Relevance -/+ Overall negative assessment, yet the focus on agriculture was relevant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Needs addressed:</u> The project design was ambitiously focusing on agriculture, hereby improving the horticulture sector and employment situation in Jordan. The focus on increasing the agriculture production outputs with limited water resources was also relevant regarding the water scarcity and food security issues in Jordan. Besides, many refugees from Syria have been active in the agriculture sector (note: they are legally allowed to work in this sector). This made it possible for the project partner to directly target refugees from Syria. - <u>Gender focus:</u> Eco Consult's project proposal included a work package specifically aimed at opportunities for gender integration in production, education, and business and in the supply chain. However, there was no clear implementation strategy formulated regarding gender equality. Gender disaggregated data was presented for only one of the work packages. - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> The project has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The zero-mobility policy resulted in the suspension of all HAED-Jo activities and some CBOs were not able to continue their efforts. The demand side for products was negatively impacted because no one was allowed to work, and many people lost their job and income. Eco Consult took mitigation measures, including virtual communication tools, yet those were not always effective due to limited internet access and lack of interests among students for online classes. - Labour costs of agricultural work increased because of the replacement of Egyptian workers for Syrian and local workers (due to these programmes and the commitments to the Jordan Compact). Moreover, Syrian workers often do daily/seasonal work and are used to different types of agricultural production. - Jordanian farmers faced the issue of child labour, as Syrian families brought their children to work on the land. - <u>Balanced support:</u> The project encountered challenges in providing balanced support to both Jordanians and Syrians (*the availability of disaggregated data is limited). - <u>Social cohesion:</u> There is no information provided on whether the activities avoided tensions between the groups or enhanced social cohesion between Jordanians and Syrians. 		
Effectiveness -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level:</u> Several of the project targets have been achieved (on training, CBO's involvement), while other targets related to #number of investments in greenhouses by farmers and establishing NL-Jordan business partnerships were underway/not yet achieved. 		

² Results from the final report were not considered in the analysis, since the final report was not yet published when document analysis took place.

<p>Overall negative assessment on outcomes achieved; women benefitted from the program; refugee involvement in the problem was an issue; KIC centre brought together different stakeholders in agriculture sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Outcome level:</u> Most project goals have not yet been achieved (e.g., only created seasonal and/or daily jobs) and the overall objective of the project has not been materialized. E.g., farmers did not get consistent access to (new) export markets and enhanced post-harvest facilities and practices. - <u>Gender targets:</u> Although no clear gender targets were defined, more jobs were created for women (152) then for men (135). Women mostly did the less physically demanding task, like lowering crops. - <u>Field visit observations:</u> IOB questions the quality of the green houses developed (were broken down or did not have a plastic layer). The hydroponic systems also showed deficiencies; technical systems and equipment are not of good quality. - The project invested in a Knowledge Innovation Centre (KIC). In line with the recommendations by the mid term review, the KIC centre could contribute to continuous improvement of the horticulture sector, as it enabled various stakeholders in the horticulture in Jordan to come together and exchange knowledge, expertise, and innovation, which also attracts Dutch companies (MTR/Interviews). - Despite the good individual efforts of capacity development and the successful links with universities, the lack of a more comprehensive knowledge management system and proper documentation and dissemination of lessons learned were missed opportunities for HAED-Jo. - <u>Refugee participation:</u> The project targeted mostly Jordanian farmers directly, given that Syrian refugee farmers were not allowed (legal restrictions) to own a business. The jobs created through this project were directly available to Syrian refugees as well. During the field visit, IOB learned about the challenges of attracting Syrian refugees and keeping them involved throughout the program. It was mentioned that “They learn how to do hydroponic agriculture, but after they obtained knowledge and skills they leave and look for jobs with higher wages. They benefit from the project.” - <u>Economic benefits:</u> At the local level, the project introduced enhancements to the postharvest value chain and processes, created additional employment opportunities (mostly seasonal or daily work) including for Syrian refugees.
<p>Coherence + Eco Consult tried to coordinate and align its efforts with other initiatives in the agriculture sector.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> The project fed into targets identified in Jordan’s national plans: JRP, Jordan Compact, and the Jordan Economic Growth Plan. Besides, the project was also aligned with national development strategies: Jordan Vision 2025, Green Growth Plan. - <u>The intervention coordinated with other donor interventions:</u> There were discussions with Mercy Corps and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) on how to contribute to selection of beneficiaries. There were also talks with Dutch NGOs, like SPARK. Linkages were initiated with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) with regards to possible access to UK markets for horticulture products and DFID plans to initiate a program on hydroponic farming. Eco Consult also coordinated HEAD-Jo with the Dutch Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI) project through regular meetings with CBI representatives. - <u>Reference to coordination with broader MFA policy:</u> HEAD-Jo project was one of the first projects that was involved in the Agriculture Roundtable (initiative of Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands Jordan, which brought together all NL-funded agriculture projects). However, the roundtable did not lead to “true collaboration and integrated approaches”. - It became clear from interviews with stakeholders involved that more structural conversations (dialogue and lobby) among donors and subgroups to align efforts were needed to incentivize innovation and attract the private sector and increase donor coordination.
<p>Efficiency + Overall, rather positive assessment given the ability to adjust project when needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There have been various requests for <u>no-cost extension (NCE)</u>, including underspending, political and economic circumstances, additional interventions, adjustments in interventions, COVID-19, and deadline issues. - <u>Overhead costs:</u> Between 2016-2020, the overhead costs were around 11.7%. This seems to include the overhead of the implementing partners. - Eco Consult is a local organization with a strong network, including at the governmental level. - <u>Adaptivity and flexibility:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There have been adjustments of project outputs, because of COVID-19 and tensions and disputes among some implementing partners and beneficiaries. The project was also adjusted based on recommendations presented in the mid-term review. • Eco Consult had to end their partnership with one of the implementing partners due to miscommunication between the partner and the beneficiaries. Eco Consult was flexible and changed partners, but trust problems remained for a longer period.
<p>Sustainability - Limited information, the issue of financial sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No exit strategy has been formulated. - In line with the recommendations by the mid term review, the KIC centre could contribute to sustainability of the project, by bringing different agriculture stakeholders together. - Financial sustainability issue: Now that the project has ended, the farmer who has invested in the KIC centre has not yet covered the costs of this investment. Continuous financial support to this innovation centre is crucial for its sustainability, yet not guaranteed.

<p>Quality of design</p> <p>- Intervention logic showed flaws; lacking context analysis; tensions and disputes negatively impacted project implementation, Eco Consult responded adequately to disputes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project's <u>intervention logic</u> was flawed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The idea that hydroponic farming limits water use does not hold. Hydroponic farming increases production, which accordingly increases the use of water. Moreover, copy-pasting greenhouses from the Dutch to the Jordanian context does not necessarily lead to similar successes as in the Netherlands. • The idea of increased employment perspectives is not fully correct. Notably, the project was not about employing refugees, but about replacing labour with new technologies. • Market chances for farmers in Jordan have been limited. Because of the Syria crisis, Jordanian farmers started to focus on the EU market (in line with the Jordan Compact). However, the quality of Jordanian products oftentimes did not meet the quality control of the EU. Besides, transportation to the EU market was expensive, making logistical costs too high to make profit. There is only limited focus on alternative markets. - <u>Realistic results and indicators</u>: MFA NL and Eco Consult knew from the beginning that the granted program duration did not match type of program. - <u>Context analysis</u>: It appeared that a more in-depth context analysis was required. An interviewee questioned whether the integrated approach of targeting both refugees, especially Syrian refugees and host communities was logical for an agriculture project in Jordan. First, Jordanians normally do not work in the agriculture and do not have the mentality and skills needed for working in the agriculture. Moreover, in light of the Syrian refugee crisis, donors asked Jordanian farmers to take Syrian refugee and local workers instead of the Egyptians labour migrants. Yet, Egyptians were much cheaper than Syrian and local workers and they handled much harder work. - <u>Implementing partners</u>: The project suffered from tensions and disputes among some implementing partners despite the concerted efforts and mediations. This has negatively impacted the project and resulted in a deterioration of cooperation, created mistrust, and a feeling of disengagement. It also led to delays in the implementation and negatively affected HAED Jo's reputation. It took some time to regain the trust of farmers, especially those who suffered from some losses and technical difficulties. Eco Consult established clear roles and responsibilities, effective communication modalities and dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms in response to these challenges. - Eco Consult took a bottom-up approach. - Initially, the project lacked a comprehensive evaluation framework. Therefore, Eco Consult established a Project Advisory Committee to better facilitate the task of the evaluation team.
---	--

Project 3 Spark – Improve Employment Opportunities in Jordan			
Project characteristics			
Project name	Improve Employment Opportunities in Jordan		
Project number	29558		
Country	Jordan		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 8,808,164 <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 60 million in Jordan to support in the accommodation of refugees in Jordan (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	SPARK		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian youth residing in Jordan, (aged 18-35) - Minimum 30% women - Partner organisations (that provide scholarships and vocational training) - Business and start-ups 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 December 2016	1 December 2016
	End date project	1 December 2018	31 December 2020
	Duration	2 years	4 years and 1 month
Main themes	Employment and livelihoods, economic development, private sector development (PSD)		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective	To supply Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian youth with all the necessary skills to make the most of newly arisen chances and focus on sectors that show new growth opportunities under the Jordan Compact. The program sought to stimulate youth to grow or start their own MSME's, if possible, with members of the host community, offers ample opportunity for not just creating jobs in Jordan, but for preparing the community for return to, and economic development of Syria once a peace agreement is in place.		

Assessment	
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Project goals</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To contribute to job creation for Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian youth through supporting existing MSMEs (50%) and start-ups (50%). To increase employability of Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian youth through the introduction and improvement of entrepreneurship education and mandatory internships in higher education institutions. To technically prepare and motivate young Syrians, Palestinians, and Jordanians for an active role in the future reconstruction of Syria (Reconstruction skills training program). 	
<p>Relevance +/- Relevant for a large group of displaced Syrian youth in search of a job; gender focus as ticking the box exercise; sensitive to COVID-19 pandemic; unclear whether there was a balanced approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Needs addressed:</u> The focus on youth employment within the project was relevant for the large group of displaced Syrian youth in Jordan that searched for jobs. The program aimed to solve the issue of a mismatch of available opportunities and the employment supply. - <u>Gender focus:</u> Spark's proposal contained specific gender targets, notably a minimum of 30% women participants in entrepreneurial activities, 50% of women awarded a scholarship and a media campaign on women entrepreneurship. Spark acknowledged the negative attitudes towards entrepreneurial and or working women. Participants from various groups directly or indirectly were asked for their attitudes towards gender-sensitive issues, such as mixed training. During a roundtable discussion, it was mentioned that female empowerment and gender equality are themes that donors want to talk about. It is more about 'ticking boxes' and integrating donors' demands and perspectives rather than aligning the interventions with what is most needed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you want women to join the labour market, you have to focus on conditions, like childcare, transportation and cultural aspects when designing a project. E.g., offering transportation to females could enhance their participation or offering online meetings so women can stay home or offer courses in the morning when the kids are in schools. - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a business venture for refugees is difficult, given that they are not allowed by law. They can only start a joint venture with a Jordanian company in specific sectors. This has obstructed the way in which this project contributed to increased participation of refugees in host communities. • COVID-19 caused delays as lockdowns negatively affected business operations, including logistics and acquiring raw materials. This in turn resulted in a decrease of revenue for many businesses and businesses lowering employee salaries or firing them. Despite these challenges, Spark and the implementing partners were still able to disburse loans during the crisis because of the shift to digital modalities. Spark was also able to quickly transform all services and activities into online modalities. Remote teaching was facilitated through offering tablets and internet access to teachers and students. Nevertheless, some Spark beneficiaries did drop-out of online training due to poor connection quality. - <u>Balanced support/social cohesion:</u> Syrians can make use of both the entrepreneurship and internship programs. The skills building program is available to Syrians, Jordanians, and Palestinians. Nevertheless, IOB did not find whether there was a balanced approach given the limited disaggregated data available on the number of Syrians supported through the program. Moreover, there was no information provided on whether the activities avoided tensions between the groups or enhanced social cohesion between Jordanians and Syrians.
<p>Effectiveness +/- Most targets were reached or overachieved, despite challenges in the project implementation; Not all outcomes were achieved, and successes were limited regarding increased employability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level:</u> All targets have been reached or overachieved. Under activity 1, a Loan Guarantee Fund was developed, which benefitted around 600 startups and micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Under the Start-Up support program, Spark provided 5- or 10-day trainings to entrepreneurs and start ups to support them in establishing a business. Under activity 2, Spark provided scholarships and created internship opportunities for youth. Indeed, most beneficiaries reported that their internship matched well with their experiences and interests and 29% reported to find a job in either the company they interned with or with another company. Yet, some were less positive about the opportunity to increase skills and knowledge through the internship. - <u>Challenges to project implementation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under activity 1, the installation of the fund was delayed due to difficulties in acquiring governmental approval. Moreover, only a small % of beneficiaries who received training to establish a business got a certificate, which suggests a high drop-out rate. • Under activity 2, Spark struggled with creating internships and dropout rates were high: (I) Spark had to teach companies that internships are about learning rather than making coffee and copies; (II) Spark had to convince businesses to take interns by paying them. (III) Spark also had to convince students to do internships and provide skills training to be

	<p>able to apply to internships. Especially Jordanians because many preferred to take government or military jobs. (IV) Spark tackled dropout by introducing a penalty for those who did drop-out (incentive). hiring percentage of around 37% of interns upon completing their three-month internship/training.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Outcome level:</u> Spark’s project played only a minor role in creating jobs for Syrian, Palestinian, and Jordanian youth (demand side of the labour market). Instead, the programmes focused on the supply side of the labour market and enhanced access to quality higher/vocational education (curriculum and modules were developed or improved and teacher staff trained). Moreover, internships increased learning chances for youth. It is difficult to determine if activities under the Reconstruction Skills Training Program technically prepared and motivated youth to play an active role in the future reconstruction of Syria. - <u>Gender targets:</u> In the latest reports, no data was presented on whether the gender specific targets were achieved (*Spark did include gender disaggregated data for some of the outputs). An interviewee mentioned that it was feasible to include 30% women in the project, yet the difficult part was to get 30% women enter the job market and get them decent jobs. Still, three of the operational Business Support Centres were women-only centres, which offered childcare facilities that allowed mothers to bring their children to the centres and work/study. - <u>Economic benefits:</u> As mentioned above, the program contributed to improvements on the supply side of the labour market, yet benefits did not materialise on the demand side considering that the project did not succeed in creating (sustainable) job opportunities. Besides, the project did not tackle the issue of labour discrimination.
<p>Coherence +/- Reference to alignment with host country policies and national and regional initiatives yet lacks clarification.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> According to the appraisal memorandum, the project was aligned with the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), Jordan Compact, the Jordan Response Platform for the Syria Crisis (JRPSC). However, the design of the project was criticized during the roundtable. It was said that the project was not aligned with government strategy plans. - <u>Reference to coordination with other donor interventions:</u> Spark sought synergies with other initiatives active in the field of youth employability, PSD, and employment, such as like World bank, ILO, and Eco Consult. There was a synergy with the regional Access to Higher Education for Syrian refugees’ scholarship program of SPARK. - <u>Reference to coordination with broader MFA policy:</u> Spark underlined that it ensured great synergy between the program and other initiatives supported by the Netherlands. However, Spark did not clarify how these synergies were sought.
<p>Efficiency + Low overhead costs, high turnover, flexible and adaptive response through NCEs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The <u>overhead costs</u> were around 5% of the total budget. - According to one of the interviewee’s, the <u>turnover of the project</u> was annually EUR 4 million or a project budget of 8.8 million. - There were various <u>no-cost extensions (NCEs)</u> requested, which resulted in a project of over 4 years instead of 2. Reasons for the NCEs: Starting a new office in Amman was more time consuming as was finding strong and reliable local partners. Other reasons were restructuring of activities and team members (increased number of partners to maximise the results), the delay in approval of the Loan Guarantee Fund, and COVID-19.
<p>Sustainability +/- Various initiatives have continued or expanded after project termination.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposal set out a chapter on sustainability, yet it could have been more detailed (e.g., there was no clear exit strategy formulated). - <u>Capacity building among local organizations:</u> Program sustainability was high according to the MTR, given that partners of the project successfully increased their capacities. It strengthened their organizational capacities and expanded their ability to work in other geographical areas. - <u>New initiatives:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The University of Jordan introduced a new entrepreneurship curriculum in 2021 based on SPARK’s polit curriculum, accommodating 50 teachers and around 4,500 students. This continued after the project was terminated. • The operational Business Support Centres was a success story. Accordingly, the Ministry of Digital Economy and Entrepreneurship decided to expand these centres and services.
<p>Quality of design - Flaws in project design, unrealistic project design; local organizations involved at later stage, yet their knowledge and expertise are relevant to designing a</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Flaws in the project logic:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The focus was mainly on the supply side of the labour market, thus enhancing vocational skills among youth to prepare them for the Jordan labour market and enhance their chances of employability. The program did not tackle the problems on the demand side, notably that of limited employment opportunities. “Enabling entrepreneurship does not necessarily create jobs, it creates entrepreneurs” (interview). • The strategic objective of supporting entrepreneurs, including MSME’s and startups, did not allow to directly target Syrian refugees, given that Syrians are by law not entitled to legally own a company. • The Start-Up support program: Spark provided 5- or 10-day training to entrepreneurs and start-ups to support them in establishing a business. However, there is a misperception about the technical side, notably implementing a business plan takes time, hence coaching is a more appropriate way of supporting new entrepreneurs than training.

<p>project; governmental approval delayed project activity 1.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Realistic results and indicators:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fact that there have been various overachievements (see output level) does not say much about whether the activities effectively contributed to reaching the objectives: E.g., while many beneficiaries received support writing a business plan (500 target, 540 reached), most of them did not finish their business plan and as such have not implemented this plan. It can be questioned whether the targets were not misjudged given the significant overachievements. • When the program was designed, the likelihood for extension was already discussed as it was a highly ambitious plan. • There was limited involvement of local implementing partners in the project design phase. This was one of the reasons for the development of proposals that were rather ambitious. Implementing partners have a local network and know what is needed. • During an interview, it was said that in general, a tender process leads to “overpromising bids” that do not fully respond to the needs of people. Consequently, partners present unrealistic project results, where donors are taken by headquarters’ demands and pass these unrealistic expectations on to project implementers. This leads to inflated reporting claiming of project results and undermines a long-term approach. - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessment:</u> The project did not address needs of all different target groups. E.g., business owners and businesses in Amman were more educated and skilled than those in remote areas. Hence, developing courses at different levels was recommended (mid term review). - <u>Implementing partners:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donors and partners have to consider the different power levels among implementing partners (interview). • Spark faced legal challenges working with a local implementing organization. • INGO’s that work through local NGO’s are much closer to the ultimate beneficiaries, compared to big donors and UN agencies. Co-designing a project with local Ngo’s is therefore of value and probably result in more effective support. - <u>Government cooperation:</u> Spark struggled to get government approval for the Revolving Micro Fund for Women (Loan Guarantee Fund under activity 1), because of misunderstanding about the name of the fund, which suggests Syrian refugee inclusion. The authorities were afraid that Jordanians would not be able to get a loan through this fund.
---	---

Project 4 Princess Alia Foundation – Sustainable Education through Renewable Energy in the Governates Affected by the Syrian Crisis			
Project characteristics			
Project name	Sustainable Education through Renewable Energy in the Governorates Affected by the Syrian Crisis		
Project number	4000000434		
Country	Jordan		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 7,222,961 <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 60 million in Jordan to support in the accommodation of refugees in Jordan (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	Princess Alia Foundation (PAF)		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - (100) Schools selected from Mafraq, Ramtha, Irbid, and North of Balqa ‘a. - (200) Teachers - (30,000 – 50,000) students in the selected schools - (1,000) Community leaders - (100-200) unemployed youth (Jordanians and Syrians) - Local community-based organizations (CBOs), especially women CBOs 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 July 2017	1 July 2017
	End date project	31 May 2019	31 August 2019
	Duration	1 year and 11 months	2 years and 2 months
Main themes	Education, infrastructure, renewable energy, and climate mitigation		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective	To contribute to the overall efforts aiming at mitigating the impact of the Syria crisis in line with the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) focusing on the Northern governorates that are most affected by the Syrian crisis. This will be achieved using Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) systems to reduce the growing energy demands, improve the learning		

environment in schools, increase enrolment and retention of Jordanian and Syrian students, improve the livelihoods of surrounding communities, and promote social cohesion at the same time.

Specific objectives

- To improve the learning environment and reduce present challenges in schools with high numbers of Syrian students at schools located in remote areas through providing them with a free source of needed electricity; renewable energy coupled with energy efficiency devices to operate various learning tools such as computers, access online curricula, sufficient lighting, cooling, and heating systems to provide a safe and healthy learning environment and increase student retention.
- To provide a sufficient sustainable income by savings in the electricity bills and by connecting these schools to the national grid enabling the sale of excess electricity generated. This additional income will be used for the daily maintenance of the system and the schools such as replacing broken windows, doors, painting, procuring educational resources and others. (**not achieved due to the decentralization law of the Jordanian government*)
- To improve the livelihood of surrounding communities through creating new job opportunities for youth in the energy sector. They will be trained by the RE private sector and at least 10% will be hired to ensure the sustainability of the systems.
- To empower the role of women CBOs in the targeted areas as training centres for local youth in the field of installing and maintaining Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) systems.
- To promote the social cohesion and community solidity between the Syrian refugees and hosting communities.

Assessment

Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Relevance + Needs addressed (and took a sustainability focus); included a gender focus; was sensitive to local realities; no balanced support; focus on social cohesion yet limited.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Needs addressed: The project invested in the installation of innovative renewable energy techniques in public schools to reduce expenditure in energy bills and generate income, which appeared to be relevant for the public schools in Jordan that suffered from bad inner climates (e.g., in the Jordan Valley, temperatures can be extreme) and the heavy burden of providing the extra number of Syrian refugee children with quality education. PAF assumed that tapping into the national grid and selling excess generated electricity is an added value that provides income that can be used for the maintenance of the infrastructure of the school such as the replacement of broken windows, fixing of doors, bathroom facilities etc. - Gender focus: PAF aimed at a 50/50 approach, having an equal number of boy and girl schools selected in the project. The program also tried to include teachers of both genders and work together with community leaders and CBOs that were both women and men led. Working with girl schools has shown to be more sustainable because they tend to treat equipment in a more respectful way than boys (interview – field visit). - Sensitive to local realities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was necessary to do school roof inspections before moving ahead with installing the Photovoltaic systems (PV). When the roofs were inspected through laboratory testing, it was found that some of the school buildings were weak and couldn't handle the new PV systems. Therefore, PAF's team in cooperation with the inspection team of the Royal Scientific Society Buildings department and the Ministry of Education (MoE) did extensive site visits to the Northern governments to select 19 new schools that were less than 20 years old and had similar capacities to the replaced ones. • The project was sensitive to differences between urban and rural areas. A lot of beneficiary schools were located in the Jordan Valley because this region suffered most from power cuts. - Balanced support: This project provided support to those schools that included Syrian refugee children in their education systems. From the achieved targets presented in the final progress report, it appears that more Jordanian students (45,625) were reached in comparison to the total number of Syrian students (10,580). The vocational training centres program (VTC) employed more Jordanian than Syrian unemployed youth (94 Jordanians versus 9 Syrians). - Social cohesion: The proposal mentioned that the pressure on Jordanian public schools increased, because of the provision of free access to public schools to Syrian children. This has stoked intercommunal tensions in some towns between Jordanians and Syrian refugees. The project proposal set out the objective of promoting social cohesion and community solidity between the Syrian refugees and host communities (output 1.6, which is not mentioned in progress reports). Project documents show that PAF in cooperation with CBOs organized workshops about renewable energy and energy efficiency awareness and social cohesion. These workshops reached just around 4000 people. Nevertheless, IOB was unable to determine whether these activities ensured social cohesion and interaction.
<p>Effectiveness + Positive outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Output level: Most of the output indicators seem to be achieved or even overachieved. (* However, IOB was unable to determine whether all output targets have been reached, because some outputs were adjusted during project implementation).

<p>achieved (mostly at a local scale); more girls than boys were reached; possible positive contribution to refugee participation (yet second shift classes); improved infrastructure (energy sector) in public schools and communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Outcome level:</u> PAF integrated technical aspects in the project, such as providing new learning tools (like computers), putting solar panels on the roofs of the schools, and installing air conditioning systems (ACs) in the classrooms. This created better climate control which made the learning environment in the schools better and the energy bills lower with almost 100% (first 1000 JD now only 3 JD) for more than 100 public schools. Also, maintenance was taken care of in the project through the training of maintenance youth workers. The project has led to a better school climate, inducing students to spend more of their time at school, rather than at home. A measurement was done on the drop-out rate before and after improvement of the school inhouse climate. Indeed, the drop-out rate has decreased. - The scale of the project was limited given that there were around 4000 public schools in Jordan, yet only 100-110 schools were included in the project. - <u>Gender targets:</u> The project reached more girls (33000) than boy (around 23000); The project specifically empowered women-led CBOs in targeted areas by partnering with them. During the field visit, IOB heard that implementing the project at girl schools was easier because they were less aggressive. - <u>Refugee participation:</u> The project has contributed to increased access to improved public learning environments for over 10 000 Syrian refugee children. Moreover, the project has brought together Syrians and Jordanians by completing around 100 awareness workshops in communities surrounding the selected schools. These awareness sessions addressed themes such as social cohesion and best practices on renewable energy. According to the third annual report, an evaluation of the pre and post surveys showed that around 4000 people gained knowledge and demonstrated new positive attitudes (mostly Jordanians and women). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • During the country visit, IOB learned that most refugee children received education during second shift classes. Those classes suffered most from lights being turned off (in wintertime), teachers that did not show up and misbehaviour and discrimination by Jordanians (e.g., ‘We leave you the trash to clean’ written on school boards). - <u>Economic benefits:</u> It is likely that the project brought some economic benefits, given that it installed renewable energy sources hereby reducing the energy costs by almost 100% for more 100 schools. Hence, the project contributed to tackling some of the challenges in the energy sector and created positive effects on public service delivery (mostly at the local level and short term, see sustainability). Moreover, households were able to take a low interest loan from a revolving fund for installing energy saving equipment that were more sustainable.
<p>Coherence +/- Project partner was aware of/aligned with national initiatives, project benefitted from royal network; there has been references made to interventions by other donors (local and international), yet how these were aligned is unclear.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project was in line with His Majesty King Abdullah II Schooling Heating Initiative: Focus was on improving the school environment for students of all ages and in all areas through heating and cooling schools by using renewable energy. • The program was aligned with several measures taken by the Ministry of Education (MoE) to accommodate to the educational needs of Syrian refugee children, including hiring new teachers, allowing free public-school enrolment for Syrian children, and having second shifts in primary schools to create more classroom spaces. • PAF is a royal NGO: The royal network helped the consortium to get things done. E.g., to get approval from MoE. - <u>Reference to coordination with other donor interventions:</u> This project was a continuation of a similar project that had been financed by the EU. The project partners showed that they were aware about the support given to 69 other schools by other donors, including a local organization named Jordan Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Fund (JREEEF). However, there was no information provided on whether synergies or alignment were sought with these projects. During the field visits to supported schools, IOB observed that these schools also received assistance by various other donors (such as USAID, EU, Canada, and Germany). It was unclear whether these projects were aligned with one another (seem to be “donor darlings”). - No reference made to coordination with broader MFA policy. - <u>Alignment with other project:</u> The project planned to create an employment application (app) alongside the development of Vocational Training Centres. Because Canada funded another project with the same consortium, the development of this app was postponed making it more advanced and integrate it into that project as well.
<p>Efficiency + NCE and reallocation approved; good return on investment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>A no-cost extension (NCE)</u> request and budget re-allocation were submitted to MFA NL to approve an additional three months. The project accumulated some savings on budgetary lines and wanted to invest these in additional activities. The NCE allowed the National Energy Research Centre to check and repair school roofs of some of the targeted schools before installing the systems. In parallel, PAF held an ongoing dialogue with government agencies about the reallocation of reduced CO2 emissions and bulls as credits to cover other schools. - During the field visit, it was mentioned that the project realised JOD 4 million (x 1,34 for euros) savings per year, which was a good return on investment (Dutch contribution was EUR 8 mln).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposal foresaw in 14% overhead expenses, but it seemed that there was an additional 7% overhead (total of 21% indirect costs).
Sustainability +/- Lack of incentives to maintain project results at the long term; sustainability levels clearly explained; cooperated with local partners (incl. MoE and CBOs).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project proposal and annual reports clearly outlined the various levels of sustainability. - <u>Incentives to maintain project results:</u> The project partner did not consider that the revenue from the excess supply of returned electricity of the solar systems had to be invested in a fund administered by the Ministry of Finance, instead of flowing back into the school systems. As mentioned by interviewees, by not returning excess revenue to the schools to invest in them, there was no incentive for the school authorities to maintain the solar panels. In addition, the project budgeted for the maintenance of the solar panels. However, no resources have been allocated to continue the maintenance after the project ended. This will harm the performance of the solar panels in the long term. In line with this, IOB heard from project implementers that there were no incentives for beneficiaries to turn off lights and ACs after school ends or during holidays. During field visits in the Jordan Valley, for example, IOB saw that although solar panels and ACs were installed in the school, the AC in the room that we were able to enter was not turned off, yet it was not working. - <u>Local implementing partners:</u> The consortium closely cooperated with the MoE because solar systems were installed on roofs of public-school buildings that were owned by MoE. After project termination, the systems were handed over to the MoE. The MoE established an internal fund to deposit the savings of energy bills because of the installed RE/EE systems. These savings have been used for maintenance, including maintaining these systems. - <u>The project only took place for 3 years, after that there was no follow up.</u>
Quality of design + Stakeholder assessment conducted; local implementing partners; worked within existing public structures instead of creating parallel systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Intervention logic:</u> In the third annual report it was mentioned that the logical framework and Theory of Change have been revised to reflect the actual start of the project and the modified indicators to better measure the project progress and achievements. There was no explanation presented why these were revised. - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessment:</u> The project was preliminary designed based on information from the Jordan Response Plan (JRP), the MoE, and the “Jordan nationwide assessment in public schools for Strategic planning”. In addition, the project partners conducted an in-depth assessment study at the beginning of the project to assess the situation in the schools in the targeted governorates to select (100) schools that are most affected by the pressure of Syrian students and in most need of improving their learning environment. The project partners also conducted a detailed assessment of the needed energy for the selected schools and the installation of ACs in the classrooms of each selected school. - <u>Implementing partners:</u> The project partners cooperated with the MoE and local organizations including CBOs. The project partnered with CBOs to implement awareness trainings. During the field visit, the project partners expressed their criticism about the level of sustainability of working with CBOs and the institutional issues (depended too much on the persons involved). - <u>Government cooperation:</u> The project made use of existing public schools that were owned by the MoE (instead of developing parallel structures).

Project 5 GIZ – Trade for Employment (T4E)			
Project characteristics			
Project name	Trade for Employment (T4E)		
Project number	4000000929		
Country	Jordan		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 5,8 million <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 60 million in Jordan to support in the accommodation of refugees in Jordan (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	The Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in cooperation with Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jordanian and Syrian job seekers, owners, and employees of trade-oriented companies in the industrial, agriculture and service sectors - Three categories of companies with export experience: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Companies which adapted their products to alternative markets. 2. Companies that developed new products to access new markets. 3. Companies with products of sufficient quality for export to other markets. 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 December 2017	1 September 2017
	End date project	31 December 2021	21 December 2022 <i>*(end date of Dutch contribution. Project runs until October 2025)</i>
	Duration	4 years and 1 month	5 years and 2-3 months

Main themes	Economic development, private sector development (PSD), (youth) employment
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The project was initiated by the German embassy and the GIZ Office in Jordan. The Netherlands was an active donor. The project was co-financed by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).
<p>Overall objective To improve the conditions for Jordanian companies to increase their trade performance to create employment for Jordanians and Syrians.</p> <p>Theory of change Against the background of the Rules of Origin (simplified within the Jordan Compact) and improved conditions for EU market access, improved trade-promotion services, involvement in shaping trade systems, improved access to a qualified work or labour force and the simplification of trade procedures and activities will have direct, positive effects on trading companies by reducing the costs of production, transactions, and trade. By reducing their costs, these companies can strengthen their competitiveness and economic performance capability, make better use of existing trade agreements and preferences, and access alternative markets in Europe and Africa. This will compensate for the loss of traditional markets and will combat the decline in trade performance. Through stabilised and increased production and sales, there will be an effect on employment and incomes for the Jordanian population and for especially vulnerable groups such as Syrian refugees. This contributes to stabilising Jordan as a host country.</p> <p>Project pillars</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthening private sector participation in shaping a conducive trade environment through the institutionalization of a Public-Private Dialogue mechanism. Improve availability and quality of demand driven trade related services. Facilitate trade across borders by simplifying trade procedures, including the import of materials and products for further processing into export-oriented products, to reduce the time and the costs needed for importing and exporting to improve competitiveness and attractiveness of Jordan businesses. Support to identifying, hiring, and retaining labour in trade related industries/sectors to improve staff recruitment in trade-oriented companies. This includes placing Syrian refugees in jobs. Activities include matchmaking activities between job seekers and trade companies. 	
Assessment³	
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Relevance + Addressed relevant needs; initially no specific gender focus included; sensitive to local realities; no balanced support, but there was a specific focus on sectors in which Syrian refugees were allowed to work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Needs addressed:</u> The project was relevant for the selected micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), who lacked export financing schemes, had limited access to financial means and a lack of information on how to access finance and market information. Moreover, GIZ provided capacity development interventions for local organizations. GIZ also offered trainings and network opportunities for those who were looking for jobs, including for Syrian refugees. The latter was the only relevant project element responding to the need for jobs among Syrian refugees. Therefore, the project seems relevant to the needs of Jordanian companies more than to the needs of Syrian refugees. - <u>Gender focus:</u> At the start of the project, the partner did not develop gender specific performance indicators. In the proposal it was said that a gender analysis will be sent to the MFA NL 4 months after signing the contract. This indicates that it was more of an afterthought and a wish of the donor to include a gender focus in the project instead of it being at the centre of the project. Only under Pillar B, a specific focus on women was integrated: “the module extended its support to the Women Exporters Unit to strengthen as a trade information hub for women-owned businesses”. Gender disaggregated data was presented for some outputs. - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic posed a significant risk to the module’s progress, particularly regarding political and social risk factors. The achievements under output B and D were delayed due to the strict containment measures which Jordan had adopted (incl. travel restrictions) This caused a decline in business revenues, lower demand for products and services, higher debts and energy costs and problems in accessing capital. The pandemic also negatively impacted the job matching and employment activities for Jordanians and Syrians. Where possible, GIZ switched to online modalities. - <u>Balanced support:</u> The proposal underlined that the program targeted both refugees and host communities. However, Syrian refugees were targeted in an indirect manner. Notably, in the progress report of 2021, the main objective was described as: “to improve the conditions for Jordanian companies to increase their trade and export while creating employment for Jordanians and Syrians.” Thus, the project’s main target group comprised of trade-oriented companies, including supply and service companies and Syrian refugees were targeted only from an employment perspective.

³ Results from the final report cannot be considered in the analysis, since the final report has not yet been published.

<p>Effectiveness +/- Most outputs were fully achieved, contextual challenges negatively impacted achievements at the outcome level, women were reached through the project, project probably had economic benefits and enhanced refugee participation in the (informal) labour market.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level:</u> According to the 2021 progress report, the targets for most of the indicators at the output level were on schedule (either almost fully achieved or fully achieved). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under output B, T4E supported the Jordan Enterprise Development Corporation (JEDCO) in an e-commerce initiative as a response to Covid-19 to assist export-oriented enterprises to access global virtual marketplaces and increase exports. • 371 businesses benefited from the module’s various service provisions until 2021. During the reporting period, 45 businesses received various trade-related services, 56 benefited from the Advance Ruling Mechanism under the trade facilitation services, and 56 received employment services (20 for the first time). - <u>Outcome level:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both the progress report (2021) and interviews with stakeholders highlighted that although the structured PPD at the macro level was successful (pillar A), it was not exactly what was needed. Priorities changed. E.g., the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply (MoITS) mentioned that they were more interested in establishing export councils. An implementing partners mentioned that the facilitation of an employer-employee dialogue was more relevant for the economic situation in Jordan. • Under pillar C, trade facilitation was enhanced through facilitating measures under the WTO trade facilitation agreement, which contributed to simplified trade procedures and processes. Nevertheless, the influence of the trade facilitation pillar was limited at a sectoral level (economic incentives were given only to certain sectors and not to others). • Pillar D provided employment services, including skills training and transportation. - <u>Contextual challenges to the project implementation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formalization of jobs was problematic as companies did not want to be regulated or pay taxes to enter and be active on the formal market. Besides, employees were unwilling to enter the formal workforce, because wages in the informal sector were higher. • The Jordan Compact did not deliver the promised working permits for Syrian refugees. • The project encountered difficulties in integrating Syrian refugee workers in the labour market because of 1) closed sectors for refugees and work permits; 2) working conditions; 3) stereotyping; and 4) dependency on family. • Interviewees mentioned that the conditionalities for project successes were not always in place (incl. childcare facilities, flexible working hours, safety measures). • Businesses that wanted to export were challenged by logistical problems to enter the EU market. Although trade flows increased, these were not up to what was needed. • Moreover, there was strong competition over products with other markets. Companies were encouraged to look at niche markets (e.g., Islamic costumes), however the level of competitiveness differs because of higher labour and transportation costs. - <u>Gender targets:</u> Under output B, GIZ extended its support to a Women Exporters unit, which contributed to the strengthening of the unit’s role as a trade information hub for women-owned businesses. Moreover, trade-oriented companies have employed a total of 3,400 staff members for more than 3 months of which 15% were women. - <u>Refugee participation:</u> The project mainly focused on Jordanian companies (creating an improved business climate for these companies to increase their performance for employment). Nevertheless, it seems that some jobs were created for Syrian refugees. Notably, supported trade-oriented companies have employed a total of 3,400 staff members (20% of them Syrian refugees) for more than 3 months. Under module 4 (output pillar D), there were 1568 jobseekers trained in Core Employability Skills including Syrian refugees (no disaggregated data was provided). There was a real-time job-matching system to connect Jordanians and refugees with available job opportunities. - <u>Economic benefits:</u> Generally, the projects main pillars have been relevant for enhancing the performance of the private sector (e.g., the manufacturing and service sectors) by improving conditions for Jordanian companies to enter new markets (incl. the EU market), by improving trade-promotion services and trading systems, by improving access to a qualified labour force and by simplifying trade procedures. This reduced the costs of production, transactions and trade which contributed to the competitiveness and economic performance of companies.
<p>Coherence + References to contributions and alignment with host country plans, other donor interventions and CBI (which is the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> The progress report of 2021 mentioned that the project contributed to the implementation of the Jordan Compact and the Regional Refugee & Resilience Plan (3RP) by facilitating exports to the EU and other less traditional markets. Moreover, the project was aligned with the Jordan Vision 2025, Jordan’s Growth Path, the Jordanian Economic Growth Plan 2018-2022, and the National Export Strategy. Moreover, the report referred to contributions to the National Employment Charter and the national employment matching platforms. It is not clear, how the project aligned with these plans. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The T4E project collaborated with the Ministry of Labour (MoL) (e.g., training and employment promotion activities for Jordanians in the formal labour market).

<p>only reference to broader NL MFA policy).</p>	<p>Registration of employment under output D was done through the JORISS platform of the Ministry of Planning and international Cooperation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Critical note:</u> The Jordan Compact was described as an ‘empty deal’ by some of GIZ’s stakeholders interviewed during the IOB country visit to Jordan. <p>- <u>Reference to coordination other donor interventions/broader MFA NL policy:</u> The progress report of 2021 clearly outlined the synergies achieved at the result level (outcome and impact) with different other donor interventions in progress report, such as the programmes by the Dutch Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI), the World Bank (WB), the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and EU-led programmes.</p> <p>- <u>Coordination structures:</u> the T4E module was part of a former EZ programme ‘Education and Employment Promotion in Jordan’, and the project is (still ongoing) part of the BMZ ‘Partnership for Prospects (P4P) Initiative’. T4E coordinated its activities on the provision of trade-related services with stakeholders, such as the Jordan Chamber of Industry (JCI).</p>
<p>Efficiency + NCE allowed for expansion/adjustment of activities; overhead was on the high end (due to many partners).</p>	<p>- Because of a top-up of the project budget by BMZ with EUR 5 million and World Economic Forum (WEF) with EUR 1.1 million in 2021, the project duration was extended to 2025. The MFA NL agreed upon a <u>no cost extension (NCE)</u> of the Dutch contribution to the module until the end of December 2022. Because of the additional funding and time, GIZ expanded activities, particularly under indicator 2 (export services and capacity building of Jordan public and private service providers) and 3 (trade facilitation) and output B1 and C1. Another motive for a NCE were the delays in the implementation of activities due to Covid-19 measures.</p> <p>- In the latest progress report under review (2021), the <u>overhead costs</u> were around 8.6% of the total budget. Given the governance structure of the project (many implementing partners), the overhead costs were probably higher than presented in the financial overview.</p>
<p>Sustainability +/- Limited information on sustainability; financial sustainability guaranteed through other donor funding; focus on enhancing local structures.</p>	<p>- <u>Exit strategy:</u> In the proposal it was mentioned that a detailed exit strategy was to be developed within one year after the start of the project. However, IOB did not find this detailed exit strategy and does not know whether it was developed.</p> <p>- <u>Local ownership:</u> T4E has been working towards enhancing local organizational capacities and improving service provision. The project’s interventions under its export promotion and trade facilitation pillars (pillars B and C) were designed to address Jordanian structures, both state and private, to eventually assist them in embedding recommended changes at organisational, individual, and societal levels.</p> <p>- GIZ expected that the employment services that were established were to be anchored either in local institutions or handed over to Jordanian and international partners like the MoL. Hence, many of the technological tools developed by IRC were introduced, tested, and transferred to MoL to maximize the benefits of the investments.</p> <p>- <u>Financial sustainability:</u> The project has received additional funding by BMZ until 2025.</p>
<p>Quality of design +/- Rather ambitious program design; extensive focus on skills building; challenge of targeting refugees directly; feedback of private sector incorporated in design; many implementing partners; cooperated with different government bodies at different levels – cooperation was difficult in some instances (e.g., caused delays).</p>	<p>- <u>Program design:</u> The project design was perceived as rather ambitious. Instead of trade for employment (title of the project), it should be employment through trade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Besides, there was an extensive focus on vocational education, training and match making activities, which did not fully correspond to the lack of employment opportunities in Jordan. It was rather a supply driven focus. • It was mentioned during the field visit that vocational trainings were not up to the standard of what people were interested in and by which they can find better jobs. • Whereas most projects focused on the increase and creation of a skill set among employees, it was more important to create jobs. Interviewees mentioned that when looking at jobs for refugees, it is important to consider that refugees are not allowed to work in all sectors. E.g., advocacy for increased provision of work permits would be necessary given that without working permits, refugees cannot legally work. Hence, why provide them with a skills-set if they cannot put it into practice? • During a focus group discussion, it was said that economic development projects are important even if refugee crisis wasn’t there. By investing in economic development projects, you will also reach refugees from Syria. <p>- <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessment:</u> GIZ did a survey study to receive feedback from the private sector on what is needed. Subsequently, GIZ selected companies through an intake which allowed GIZ to gather information about the companies export schemes and information on how to access finance and market info for trade companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The country visit revealed that the right needs have been addressed for companies. • No needs assessments were carried out on how to best address the needs of Syrian refugees in the project. • During the country visit, it was suggested to give beneficiaries the ability to give suggestions and be included in the designing of the program: “Including beneficiaries and those who are closest to the beneficiaries from the beginning onwards is important when trying to respond in an agile way to the local context.”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Implementing partners:</u> The project involved a lot of stakeholders, which led to a thin spread and complex set up. There was a low level of cooperation and a strong competition between several business organizations and chambers (at national and regional level). GIZ pushed for better coordination between implementing partners. However, IOB did not find whether this improved the cooperation between partners. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the implementing partners mentioned that when they got involved, the project design was already set, and it was a matter of “take it or leave it”. Nevertheless, GIZ was flexible and welcoming new ideas to a certain extent. • There has been a compliance issue with one of the implementing partners, which has been managed and communicated in a good manner. - <u>Government cooperation:</u> The project cooperates with different government bodies at national and local levels and has faced some challenges in working together with the government bodies. E.g., T4E dealt with delays in receiving necessary feedback on technical matters from the MoITS. This might be related to the high turnover of ministers and civil servants in the MoITS, which resulted in a lack of understanding on the aim of the intervention. Consequently, officials often did not have the sufficient knowledge or background to implement the pillars. Nevertheless, IOB heard during the country visit that when looking at how things were in 2017 and how things are now, the understanding among local government bodies about themes like trade and export has improved. However, national level impact has not been reached – the different platforms are not coordinated well. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proactive government is needed, but not yet established. Hence, government agencies lack the capacity and the money to invest in economic development. - The MFA NL contributed to all the module’s activities excluding the Output D grant agreement.
--	--

Lebanon

Project 6 UNICEF – Fostering Economically, Personally and Socially Active Youth			
Project characteristics			
Project name	Fostering Economically, Personally and Socially Active Youth – part of the UNICEF Adolescents and Youth Development programme		
Project number	29317		
Country	Lebanon		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 20 million <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 86 million in Lebanon to support in the accommodation of refugees in Lebanon (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) Lebanon Country Office		
Main project beneficiaries	30,177 adolescents and youth (approximately 50/50 girls and boys; and approximately 60%, 20% and 20% for Syrians, Palestinians, and vulnerable Lebanese respectively)		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 September 2016	1 September 2016
	End date project	30 April 2018	31 March 2020
	Duration	1 year and 8 months	3 year and 7 months <i>*(cooperation between MFA NL and UNICEF continues under the Prospects partnership 2019-2023)</i>
Main themes	Education, youth employment, health and psychosocial well-being, social cohesion		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was an active and lead donor alongside the German cooperation Deutsche Zusammenarbeit (implemented by KfW Development Bank)		
Overall objective Support youth in different ways for them to engage in quality (vocational) learning, in taking opportunities to employment and to adopt healthy lifestyles.			
Project goals			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build skills base: Increase access of the most disadvantaged Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth (15-24 years) to technical and vocational training and innovative skills building programmes for improved professional readiness and employability. 2. Expand participation: Strengthen mechanisms and increase opportunities for meaningful participation and empowerment of the most disadvantaged Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth at central and local level, enabling active engagement in their host communities as social agents in conflict management, social cohesion, and promotion of healthy lifestyles. 3. Inclusive policies for youth: Strengthen government capacity and systems to implement and monitor inclusive policies and plans for meaningful participation and empowerment of Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth. UNICEF worked with government and non-government counterparts to operationalize the National Youth Policy and support its implementation and monitoring. 			
<i>*The Netherlands has specifically supported the first two project goals of UNICEF’s Adolescents and Youth Development programme 2017-2020 through the Fostering Active Youth project.</i>			
Assessment⁴			
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment		
Relevance +/- Addressed needs of youth; gender focus included yet gender related details were not shown; sensitive to local realities; balanced support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Addressing needs: The program responded to the high demand for job opportunities and mental health and psycho-social support for refugees. Less than 3% of the 82,744 registered Syrian refugees aged 15-18 were enrolled in public secondary schools during the 2015-2016 academic year. The protracted crisis caused loss of confidence and self-esteem among young people. UNICEF Lebanon tried to tackle these issues by expanding access to secondary education and vocational training programmes that focus on employability for youth. - Gender focus: The program served both women/girls and men/boys, and the project proposal referred to a breakdown of approximately 50/50 for all youth activities. Gender disaggregated data was presented for most targets set. For many of the activities, more girls/young women than boys/young men were reached. In the proposal, UNICEF mentioned that it would address 		

⁴ Results from the final report were not considered in the analysis, since the final report was not available.

<p>unlikely given restrictions to Syrian refugees; lack of information on strengthened relationship between refugees and host communities.</p>	<p>gender-based barriers to participation, for example by provision of safe transport, women-only classes in certain areas. However, further project documentation did not present gender related details, e.g., on whether these activities were implemented with gender-specific needs in mind (see the progress report of April 2019).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> Political and social unrest were foreseen in the project proposal phase. A no cost extension was justified by the program disruptions caused by demonstrations and unrest across Lebanon since October 2019. The COVID-19 pandemic was not foreseen initially, but UNICEF was able to adjust some of its activities to online interventions. E.g., COVID-19 provided an opportunity to reach more females through online training. UNICEF was also able to help implementing partner, Digital Opportunity Trust (DOT – a youth-led movement that supported young innovators to create and apply digital solutions) with their digital transformation concept. - Most of the youth had one goal to achieve, which was to secure a job at a governmental institution or enrol in the army to secure a long-term sustainable job. - <u>Balanced support:</u> Overall, the program has been available to non-Lebanese and Lebanese youth. However, some vocational courses were not available to Syrian refugees due to security restrictions and lack of legal documentation for Syrian refugees in Lebanon. - <u>Social cohesion:</u> UNICEF mentioned that the project implementation may be negatively impacted by the rising unemployment rate among poor and young Lebanese and the deeply rooted perception that Syrian refugees are taking jobs away from Lebanese (*statistics did not confirm this as refugees were for the most part unskilled laborers), which fuelled tensions among the different groups. The project tried to increase the understanding and strengthen relations in the concerned regions by offering activities that bring together Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth. Nevertheless, IOB did not find information on whether the project strengthened the relationship between different groups.
<p>Effectiveness + Most targets were achieved, yet there were some bottlenecks in the project implementation, including possible double counting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>At the output level:</u> Apart from the targets under activity 1.1.6 (building innovation labs), UNICEF has achieved all its intended targets. UNICEF reached 37.731 Lebanese and non-Lebanese adolescents and youth since the start of the program until December 2018. Yet, important to note is that it is unclear whether beneficiaries were able to and did participate in multiple activities (double counting). This was also questioned by the MFA NL. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation of the innovation labs was pressured by the lack of stable locations and lengthy assessments in various locations. Moreover, some adolescents and youth were unable to reach the minimum requirements for the program in terms of their age, and numeracy and literacy levels (these beneficiaries first had to get involved in the literacy and numeracy programmes before they could enrol in the innovation programs.) - <u>At the outcome level:</u> The program’s accountability is explained at the output level and not at the outcome level. Indicators mentioned in the budget and logical framework were formulated at the output level and specification was limited. - <u>Gender targets:</u> The percentages of women beneficiaries and non-Lebanese beneficiaries reached were 50% or more in all activities. Possible double counting. - <u>Refugee participation in host communities:</u> The program has contributed to increased refugee participation by providing access to formal vocational education and competency-based skills trainings in collaboration with concerned ministries. The program facilitated access to employment and income generating activities for more than 4000 adolescents (highly likely that this included more Lebanese than non-Lebanese beneficiaries). - <u>Economic benefits:</u> Given the types of interventions (incl. training, setting up of innovation labs, supporting start ups), it is likely that the supported youth will play a role in the host country’s economy in the near future. Economic contribution, as measured in absolute money terms, seems to be limited. - <u>Challenges to program implementation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor infrastructure in agriculture schools which didn’t allow for a regular flow of sessions. • Low commitment in literacy and numeracy courses due to need to generate income. • Adolescents and youth struggled to commit to programmes that ran over several months, like the mentorship component that ran for 3 months and the innovation labs. • The temporary closure of banks and severe capital controls hampered partners’ ability to access or spend funds. • There were issues regarding the payment process under activity 1.1.1. Consequently, allocations had to be refunded.
<p>Coherence + Aligned with strategic initiatives of host country</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Alignment host country policy:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program has been aligned with the national policy frameworks related to adolescents and youth development in Lebanon, including the Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) plan of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), the Strategic Framework on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) National Strategic Framework (NSF), and the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP 2017-2020).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF collaborated with the MEHE, the Ministry of Agriculture, local partners, and vocational training institutes for project implementation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Coherence with broader Dutch policy in Lebanon</u>: Following the progress report, the program was aligned with FAO's agriculture program funded by the Netherlands. - IOB did not find information on alignment and synergies with other donor's interventions.
Efficiency + Flexible response to changes in context though project extensions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>3 project extensions were granted</u>, of which 1 with a budget top-up of EUR 5 million. Reasons for no cost extensions (NCEs) were delays and challenges in certain interventions, disruptions in programming which resulted from the nation-wide demonstrations and unrest. - Although the project appraisal mentioned that channelling funds to UNICEF is advisable, since it has adequate and reliable monitoring and accountability mechanisms in place, the MFA NL concluded that it was impossible to make a judgement on efficiency at the output level. - <u>Overhead costs</u> were around 13%. UNICEF Lebanon management support costs (between 5-6,5%); Indirect cost (8% of programmable costs). However, the overhead figure did not consider the overheads of UNICEF's implementing partners, which means that the actual overhead percentage was higher. Approximately 64% of the budget has been transferred to local NGOs for the implementation of the programme.
Sustainability + Financial support; local ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNICEF worked together with several local NGOs and government agencies for the implementation of the interventions and aimed for the enhancement of their capacity to enable them to continue the implementation after the end of the interventions. - Financial support for the interventions continued under the Prospects partnership.
Quality of design +/- Flaw in intervention logic, lack of clear definition target group; unrealistic and unclear M&E and result indicators; coordination implementing partners could have been better.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Flaw in the intervention logic</u>: The project focussed on the supply side of the labour market, by providing access to formal vocational and competency-based skills trainings and an integrated package of life skills education and healthy life-style activities. Nevertheless, by enhancing the professional readiness of young people, UNICEF did not tackle the challenges on the demand side of the labour market, including the lack of employment opportunities in Lebanon. (<i>* this is in line with the evaluation report of UNICEF's Adolescents and Youth (YAD) Programme (2017-2019) by Ecorys which found that "the effectiveness of the skills building services is constrained by ... the continuing shortage of quality employment opportunities that young people access following the completion of the Program"</i>)⁵ - There is no clear <u>definition of target groups</u>: e.g., the difference between the 2300 students and 2000 out-of-school/working adolescents and youth that had access to formal vocational training. Moreover, it was unclear how UNICEF defined most vulnerable or disadvantaged youth and adolescents. - <u>Realistic indicators and results</u>: Objectives were in general well described in terms of numbers, but more concrete success indicators were missing, e.g., from the 2300 students, 1500 will successfully receive a certificate from non-formal training centre OR e.g., from the 2300, #number will find a job or will be self-employed. Same applied to the Innovation Labs. It was unclear how UNICEF monitored success regarding these objectives. - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessment</u>: IOB did not find whether the focus on ICT was a primary concern and need of the community. This seems to imply that needs assessments and stakeholder analysis were insufficient. - Following the critique of the MFA NL on the initial project proposal, UNICEF formulated an adjusted proposal. This allowed for a more comprehensive description of activities, implementing partners, the strategic value of the program and an expanded Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) component. Despite an expanded paragraph about M&E in the proposal, the question on how UNICEF monitored success was not addressed in the new proposal nor were success indicators for the Innovation labs included. - <u>Government cooperation</u>: Because of political instability and fragmentation of power at the central government level, the high political turnover and multitude of authorities engaged in decision-making and implementation, the effect of capacity building efforts within this program were limited. - <u>Implementing partners</u>: Cooperation and synergies between implementing partners could have been improved by enhanced communication and coordination (final evaluation).

⁵ [Evaluation reports | UNICEF Evaluation in UNICEF](#) – Ecorys, 2020, Evaluation of UNICEF's Adolescents and Youth Programme (2017-2019) in Lebanon

Project 7 FAO – Water and Agriculture			
Project characteristics			
Project name	Water and Agriculture – Promotion of Agriculture Livelihoods and Employment through Investment in Land Reclamation and Water Reservoirs		
Project number	29561		
Country	Lebanon		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 7,424,823 <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 86 million in Lebanon to support in the accommodation of refugees in Lebanon (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Green Plan of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) - Small and medium farmers (including 9% of women): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lebanese small-holder farmers in hilly areas (1220 households or about 6345 beneficiaries), with particular focus on the poorest areas with the highest concentration of displaced Syrians. • Vulnerable Lebanese farm households, including women and youth, will benefit from higher income and better access to home-grown food products. • Syrian refugees and other unskilled construction and agricultural workers, in addition to Lebanese unskilled workers. Temporary jobs expected to be created: 81 300 man/days benefiting around 5 420 workers. Given the nature of the work, it is expected that most of these workers will be male, especially young men (16-25 years) with very few female direct beneficiaries. • Syrian refugees and other seasonal workers will benefit from seasonal work in the harvesting of fruits and vegetables (715 seasonal jobs expected to be created (6 months/year) farm male and female workers. 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 December 2016	1 December 2016
	End date project	31 December 2019	31 May 2020
	Duration	3 years and 1 month	3 years and 6 months
Main themes	Private sector development (PSD), agriculture sector, institutional capacity building, employment		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective			
Agriculture and rural livelihoods in the intervention areas are more sustainable and they adopt climate change sustainable natural resources management and conservation approaches. The project supports the <i>*Green Plan (GP)</i> to revive agricultural livelihoods through investment in small-scale farming infrastructure while creating temporary jobs for unskilled workers and sustainable yearly seasonal work opportunities for displaced Syrians and Lebanese host communities, hence contributing to the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.			
Project goals			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen the capacity of the Green Plan to implement rural development projects for vulnerable people. 2. Improve the livelihoods of small and medium farmer communities through 390 ha of land reclamation and water conservation. 3. Improve the know-how of 1220 farmers in establishing and managing orchards and irrigation systems. 4. Create over 80 000 man/day job opportunities in the agriculture sector. 			
<i>*The Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture established the Green Plan (GP) in 1963 as an autonomous authority that was mandated to study and execute land reclamation and development projects. The GP runs a demand-driven support programme allowing farmers to benefit from subsidies to invest in agriculture infrastructure and land reclamation for agriculture and soil and water conservation. GP subsidies have allowed many farmers to invest in reclaiming their abandoned lands or rehabilitating/upgrading low-productivity lands.</i>			
Assessment ⁶			
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment		
Relevance +/- Addressed needs, gender focus was limited given the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Addressing needs</u>: FAO's project provided relevant support to the Ministry of Agriculture's Green Plan (GP), which struggled with processing grant applications by Lebanese farmers, and to small Lebanese farmers who benefitted from subsidies for medium and longer-term investments in land reclamation projects. FAO hereby facilitated seasonal and daily job opportunities for amongst other displaced Syrians and unskilled Lebanese workers. 		

⁶ An evaluation of this program has been recently published by FAO's evaluation (2023), not considered in this project assessment, yet shows similar findings. Link can be found [here](#).

<p>nature of work; sensitive to local realities; yet no balanced approach; no signs of focus on social cohesion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agriculture sector has traditionally been dominated by unskilled Syrian labourers. • A large percentage of Syrian displaced populations were in the agricultural areas of Bekaa Valley and Akkar and they constituted a heavy burden on host communities. <p>- <u>Gender focus:</u> In the proposal, it was mentioned that there would be a focus on gender equity and equality. However, FAO did not present a detailed gender strategy or indicators. In line with the promises to MFA NL, FAO provided an updated log frame that included gender disaggregated indicators in the beginning stage of the project implementation to further specific such indicators. However, to put things into perspective, many farmers were men while women-headed households constituted around 9% of the total farming households. Following the Mid Term Review report, farming is widely a family enterprise, and most women have their male head of household take care of land management. There were limits to women involvement, such as hard labour works that needs physical strength.</p> <p>- <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> The country context was extremely challenging and hampered project implementation. The absence of the Executive Committee as a fully functioning decision-making board in the GP resulted in the postponement of the implementation and rescheduling and adjustment of several originally planned activities (i.e., M&E, annual budget preparation, ISO certification). Additionally, the project suffered from unfavourable weather conditions, which inhibited access to land and led to a stop in the execution of works. In November/December 2019, the country was seriously affected by the demonstrations, protests and roads blocks, and government demission, and more recently by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has added more burden to the financial and economic situation. This all had a direct impact on the project delivery, specifically the field activities. Additionally, and because of these events, farmers requested extensions on their deadlines to enable them to complete the planned works covered by the grants. This led to some project implementation, especially under Outputs 2 and 3. In response, FAO adopted a contingency plan for the project and monitored the situation and related developments in the country.</p> <p>- <u>Balanced support:</u> Overall, IOB found that the project did not have a balanced approach given that Lebanese farmers, unskilled workers, students (those attending the agriculture business schools), and government agencies were the direct beneficiaries of the project. Technical assistance was solely provided to Lebanese institutions and Lebanese farmers were the only group allowed to receive grants by the GP. Displaced Syrians were targeted in an indirect way. Nonetheless, FAO has tried to integrate Syrian refugees by introducing a conditionality that forced Lebanese farmers to hire Syrian refugees as workers.</p> <p>- <u>Social cohesion:</u> IOB did not find any information on whether the program focused on the prevention or mitigation of possible tensions between refugees and Lebanese.</p>
<p>Effectiveness +/- Both positive and negative assessment given overachievement on certain outputs; no decent jobs were created, and policy/structural change was halted by the absence of a GP president and executive committee.</p>	<p>- <u>Output level:</u> FAO has overachieved on two of the four outputs (output 2 & 3) set in the project proposal. For the other output indicators (1 & 4), it did not reach its intended results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under output 1, the GP procedures were simplified, updated, and tailored to the work requirements. However, because of the absence of a fully functioning decision-making board in the GP, the implementation of some activities was postponed, and several planned activities were rescheduled and modified. • Activities under output 2 have been successfully completed and the % of processed and approved applications is higher than the planned targets. The project established new selection criteria for small-scale farmers that comply with GP land conditions. • Under output 3, most targets have been overachieved. The project has provided over 165.793 m3 of conserved water against the 25.000m3 planned. The 92.929 workdays that were created the target set at 81 200 workdays. Nevertheless, there was limited information available on the ultimate beneficiaries reached. Moreover, overachievements were mainly due to the reallocation of resources to increase grants. • Instead of offering individual training sessions under output 4, FAO adjusted the activity and developed the concept of Farm Business Schools (FBS). The roll out of nine FBSs in different regions of Lebanon enabled farmers to improve their knowledge on various themes (incl. agricultural practices, marketing, and farm business planning) via training. This also improved the capacity of the MoA in agriculture business concepts, and connected farmers with the extension services. Between May and September 2019, 91 farmers were trained of whom 25 women. FAO was not able to roll-out 3 new FBSs during the project extension period, due to the unrest in the country and COVID-19. <p>- <u>Outcome level:</u> FAO mentioned in project documents that it expected to create a sustainable flow of more than 195 000 days per year of seasonal labour once all established orchards enter full production. IOB was unable to verify this during the visit. However, due to the absence of an Executive Committee and the difficulty of making any policy change in the current political environment, it seems highly unlikely that project outcomes have been reached and that there was a needs-based distribution of the budget.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Best practice:</u> The Grant Workflow Management Information System (digital tool) enhanced the grant application process (reduction of waiting time for farmers before they received grants and strengthened technical capacity of the GP). Due to the utility of this system, the FAO Country Office in Lebanon has assisted the FAO Country Office in Somalia in adapting such a system. - The project did not promote decent work conditions, as most job opportunities consisted of informal seasonal or daily agriculture work. - <u>Gender targets:</u> There is a mixed picture per output. Female farmers were targeted as beneficiaries. However, men made up most of the workforce with very few women as direct beneficiaries (see e.g., output 3: more than 11 457 unskilled labourers benefitted with less than 1% of women, due to the nature of work). The selection criteria under output 2 favoured women, which allowed for more female farmers applicants (19% versus anticipated 9/10%). - <u>Refugee participation in host communities:</u> The project itself was not so much focused on an integrated approach. Only Lebanese farmers were entitled to grant applications, and many outputs referred to trained/supported Lebanese farmers (land reclamations, planting, conservation of water). More than 11 thousand unskilled labourers benefited from job opportunities and more than 50% were Syrians. It is important to note that Syrian seasonal workers were traditionally active in agriculture in Lebanon. Thus, it is hard to say whether the project really contributed to a higher share of temporarily employed. - <u>Economic benefits:</u> It was estimated that more than 92 000 days of work for about 2 500 workers have been created, of whom 16% are women and 53% displaced Syrians. From the results of the impact assessment [quality could not be checked by IOB] of the GP grants that were disbursed in 2019, it can be concluded that the GP grant scheme, which aimed to encourage long term investments in land reclamation, had significant positive financial, environmental, and social impacts.
<p>Coherence +/- Well aligned with host country policy; limited info on other coordination structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> The program was aligned with the national policy frameworks including the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan and the 2015-2019 Strategy of the MoA, which strongly recommended expanding economic and livelihood opportunities benefiting local economies and the most vulnerable communities. FAO collaborated with the Ministry of Agriculture's Green Plan in this project as well as with other public institutions directly concerned with the agriculture sector, incl. vocational training schools and other MoA services. - In the appraisal memorandum, cooperation/coordination with Berytech and the FAO project Agriculture education Lebanon were mentioned. No information was found on whether this coordination took place.
<p>Efficiency + Flexible response to changes in context, limited info on overhead costs, but seem to be on higher end.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A budget revision and six months <u>no-cost extension (NCE)</u> were submitted. Both were approved by the MFA NL. A NCE was requested by FAO for several reasons: the absence of the GP Executive Committee, unfavourable weather conditions, and the economic crisis. Besides, several beneficiaries who requested to match their grants to the agreements with FAO were not accepted mainly due to their financial inability to match the grants. - The <u>budget revision</u> mainly involved the re-allocation of funds between budget lines: specifically, an increase of grants related expenses (under contracts) and a decrease of personnel and operating expenses. Before the crisis the grants were in LBP and after the crisis, they paid the grants in USD. This shows the flexibility of the program to respond to the crisis. - General Operating Expenses (USD 225.000) and Project Support Cost (USD 750.000) of total budget (USD 8.250.000) = 12%. It is likely that <u>overhead costs</u> of implementing partners are not calculated. Output 3, the application of grants, covers over 50% of the project budget. This grant allocation by GP staff is also part of the overhead, but no estimates are available. This means that realistically overhead costs will lie well above 12% of the project budget.
<p>Sustainability + Focus on local ownership; supported farms were productive on the longer run; focus on institutional capacity strengthening, yet partially failed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Return on investment:</u> The GP Impact Assessment study [quality could not be checked by IOB] showed that 90% of the supported farms were productive after eight years after the initial investment. The project monitoring of the supported farmers showed that 56% were productive after only one year of the initial investment. There was a low risk that farmers would not generate sustainable income in the absence of business and technical support. - <u>Local ownership:</u> The demand-driven nature of this programme strengthened local ownership. With the proposed interventions, the capacity of the GP was enhanced to support small and medium farmers in the longer run to increase their income through land reclamation and adoption of sustainable water management practices. This also contributed to extending the impact beyond the lifespan of the programme, and thus to its sustainability. - The MoA and GP planned to institutionalize the project's effort after project termination to improve its processes, particularly in relation to the Geographic Information System and digital workflow management for grants. However, it was unlikely that the GP was going to implement changes related to beneficiary targeting criteria or needs-based distribution of

	budget per region due to the absence of the Executive Committee and the difficult political environment. This, however, is perceived as essential for the project's sustainability.
Quality of design +/- Accountability at the output level; lack of detailed analyses; and there were issues in cooperation with government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - FAO did not conduct a detailed <u>context and stakeholder analysis</u>. Therefore, it is unclear whether the project partner managed to reach the most vulnerable/poorest beneficiaries as promised in the proposal. Given the development-oriented focus of the project, it is unlikely that they reached the poorest. - In the log frame matrix with achievement of indicators, accountability on the impact and project outcome levels is primarily measured by agriculture outputs, such as hectares (ha) of reclaimed land, cubic meter of water conserved, and number of workdays created. However, the project mainly focused on capacity strengthening of the GP management structures, which was crucial for sustainable project results and improvement of the agriculture sector in general. This can be perceived as a flaw in the M&E framework. - <u>Government cooperation</u> was sought and was crucial for the implementation of the project. However, the absence of a President of the GP Executive Committee, left the GP management with little decision-making power to undertake structural changes. The existing GP mechanism was however able to identify and evaluate the potential land to be reclaimed and all applications affected forest land or fragile ecosystem were rejected.

Project 8 Berytech Foundation – Smart Agri-Food Innovation Hub / Agritech			
Project characteristics			
Project name (full)	Smart Agri-Food Innovation Hub - Agritech		
Project number	29563		
Country	Lebanon		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 2,829,867 <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 86 million in Lebanon to support in the accommodation of refugees in Lebanon (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	Berytech Foundation		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Entrepreneurs based in Lebanon (Lebanese, Syrian, Palestinian). Particularly, founders of startups and high growth Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). (50% of entrepreneurs under 35 years old, 20% of entrepreneurs are women and 15-20% of entrepreneurs are innovative Syrian refugees). - Young graduates and job seekers in Lebanon. - Lebanese and Dutch industrial firms and business representative organizations. - Incubators, accelerators, relevant universities (research & innovation departments (Tech, agrifood, engineering) from Lebanon and the Netherlands. - Lebanese and Dutch business angels and early-stage investment fund managers. - Industry experts on the Netherlands, MENA, and EU markets. - Public agencies and authorities in charge of innovation, investment, industry, export, and entrepreneurship development. 		
Project duration	Planned	Actual	
	Start date project	1 October 2016	1 October 2016
	End date project	31 December 2018	31 August 2019
	Duration	2 years and 3 months	2 years and 11 months
Main themes	Youth employment, economic development, private sector development (PSD), food security		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective To support innovation in the Agri-food sector, improve its competitiveness, and expand employment opportunities.			
Outcomes			
1. To create, build capacities, and promote innovative start-ups in the Agri-Food sector.			
2. To promote linkages through creating Agri-food Innovation Clusters and exchange channels.			
There are 5 pillars:			
1. <u>Mobilization, cementing and promotion</u> : Stimulating, creating awareness, and promoting the innovation areas and innovators in Lebanon through pitching events; developing an online platform to favour cooperation between innovators and Agri-Food industry and mutual learning, and develop business and industrial partnerships with the Netherlands and Lebanon through various events.			
2. <u>Entrepreneurs Booster Program</u> : Give opportunity as of phase 2 to 15 selected entrepreneurs with high potential for value and job creation in the region. Specific coaching will support entrepreneurs to develop partnerships and			

<p>innovation management strategies, completed by pitching trainings, meetings with investors and angels during Power Dinners, and promotion through crowdfunding platforms.</p> <p>3. <u>Fab Lab Booster Program</u>: Invest in the creation of a fast-prototyping lab with high tech equipment, incl. as 3D printers and software solutions, designed specifically to accelerate the productivity of engineers and scientists.</p> <p>4. <u>Cluster Booster program</u>: The development of a Smart Agri-Food Cluster based on the EU Cluster Excellence guidelines will lead to shape tailored capacity building programmes for the established innovative Startups and SMEs in this sector, and a mentoring of 9 months by Dutch Clusters experts and EU peers.</p> <p>5. <u>Tech Transfer Excellence Centre</u>: Grow the smart Agri-tech program and build additional programmes that can benefit from a similar track in clean tech and renewable energy among others to ensure sustainability.</p>	
Assessment	
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Relevance +/- Relevant sector focus; sensitive to contextual challenges; there was no balanced support; awareness about possible rise of tensions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Addressing needs</u>: The project's focus on innovation and improvement of agricultural production practices in Lebanon and the region was relevant for local communities that were pressured by aridity, population growth, and shortages of water. Besides, the agri-food sector became more competitive and the requirements for exports were getting more challenging due to the economic crisis. The focus on increasing employment chances in the agriculture sector was also relevant in relation to the high unemployment rates in Lebanon. Combining Tech, Engineering and Business support and expertise (both Dutch and local) to solve agri-food challenges in the private and public sectors contributed to innovations in the agriculture sector in Lebanon. Important to note is that the project responded to the needs of host communities more than the needs of Syrian refugees who were indirect beneficiaries. One of the main reasons was that Syrians were not entitled by law to start their own company. - <u>Gender focus</u>: Although the number of female entrepreneurs in the tech- and engineering field in Lebanon was between 10%-12%, the program gave special attention to female beneficiaries, aiming at a minimum of 20% participating female entrepreneurs. In the end, the target was adjusted to 15% instead of 20%. - <u>Sensitive to local realities and contextual challenges</u>: The project faced several issues including (1) the lack of entrepreneurial spirit among young people; (2) the slow growth of family owned Lebanese companies (these companies made up more than 70% of all companies (their corporate governance made them grow slower, these companies were more reluctant to open their capital and to grow on foreign markets)); (3) the countries' limited exports which was the result of low quality products, limited use of technology and overall innovation management; and (4) during the field visit it was said that in general, Syrians residing in Lebanon were mainly doing rural work and did not have the cultural and intellectual mindset to proceed within the various phases of the program. The program has anticipated on these challenges. - Moreover, Berytech Foundation was able to slightly change the thematic focus of the project from Agriculture, Industry and Energy to Agri-food, Energy, and waste management i.a. in response to the energy crisis and the booming agri-food sector (since most of the raw materials needed for food production are imported and have increased in price). - Because of the financial crisis in Lebanon, Berytech had to change its focus from finding solutions for problems of startups, to helping startups and SMEs to develop on an international level, mainly in Europe and the USA. Moreover, the support by the Bank of Lebanon was halted because of the crisis. - <u>Balanced support</u>: Following the project proposal, the objective was to create synergies and give opportunities to innovative Syrian entrepreneurs to establish Lebanese registered companies and offer jobs accordingly to help the economy. However, given the contextual challenges mentioned above, this objective was rather unrealistic. Indeed, entrepreneurs and SMEs were supported, hereby allowing them to innovate and create jobs that serve efficiency gains in the Lebanese agri-food sector. However, the participation of Palestinian and Syrian entrepreneurs in the project was marginal, despite evidence that the Agritech management tried to reach them, especially during the setup of Batch II. - <u>Social cohesion</u>: Berytech mentioned that there was a need to keep the Syrian refugee selection in the program to a 20% maximum of the total selected beneficiary group, to limit friction and minimize political tension between host community and Syrian refugees.
<p>Effectiveness + Achieved results mostly at the local level; female entrepreneurs were motivated to enter the project;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level</u>: Most outputs have been overachieved (e.g., the target of 125 delivered group training sessions in the 2nd and 3rd phase was overachieved with 25 sessions). Despite overachievement of most outputs, the MTR underlined that it takes time to generate revenues by startups (e.g., only four startups out of the seven incubated in Batch I were generating revenues following the end of the incubation and soft-landing phase). - <u>Outcome level</u>: The project has created and promoted innovative startups and built capacities of startups in the agri-food sector (outcome 1). It promoted linkages through the creation of a Agri-food Innovation Cluster (outcome 2) and created jobs for both local and refugee workers.

<p>involvement of Syrian and Palestinian entrepreneurs was limited.</p>	<p>However, outcomes have been achieved at a local scale given that the project was implemented specifically in and around Beirut.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IOB did not find information on whether the jobs that were created were decent jobs. - <u>Gender targets:</u> The program set a gender specific output (output 1.1): “Innovative Agri-Food Startups & Spin-offs created with Female co-founders”. The project exceeded the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) (target 15%) given that Berytech Foundation focused on targeting and motivating women to start their entrepreneurial journey. Some startups were mainly led by females and almost every startup had a female co-founder. Moreover, the quality of ideas, coupled with women’s skillsets gave them an advantage over other applicants. - <u>Challenges to the project implementation:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mid term review (MTR) highlighted that the focus of the project was almost exclusively geared on the incubator pillar. Equal attention to the other pillars would have led to a swifter implementation and an earlier realization of the anticipated results. • The 3rd pillar of the project, the FabLab, struggled with attracting a broader audience to maximize the use of its services and the facility and increase its revenues to cover its running costs and depreciation costs. Main reasons for why these challenges occurred were the absence of a structured outreach strategy and the remote location. - <u>Refugee participation in host communities:</u> Since the project reached out to entrepreneurs (start ups and established SMEs), and Syrians were (and still are) by law not entitled to own a company, Lebanese were the direct beneficiaries of the project. Syrians were at most indirect beneficiaries. Therefore, it seems unlikely that the project directly facilitated refugee participation in host communities. The project did however contribute to the creation of jobs, including for Syrian refugees. - <u>Economic benefits:</u> Only four startups out of the seven incubated in Batch I were generating revenues following the end of the incubation and soft-landing phase. This is inherent in working with start ups and things might evolve in future. Given the scale of its operations one could argue that immediate economic benefits were modest, but that there are potential benefits on the longer term.
<p>Coherence + Bottom-up approach; there was coordination with broader MFA policy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to coordination with host country policy:</u> The project tied in with the needs of the livelihood component of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan. Yet, given the lack of governmental support to PSD, the MFA NL decided to work through (local) NGOs, like Berytech Foundation (bottom-up approach). - There was coordination with an UK supported Tech hub in Lebanon (Growth wheel Program). - <u>Reference to coordination with broader MFA policy:</u> Coordination existed between this project and other interventions supported by the MFA NL. The Agri-food cluster has benefitted from the Dutch private sector development program of the Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI), which supported the transition towards inclusive and sustainable economies by helping SMEs to strengthen their economic, social, and environmental sustainability. They did this by helping ventures to export products and services to Europe and regional markets. - During the field visit, it was recommended for future programming to build synergies, enhance linkages and contacts between Berytech and other entities working in the Agri-innovation field, like CBI and the Dutch Entrepreneurial Development Bank (FMO)
<p>Efficiency + Flexible approach, important local partner.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a 1 month <u>no cost extension (NCE)</u> submitted to enable Berytech Foundation to use the remaining interest for the implementation of activities. - Berytech Foundation was flexible and adaptive to changes in the context, which was exemplified by Berytech’s change of focus after the economic and financial crises (see relevance). No major re-allocations of funds were required. - With a relatively small amount of money compared to other programs funded by DAFD (2.8 million Euros), the project has managed to create jobs and economic development for 138 Lebanese and 13 Syrians. - Berytech was described by the MFA NL as an important local partner with a strong network and an enabler of local NGOs.
<p>Sustainability +/- Financial sustainability guaranteed by MFA NL; negative assessment on reporting of sustainability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In the final assessment of the MFA NL, it was mentioned that in future reporting, more attention had to be given to the risks and sustainability of the project. Berytech has received financial support from the Sustainable Economic Development Department (DDE) since 2020 to continue the activities. However, it was not clear how the results that have been achieved under this project, were to be pursued in the future. - Berytech did receive new financial support by the Dutch embassy for project continuation. - The fast-prototyping Lab generated income to sustain itself, and the Berytech team used this income to help fund a new program to support entrepreneurship. - Berytech created an Alumni Fund that helped them sustain the program for future users.
<p>Quality of design +/-</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project made use of the <u>stakeholder and needs assessment</u> of LCRP of 2015-2016. - The proposal clearly described the different target groups and interests.

<p>Clear description of target group, Accountability at the output level, overambitious goal on refugee involvement, no government cooperation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project did not consider the issue of fulltime dedication to the program. This was a concern for new startups from Batch I, who pointed to unfair “competition” between previously established businesses benefiting from the acceleration program versus entrepreneurs starting from scratch. - In the log frame matrix with achievement of indicators, accountability on project outcomes were primarily measured through outputs, like number of ventures involved and number of visitors of the cluster per month. These outputs do not explain whether linkages between these ventures and/or visitors have been created or if and how channels were exchanged. Moreover, most outputs have been overachieved, which might indicate that some of the target’s set were underestimated. - The MTR highlighted that the commitment to involve 15-20% Syrian and Palestinian entrepreneurs in the activities of the program was an overambitious goal and not linked to the ecosystem within which young Syrian and Palestinian entrepreneurs evolve. - <u>Government cooperation</u>: The intervention is an example of how donor supported interventions necessarily circumvent (nonfunctioning) public authorities. The downside of this is that it creates moral hazard at the side of public authorities about activities that are directed at refugees.
---	--

Project 9 UNDP – Lebanon Host Communities Support (LHSP)			
Project characteristics			
Project name (full)	Support to Economic Recovery, Community Security and Social Cohesion in Lebanese Communities Affected by the Syrian Crisis – Lebanon Host Communities Support (LHSP)		
Project number	29568		
Country	Lebanon		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 20,000,800 <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 86 million in Lebanon to support in the accommodation of refugees in Lebanon (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Lebanon Country Office		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approx. 550,000 Lebanese, Syrian Refugees, Palestinian Refugees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Activity 1.2</i>: 55 Communities receive transformers; 10 Public-service Institutions; 8 small scale farmers; 2 Biomass Processing Plants. • <i>Activity 1.3</i>: 300,000 people living in areas serviced by Zahlé Landfill; Up to 50,000 beneficiaries in two locations where uncontrolled dumpsites will be closed and that will be supported in the management of solid waste. • <i>Activity 1.4</i>: improve living conditions of 30,000 refugees living in the Palestinian Gatherings and surrounding communities (5,620 women 4,830 men and 19,555 children). • <i>Activity 1.5</i>: 3 Governorates and 2 Unions of Municipalities. • <i>Activity 1.6</i>: 8 to 13 municipalities as pilot locations; ISF Academy and Human Resource Departments.; ISF police forces stations in pilot locations. • <i>Activity 2.1</i>: 30 SMEs/cooperatives; 2,500 beneficiaries (70% women and 30% men); 300 youth and women trained and have opportunity to access the labour market. • <i>Activity 3.1</i>: ISF Anti-Torture Committee. • <i>Activity 3.2</i>: 3200 prisoners. • <i>Activity 4.1</i>: Whole of Lebanon. 		
Project duration	Start date project	Planned	Actual
		1 December 2016	1 December 2016
	End date project	31 December 2018	31 December 2019
	Duration	2 year and 1 month	3 years and 1 month
Main themes	Social cohesion, institutional development and capacity building, youth employment		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was a lead or active donor. Other donors of the program were Agencia Catalana de Cooperació al Desenvolupament; Ajuntament de Barcelona, Area Metropolitana de Barcelona, Department for International Development (DFID), European commission, Fons Catal de Cooperació al Desenvolupament, governments of Denmark, Ecuador, Italy, Japan, Monaco, Norway, Republic of Korea, United States of America, Howard Karagheusian commemorative corporation, ILO, Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau, Lebanon Recovery Fund, Solidarite and Development rural, tavola Valdese Roma, UNHCR, UNICEF, and UNDP		
Overall objective	To reduce the level of tension between refugees and host communities in target areas, to link vulnerable groups to strengthened basic services and protection and to support national institutions to preserve social stability.		
Theory of Change			

If the Government of Lebanon at the central and local level builds adequate capacities to lead and respond to the crisis and the needs of the host communities, then Lebanon can cope with the crisis and social stability in host communities is maintained; because the needs of vulnerable communities will be met through enhanced access to basic services, productive activities, and local security. This theory of change is substantiated by extensive global research and lessons learnt which demonstrate that the responsiveness of governments to the needs of the citizens reduce the likelihood of conflict.

Outcomes

1. Capacity of national and local actors (government and civil society) strengthened in managing the impact of the Syria Crisis.
2. Livelihoods and economic opportunities increased in areas affected by the crisis.
3. Support to prevention of torture and improved conditions in Lebanese Prisons.
4. Strengthened Coordination & Monitoring of the Stabilization Dimension of the LCRP

Assessment

Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Relevance +/- Addressed challenges to social stability; incorporated a gender focus in line with general gender equality strategy; did not manage to pursue sustainable development solutions (i.a. to social stability); not always balanced support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Addressing needs</u>: The program’s focus on reducing the level of tension between refugees and host communities and preserving social stability was relevant with regards to the deteriorated local community dynamics and management of authority, resources, and tensions in Lebanon, which have been negatively impacted by the demographic and socio-economic challenges of the Syria conflict. Access to and quality of local resources, including the national health care, education and infrastructure services were under greater pressure, negatively impacting the social stability in Lebanon. With this program, UNDP tried to tackle these issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a specific focus on the needs of populations living in Palestinian Gatherings in which the lack of basic infrastructure is a major issue. UNDP has supported these vulnerable populations with water provision, rehabilitation of sewerage networks and shelters as well as hygiene promotion activities. This intervention within the UNDP program has been one of the few that prioritized Palestinian Gatherings. - <u>Gender focus</u>: UNDP followed its Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, a general strategy by which UNDP supported gender equality and integrated the empowerment of women. By offering capacity building activities and local community initiatives, UNDP tried to empower youth and women and combat risky behaviour and resorting to extreme means of survival. UNDP also took a participatory bottom-up approach in which active participation of women as decisionmakers as well as beneficiaries was key and contributed to gender inequality being addressed as well as traditional gender roles being challenges. - <u>Sensitive to local realities</u>: The final evaluation report mentioned that UNDP missed on opportunities for pursuing sustainable development solutions (pursuing a humanitarian-development nexus approach in the Syrian refugee response). As a lead agency for enabling a resilience approach, UNDP had to be more proactive in building momentum for long-term approaches by revisiting its programme positioning in the LCRP and reviewing its strategy based on its strengths. - <u>Contextual challenges</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donor access restrictions caused Lebanese-Syrian tensions, but also intra-Lebanese ones. • Competition for low paid job opportunities rose over the years and was perceived to be one of the main causes of tensions between Syrians and Lebanese. Furthermore, the Government of Lebanon consistently highlighted that those Syrian refugees operating outside the remit of the labour law pushed down the labour cost. • An example from the IOB field visit: Refugees on a cash for work basis earned \$10 per day, while a Lebanese only made \$1,5 a day for his job as policy officer. - <u>Balanced support</u>: The final log frame showed that for most of the indicators under the outputs, significantly more Lebanese were reached compared to Syrians. Whether support is balanced varied per intervention, e.g., IOB visited the DAFD contribution in the Ghazze municipality dumpsite where around 28 000 refugees were living against 7 000 Lebanese. IOB also visited a school that hosted more than 1000 students, divided into two shifts, one in the morning and the other in the afternoon and that most of the students were refugees. The wastewater treatment plants support, on the other hand, served 27 000 Lebanese citizens compared to 6 200 Syrian refugees per year.
<p>Effectiveness - Main outcome has not been achieved; gender targets reached; limited effect on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level</u>: Most of the outputs have been achieved or overachieved according to the latest log frame available. A few of the outputs have been cancelled, including the capacity development of staff from Lebanese Prisons and ISF personnel, and the number of open uncontrolled dumpsites that were rehabilitated. - <u>Outcome level</u>: The program’s main objective was to reduce tensions between refugees and host communities and increase the social stability within Lebanon. Their Tensions Monitoring System (TMS) generated stabilization impact data that revealed that tensions existed between

<p>refugee participation in host communities; potential economic benefits.</p>	<p>Syrian refugees and host community members at the local level. During 2019, the public expressed significant concerns regarding the level and quality of public services, particularly the services regarded as most in need of improvement including medical care, electricity, and access to jobs. Despite the interventions made by UNDP, tensions have been still on the rise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Challenges in project implementation:</u> It became clear from the final evaluation and field visits that efforts to prioritize longer-term solutions to address fundamental development issues through the program were inadequate, and success was constrained for several reasons. The program struggled with political stalemate and constraints in engaging with national entities on policy and institutional development (see contextual challenge above). The interventions have not been able to fully address concerns of imbalance. Gaps remained in applying a development approach (focus on short-term employment and quick fixes to service delivery). - <u>Gender targets:</u> Under output 2.1 (innovative support to local economic recovery), there was a specific focus on improved access to decent work opportunities for women and youth. Special attention was provided to facilitate women's access to all activities and opportunities under this output, considering the many obligations they have as care givers. The log frame shows that 424 Lebanese women were trained (compared to the target of 300). No information was provided on the number of women who entered the labour market because of these training. - <u>Refugee participation:</u> UNDP has provided support to vulnerable populations residing in Palestinian gatherings, including Syrian refugees. The project included water provision, rehabilitation of sewerage networks and shelters as well as hygiene promotion activities. During the field visit to the energy project, IOB visited a school that was supported with solar panels, which made second shifts for refugee children possible. Hence, it contributed to the participation of refugees in host communities. Other interventions did not have such an effect. - <u>Economic benefits:</u> Under outcomes 1 (Capacity of national and local actors strengthened in managing the impact of the Syria Crisis) and 2 (Livelihoods and economic opportunities increased in areas affected by the crisis), the program has probably benefitted the host country economically, by e.g., providing infrastructure, sustainable energy sources, and job-related training. However, the activities implemented under this program made a relatively small contribution in solving the bigger issues in the country, like the energy crisis and the economic downturn in the country that also caused an increased competition for low paid jobs.
<p>Coherence +/- Aligned with host country policies and plans; no internal coherence between activities; coordination among UN partners visible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to coordination with host country policy:</u> UNDP played a key coordination role in the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) together with UNHCR. All activities implemented contributed to the LCRP. Most activities directly contributed to the social stability and livelihood sector outcomes of the LCRP. Activities under outcome 4 contributed to the entire stabilization component of the response since it supported the monitoring and evaluation of the LCRP. Important to note is that the implementation of the LCRP faced multiple challenges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific government plans and strategies that were supported through the program were: The Internal Security Forces Strategy (protection), the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities Plans (capacity building of protection services), the Ministry of Agriculture's Green Plan (support agriculture sector – IOB did not find a link with the FAO programs which points to a lack of coordination); the Ministry of Environment plans to improve solid waste management. - <u>Project coherence:</u> The project consisted of several components that were not designed from a synergy perspective. Program consisted of wide range of activities. - No reference to coordination with broader MFA policy. - A special activity focused on support to vulnerable populations in Palestinian Gatherings which has been coordinated with different UN partners incl. UNWRA, UNHCR and UNICEF.
<p>Efficiency +/- There have been issues in the management of funds and level of coordination between UN agencies, NCE was provided to respond flexible to contextual challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There has been a one year <u>no cost extension (NCE)</u> for the program and a request for a budget adjustment. The request for a NCE of 10 months (until 31 October 2019) was required to secure the national level approvals and design and implement the larger and complex infrastructure investments. The changes in the budget were requested to address the increasing vulnerabilities and needs of the population residing in the Palestinian Gatherings. - <u>Management of funds:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNDP has the experience and in-country systems in place to implement the proposed activity according to the MFA NL. No other organizations in Lebanon came forward to implement the activities proposed at the speed and scale that is required, which indicated that UNDP is in a unique position in terms of efficiency and scalability. • With a relatively large budget compared to other programs funded through DAFD (EUR 20 million), the activities implemented until 2019 needed a lot of maintenance and reform to function. IOB observed that the UNDP higher management also provided misleading information to other UN agencies (mainly UNHCR) accusing them of fuelling tensions between Syrians and Lebanese. Hence, the level of coordination between UN agencies can be questioned by this example, which showcases a potential rivalry and

	<p>competitiveness among agencies. Competition between UNDP departments and lack of coordination was also noted during the field visit to the Bekaa.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - UNDP was able to have some minor changes in the indicators, including adding new indicators and remove indicators. MFA NL was informed.
<p>Sustainability +/- UNDP considered exit strategies; yet the field visit showed that project results were not sustained due to contextual challenges and dominance of funding short term activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Exit strategy:</u> There have been various attempts by UNDP to increase the sustainability of the project results, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signing Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with partners to provide a framework of cooperation and commitment to maintaining the installed systems on the long run. • Providing performance guarantees with regards to physical works for up to two years. • Follow up visits 3, 6, and 9 months after implementation to ensure municipalities are taking care of the maintenance project. • Chair the Palestinian Gatherings Working Group, a national planning and coordination platform that brought UN agencies and NGOs active in the Gatherings together. • Organize focus group discussions to include people’s voices in municipal police plans. • All interventions employed a participatory approach, which involved contributions by municipalities in the intervention. • Establish new partnerships to sustain the results of achieved activities. • Conduct in-depth analysis and additional studies to develop future interventions. - There has been a dominance of funding for short term humanitarian activities according to the final evaluation. - During field visit, IOB heard that municipalities no longer received funds from the government nor UNDP and that they were no longer able to afford operational costs, including fuel and maintenance. The waste crisis was submerging again in Lebanon and specifically in the Bekaa Valley, where most Syrian refugees resided due to rising prices for fuel and the devaluation of the Lebanese Lira. This demonstrates that UNDP’s results were not sustainable. - UNDP aimed for a high level of ownership at the national and local level. However, given the political instability within the country and the challenges this brought to national and local government institutions, local ownership has deteriorated over time.
<p>Quality of design +/- Intervention logic was flawed; contextual factors obstructed the implementation of some project activities; stakeholder assessments were conducted prior and during project implementation; government cooperation was sought.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Elements of the intervention logic:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assumption that other factors causing tension will remain constant (e.g., political, and economic) was unrealistic given the unstable political and economic situation in Lebanon at the start of the project. Besides, possible risks weren’t well described. • The idea that training people increases access to the labour market did not hold, given that enhanced professional readiness of young people does not tackle the challenges on the demand side of the labour market, such as the lack of job opportunities. The ability to enter the labour market in Lebanon is relatively limited, especially for refugees from Syria and Palestine. The program did not clearly define the type of training nor an indication of the extensive of jobs that people were trained for. • See ToC: it is unclear how enhanced capacities would lead to more social stability and the ability to cope with the crisis. - It is unclear how outcome 3: Support to prevention of torture and improved conditions in Lebanese Prisons, contributed to the main objective of reduced level of tension between refugees and host communities in target areas. - <u>Overlooking contextual factors:</u> For outputs 1.2 and 1.3, the main risks were associated with the weak or often non-existent policies for these service sectors at the national level. In terms of energy, the national power utility was incapable of providing sufficient electric power to meet the demand and was not able to transport the produced power efficiently. With the influx of the Syrian refugees, this gap grew even more and increase in power shortages led (and still leads) to increased tensions between the two communities. The government did not develop a good strategy for the solid waste management sector, which challenged project implementation (e.g., local-level push back and limited resources). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation of community security committees proved to be challenging. Such an activity was associated with the risk of disputes among groups, especially when both Lebanese and Syrians were gathered in one committee. UNDP adjusted its implementation methodology and established committees in different areas. • Overall, Lebanese women have been highly educated compared to women from other countries in the region. However, they have been facing limited job opportunities and often work in lower paid (informal) positions without social protection. In both rural and urban settings, women lacked access to public services as well as services that can assist them in identifying, creating, starting up, and managing sustainable enterprises. Women have been predominantly active in the services and agriculture sectors. - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessment:</u> In 2013, UNDP established the LHSP and identified 251 vulnerable communities. For each community, a Maps of Risk and Resources

	<p>(MRR) was set. There were 332 communities identified and the MRR turned into the Mechanism for Stability and Local Development (MSLD). The MSLD for each community was identified through local committees that set problems of each area and created a plan according to priorities identified by the members of each committee. Syrians were not involved during these discussions, but UNDP had parallel discussions with them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Implementing partners:</u> UNDP's program supported local community initiatives in their socio-economic community projects, to contribute to the empowerment of youth and women. In this regard, UNDP supported local NGOs that implemented psycho and social programs. Moreover, the project fostered a participatory bottom-up approach that aimed at bringing the various local actors together whether local committees, municipalities, public service agencies. - <u>Government cooperation:</u> UNDP worked through government institutions and municipalities. Government authorities were involved by e.g., participating in the steering committee for overall guidance and control. Municipalities were also handed over some of the projects after project completion by UNDP to continue project results.
--	--

Project 10 ESFD – Boosting Economic Growth and Job Creation			
Project characteristics			
Project name (full)	Boosting Economic Growth and Job Creation		
Project number	4000000172		
Country	Lebanon		
Budget	Initially, the project budget was EUR 3,796,930 however, the MFA NL decided to halt allocations and ask for a reimbursement of USD 1,829,142 in 2020. This set the final project budget at USD 570,858. <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 86 million in Lebanon to support in the accommodation of refugees in Lebanon (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	Economic and Social Fund for Development (ESFD)		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lebanese Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) owners (above 21 years). - Those operating or establishing a financially viable small enterprise situated in remote areas (incl. startups with less than 1 year of operation). - Around 30% of all loans will be disbursed to female entrepreneurs. - Commercial banks in Lebanon (incl. Banque du Liban) 		
Project duration	Planned	Actual	
	Start date project	1 January 2017	1 July 2017
	End date project	31 December 2020	30 April 2026
	Duration	4 years	8 years and 9 months
Main themes	Private sector development (PSD), economic development, employment and livelihoods		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands has been the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective			
To contribute to the revival of the local economy and to enhance the resilience of vulnerable population living in areas with high concentration of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.			
Outcome			
To create sustainable job opportunities (to Lebanese and non-Lebanese citizens) in the problematic targeted areas by providing financial and non-financial support to Lebanese small and medium enterprises (SMEs). The quantitative target for the number of jobs to be created is 255 jobs.			
Outputs			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business advice services (BDS) are provided to targeted SMEs in specific areas, to increase the access to the banking system of the unbanked business owners. The quantitative target for the number of businesses supported is 500 supported (22 hours per SME). 2. Business loans are provided to SMEs. The quantitative target for the number of loans provided 170 loans (USD 45,000 per loan). Funds are provided to commercial banks at a subsidized interest rate of around 2,5% per annum to reduce their cost of funds. Commercial banks provide loans to SMEs with help of BDS officers at a rate of around 7%, which is significantly lower than similar products available in the market. Partner banks will repay funds to the ESFD with a period of 12 months over a specified number of years (max. 7 years). Funds received by ESFD will be re-injected to partner banks to provide further loans to SMEs. Partner banks keep the amounts of money collected from end-borrowers for the length of the loan contract and should be used as a revolving fund to increase outreach. 			
Assessment			

Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Relevance +/- Relevant project for PSD; gender focus included, yet gender sensitivity can be questioned; ESFD made various attempts to adjust to changes in local context, but MFA decided to halt funding; no balanced support provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Needs addressed:</u> The project has been relevant for SMEs that suffered from the lack of access to finance and the provision of business support. Micro- and small-scale enterprises have the potential to contribute to over 80% of employment. Providing support to these SMEs can help to improve the sustainability of these businesses, while simultaneously increasing their potential for job creation (for both Lebanese and non-Lebanese workers) in the long run. - <u>Gender focus:</u> In the proposal, it was mentioned that ESFD would invest in marketing and visibility efforts to identify female entrepreneurs. ESFD Business Advisors (BDS officers) were to be directed to women-led companies, such as in food-processing, certain agriculture sectors, crafts, and artisanal activities. Based on experience, ESFD estimated that around 30% of loans will be disbursed to female entrepreneurs. The ESFD proposed that the funds allocated to women were to be segregated from funds allocated to the male gender. This would further ensure the desired gender distribution. However, ESFD warned that placing excessive focus on women pushes husbands/brothers to fake ownership. In this instance, men claimed that their businesses were run/owned by females, to get easier access to loans. - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> Due to economic downturn, the Ministry of Finance put restrictions on money transfers. Every transfer had to go through a governmental transit account before it could be transferred to Banque du Liban (BDL). This caused enormous delays which hampered project implementation. ESFD tried to advocate to help mitigate the issue and the embassy interfered, but without results. Further restrictions were imposed, and banks were not allowed to lend more than 25% of the total bank deposit to the private sector. Since most of the banks involved in the project already had exceeded this 25%, they could not lend more money. In 2019, the whole bank system collapsed which meant they could not provide loans. ESFD asked to switch to money transfers to provide SMEs with loans to keep the project going, but this request was declined by the embassy (risks were too high). Thereafter, the project has been cancelled prematurely and the MFA NL asked to return most of the allocated funds. Because of the Lebanese banking crisis, these funds have not yet been reimbursed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Covid-19 crisis worsened the impact of the economic crisis on SMEs, as many businesses had to stop operations or downsize. - <u>Balanced support:</u> The project has not provided balanced support, given that the banks would not lend money to Syrians because they were afraid of the possibility of them fleeing the country. Business loans have only been provided to Lebanese SMEs. - <u>Social cohesion:</u> Reducing tensions has not been an objective of the project. Therefore, it was difficult to assess at a project level whether the project has contributed to avoiding tensions.
<p>Effectiveness - / 0 Reported results laid behind targets; lack of information on refugee participation; possible economic benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level:</u> In 2019, the forecasted outputs were not achieved. Because of the economic/banking crisis, the project implementation was delayed substantially and although ESFD stepped up its efforts to expedite project implementation, incl. through the appointment of 4 extra business advisors to spark interest among SMEs to take on loans, the forecasted targets for the reporting period of 2019 were not reached. Reported results laid behind the targets set (e.g., 64 companies supplied with business development services out of 131 targeted), 22 loans disbursed (170) (*the loan granted per project has been lower than forecasted (USD 18.200 versus forecasted USD 23.333). 49% of the first payment is granted as a loan to banks and of this sum of money only 19% was granted to SMEs. - <u>Outcome level:</u> Given the circumstances in Lebanon, and the collapse of the banking sector in 2019, the MFA NL did not consider the achievement of final (forecasted) results as a realistic option. The MFA NL decided to discontinue the 2nd disbursement and ESFD had to reimburse a large part of the budget that was allocated. This meant effectively phasing out activities. Since the project was terminated earlier, there is no ex-post information on outcomes. - <u>Challenges in project implementation:</u> The gloomy political situation and economic stagnation negatively affecting both the demand and supply sides of the lending activity to the private sector. The squeeze in liquidity resulting from the financial crisis affected all commercial activities in Lebanon. This prompted the banks to freeze their lending operations, and business owners to postpone their business expansion plans. - <u>Gender targets:</u> The progress report of 2019 shows that there have been loans granted to female borrowers and that there have been jobs provided to female jobseekers (both Lebanese and Syrian job seekers). Still, most beneficiaries were male. - <u>Refugee participation:</u> There is no specific information on whether it contributed to increased refugee participation in host communities. Nevertheless, the latest progress report available (2019) shows that the project provided 34 jobs to Syrians (most likely in the informal sector). - <u>Economic benefits:</u> The provision of money to SMEs in the informal sector probably benefitted host communities and refugees economically. Nevertheless, no data is presented on whether the access to finance via ESFD commercial banks resulted in increased production and revenues for SME's.

Coherence +/- Not clear how the intervention tied in with LCRP; There was some coordination sought between ESFD and other interventions/donors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> following the appraisal memorandum, the intervention tied in with the needs of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, yet detailed information was missing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project partner is an EU-Med Partnership established between the European Commission and the Republic of Lebanon. It is autonomous government body funded by the EU working under the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR). - <u>Reference to coordinate with other donor interventions:</u> According to project documents, ESFD also signed a project document with UNDP in 2012, because the UNDP provided humanitarian resources services and some minor administrative procedures. - <u>Reference to coordination with broader MFA policy:</u> It was mentioned in project documents that ESFD coordinated closely with Berytech Foundation, as they have provided in-kind grants for businesses working on creating engineering solutions.
Efficiency 0 Limited info does not allow for clear assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There was a no-cost extension (NCE) signed between ESFD and MFA NL of 5 years and 4 months until 30th of April 2016, given that project implementation continued under ESFD. - Because of limited results, the MFA questioned the efficiency of the allocated resources. Notably, because of unforeseen events, most of the capital has not yet been paid out to the end users/beneficiaries.
Sustainability ++ Project had a long-term focus; facilitated local ownership by banks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project had a <u>long-term focus:</u> Repayments from SMEs on their loans from commercial banks, were to be re-injected into the programme (revolving fund) until the situation in the regions was streamlined and partner banks have gained enough experience in lending to targeted SME's. - Since banks became enthusiastic one could say that outcomes were on the positive side. The banks incentivized their employees, some of them even created an SME unit and started working on their own. They created mobile banking units and went to rural areas.
Quality of design -/+ Efforts to adjust program to changes in context; both small bets and unrealistic project results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Realistic project goals:</u> Initially, the MFA consulted experts (internal advice) who argued that the intended outputs that were formulated in the proposal were on the low end. - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessments:</u> A stakeholder analysis on the program level was not conducted, although ESFD held regular meetings with their stakeholders. - <u>Adaptivity to wider political and economic challenges:</u> Despite various efforts by ESFD to adjust the program design to the political and economic crises in Lebanon, the MFA NL decided to not continue with the 2nd disbursement of payment. - <u>Government cooperation:</u> Limited government cooperation, Ministry of Finance hampered the project implementation by putting restrictions on money transfers. Every transfer had to go through a governmental transit account before being transferred to Banque du Liban (BDL).

Project 11 ABAAD – NASEEJ Protection and Mitigation of Gender Based Violence in Lebanon			
Project characteristics			
Project name (full)	NASEEJ - Protection and Mitigation of Gender Based Violence against Women and Girls in Lebanon among Syrian Refugees and Vulnerable Host Communities ⁷		
Project number	4000000210		
Country	Lebanon		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 5,271,255 <i>This budget stems from the total investment of EUR 86 million in Lebanon to support in the accommodation of refugees in Lebanon (2016-2017).</i>		
Project partner	ABAAD – Research Centre for Gender Equality		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Official Stakeholders, NGOs, and civil society practitioners and front-liners working in the Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Child Protection (CP) sector in Lebanon. - Media personnel, reporters, and journalists. - Men with abusive behaviours (40% Lebanese, 60% Syrian). - Women and girls at risk of survivors of GBV In Lebanon (40% Lebanese, 60% Syrian). - Women and Men community members and the public. 		
Project duration	Planned	Actual	
	Start date project	1 March 2017	1 March 2017
	End date project	28 February 2019	28 February 2019
	Duration	2 years	2 years
Main themes	Gender equality, gender-based violence (GBV), sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR)		

⁷ The project continued under the Strengthening Gender Based Violence prevention and mitigation project by ABAAD (2019-2021) (project 14) and the COVID-19 ABAAD Lebanese response project by ABAAD (project 15) (See p. 44).

Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor to the project.
<p>Overall goal To ensure a better quality of life free from violence for women and children in Lebanon through contributing to improved protection, prevention, and service provision.</p> <p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National prevention and protection GBV mechanisms are strengthened and hence enhance response to women’s needs. • Mental health care to both victims of GBV and self-care for practitioners working in this field, for them to deal with the heavy caseload. • To create more realistic and honest media-coverage of women’s issues amongst the refugee population by providing training to media professionals. • To prevent GBV by raising awareness amongst men and providing a sexual education toolkit targeting youth. <p>Outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. National Inter-sectoral structures are better equipped and capable to respond to the GBV needs of women on the medium and long-term. 2. Enhanced gender-sensitive and quality media coverage on issues related to women in conflict/post conflict set ups. 3. Women, men, and children (boys and girls) survivors or at risk of GBV, including SGBV, have improved access to quality and inclusive services. 4. Youth have enhanced access to knowledge and services platforms to positively discuss sexual education among which is SRHR, CMR and child marriage. 	
Assessment	
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Relevance ++ Addressed gender-based issues; focus was on most vulnerable groups (women and girls, especially Syrian refugee women and girls); responded to political challenges; no information on whether the intervention contributed to the reduction of tensions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Addressing needs</u>: The project was relevant to the needs of women and girls in Lebanon that were affected by different forms of gender-based violence (GBV), incl. physical domestic violence, sexual violence, and child, early and forced marriage. The prevalence of these forms of GBV was combined with a lack of awareness of the impact of GBV, lack of community and government engagement, mobilization, funds, and capacity to systematically address GBV and absence of responsive media coverage of GBV survivors. This project was designed to respond to the structural gaps that exist in the GBV sector, while addressing the needs in ensuring a holistic, interdisciplinary, and multisectoral sustainable response to the GBV issue in Lebanon. The interventions specifically focused on capacity building of institutions and awareness raising by providing better information channels. Hence, it was relevant for both women’s rights and the strengthening of local civil society organizations. - <u>Gender focus</u>: The project provided special attention to gender mainstreaming and approached gender equality as the key condition for sustainable social and economic development in Lebanon. For example, ABAAD provided shelter, psychosocial support, basic life skills and legal counselling to female beneficiaries. ABAAD also supported children with these services along with basic literacy and non-formal education. - <u>Sensitive to local realities</u>: ABAAD was aware of the possible contextual challenges that might impact the project implementation, e.g., the possible political tensions and/or gridlocks that were caused by the parliamentary elections of 2018. ABAAD tracked the political situation through media monitoring and close relationships with ministries, the ISF and other local officials. ABAAD worked closely with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). Elections might have disrupted the activities with them. Thus, ABAAD collaborated with the Director General of each ministry to ensure sustainability and consistency in the work. - <u>Balanced support</u>: Shelters were available to all layers of society, but most beneficiaries were refugees for Syria. Syrian refugee women and girls specifically, were encountering GBV and many refugees were unaware of mechanisms and procedures to obtain access to services. This included the right to legal protection, which undermined their sense of security and left them vulnerable to exploitation. They were also unaware of potential service providers: "There is no one place or entity where they could go to obtain information, be referred to relevant services, and to register complaints". Moreover, Syrian refugee women and girls encountered mobility restrictions. These include lack of money to pay for transport, not having updated legal residency permits and the need to seek approval for travel from male heads of families. - <u>Social cohesion</u>: no references were made to whether the project contributed to reducing tensions between refugees and host communities.
<p>Effectiveness +</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level</u>: Reporting clearly outlined the results per activity, which shows that most intended results per activity were achieved (very few activities did not reach intended targets). Through this project, ABAAD has upscaled protective services at our three MWHs, eight

<p>Most activities have been implemented in line with the project design; small adjustments were made following the contextual challenges, the project partner mitigated challenges to implementation; economic benefits not at heart of the intervention.</p>	<p>WGSSs, Men Centre and partner centres, provided legal counselling and education sessions, psychosocial support (PSS) activities, socioeconomic empowerment, and life skills trainings, as well as Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) and forensic services. Some of the activities were adjusted to better respond to the context. E.g., it was communicated to ABAAD that there was a lack of economic empowerment programs targeting GBV survivors in Palestinian camps. ABAAD responded to this by contracting a local organization to implement such a program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The production of a GBV-Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) document, which was nationally endorsed by relevant official entities in Lebanon for women survivors of GBV, was developed through a collaborative consultative process that engaged government and non-governmental organizations as well as local representatives. <p>- <u>Outcome level:</u> This project has contributed to improved direct protective response services in Lebanon for vulnerable women and girls by focusing on capacity building and strengthening of government and media bodies and local organizations (incl. universities and NGOs) in responding to GBV needs and challenges and by developing various toolkits/curriculum, guidelines, and codes of conduct on GBV issues. ABAAD also trained and provided guidance for GBV front-liners, social workers, and mental health providers. Besides, ABAAD directly supported victims of GBV with shelter, safe housing, mental health services, legal counselling, and psychotherapy. Beneficiaries who left shelter were supported by ABAAD with rental fees, job placement and psychosocial support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure a holistic approach to gender equality, ABAAD has improved\scaled-up services related to the provision of engendered Mental Health (MH) services for men and boys within the establishment of a Men Centre alongside prevention behavioural change community activities. <p>- <u>Challenges to project implementation:</u> (I) ministerial bureaucracy, which hindered the deliverables and implementation of activities; (II) the possible risk of women not reporting on sexual and/or gender-based violence. The latter was mitigated by good networks between ABAAD and other relevant organizations to ensure that women can access centres for services and disseminate information.</p> <p>- <u>Refugee participation:</u> No specific information was found on whether it contributed to improved participation of refugees in host communities. However, the project did enhance access to services, such as MHPSS.</p> <p>- <u>Economic benefits:</u> Although this aspect is not at the heart of the intervention, women did receive training on how to make soap and cook pastries and sweets. Hence, the project can contribute to their self-reliance, which might have positive indirect economic effects.</p>
<p>Coherence + / 0 Reference to host country policy, but not specific/detailed info on how it contributes to LCRP; ABAAD participated in various coordination structures</p>	<p>- <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> The project was in line with the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) strategic component: “strengthen the capacity of national and local service delivery systems to expand access to and quality of basic public services” (protection chapter).</p> <p>- There was no reference to coordination with other donor interventions.</p> <p>- There was no reference to coordination with broader MFA policy.</p> <p>- <u>Coordination structures:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABAAD worked with stakeholders at the national level including MoSA, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Women’s Affairs, MoPH and Internal Security Forces (ISF). ABAAD also coordinated and collaborated at the community level with municipalities, ISF personnel and local and national GBV service providers and NGOs. • ABAAD participated in the Lebanese Humanitarian INGO Forum (LHIF) steering committee, which is an informal independent coordinating body comprised of INGO’s who tried to address needs of individuals, families, and communities in Lebanon.⁸
<p>Efficiency 0</p>	<p>- Timeframe of the project was not extended.</p> <p>- In this project the embassy, based on these earlier experiences, has chosen to directly support ABAAD. Given the relevance of this project, creating synergies by means of several activities deployed can be regarded as efficient.</p>
<p>Sustainability + Project partner focused on institutional and social sustainability, yet there was no exit strategy formulated; ABAAD succeeded</p>	<p>- <u>Exit strategy:</u> Although no exit strategy was formulated as such, the project had a sustainable character. It largely focused on creating lasting and sustainable operating procedures and guidelines for providers of care.</p> <p>- <u>Institutional sustainability:</u> The project built the capacities of official stakeholders to enable them to develop more sustainable protection interventions, incl. relevant ministries, CSO’s and NGO’s.</p> <p>- <u>Social sustainability:</u> With the project, ABAAD tried to change social norms around masculinity and femininity and GBV behaviours through produced curriculums and public opinion campaigns that will have long-term effect on the targeted communities.</p> <p>- <u>Sustained financial support:</u> ABAAD received more financial support by the MFA NL to continue with the implementation of the project. Moreover, ABAAD mentioned in their final</p>

⁸ lhif.org

in ensuring financial sustainability.	report that they were contacting several new duty bearers/donors, who share their vision regarding gender equality and justice, and accordingly communicate with them the project's successes and the resources needed to ensure the sustainability of the services and activities that reduce and mitigate GBV among Syrian refugees and host communities.
Quality of design +/- Involvement of relevant stakeholders in project implementation; working together with relevant government bodies, although this also brought challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Realistic project goals</u>: The MFA believed that the project objectives were realistic. The final report did not outline the results achieved at the output and outcome levels. - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessments</u>: The stakeholder analysis included in the LCRP 2015-2016 provided the basis for the intervention. Besides, ABAAD involved the most relevant (local, national) actors into formulating the standardized policy and national curriculum, which made it an inclusive process. ABAAD held close consultations with relevant stakeholders and implemented a strategy that fitted national plans. Moreover, ABAAD made very detailed descriptions on the number of beneficiaries per target group. - <u>Implementing partners</u>: Despite heavy screening for all partners, ABAAD faced some difficulties in the implementation of the projects. Notably, some partners did not meet deadlines and were unable to deliver expected results. In response to this, one of these partners' contracts was terminated. This partner was replaced by another contracted NGO. Throughout the reporting period, ABAAD maintained professional and close follow-up with all partners to ensure timely deliverables. ABAAD continued to do so over the next year. - <u>Government cooperation</u>: ABAAD cooperated closely with relevant ministries (e.g., MoSA and MoPH), which sometimes came with ministerial bureaucracy, which hindered the deliverables and implementation of some activities.

Project 12 UNHCR – Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance in Lebanon and Jordan			
Project characteristics			
Project name (full)	UNHCR Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance in Lebanon and Jordan <i>*Part of the Dutch contribution to the 2018-2019 Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) in Lebanon and Jordan</i>		
Project number	4000002149		
Country	Lebanon and Jordan		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 10,173,409		
Project partner	UNHCR		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In Lebanon around 15,100 severely vulnerable refugee families - In Jordan, around 14,728 vulnerable Syrian families 		
Project duration	Planned	Actual	
	Start date project	1 December 2018	1 December 2018
	End date project	30 November 2019	30 November 2019
	Duration	1 year	1 year
Main themes	Material relief assistance and services, human rights		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands has been an active donor to the UNHCR and participated in the yearly Executive Committee and Standing Committees.		
Overall objective			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Lebanon, EUR 5 million would provide around 15,100 severely vulnerable refugee families for two months with multi-purpose cash assistance at the amount of 175 USD per month. • In Jordan, the EUR 5 million contribution would provide 14,728 vulnerable Syrian families for two months with multi-purpose cash assistance, at an average amount of 180 USD per month. 			
Assessment			
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment⁹		
Relevance + Cash assistance has been crucial for the most	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Addressing needs</u>: During the field visit, cash assistance was mentioned as one of the most critical needs covered by UNHCR. Especially considering the critical funding gap in cash assistance of USD 44 million since September 2018 as presented in the appeal by UNHCR. Cash assistance enabled the most vulnerable families – mostly Syrian refugees – to meet their basic needs and reduce their socio-economic vulnerability to exploitation and use of negative 		

⁹ Given that there was no progress or final report, data from UNHCR reports have been included in the analysis: Samuel Hall. 2019. UNHCR Multi-purpose cash assistance 2019 post distribution monitoring report 2019 – Jordan. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/73655>; UNHCR. 2019. Global Report 2019. https://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/gr2019/pdf/GR2019_English_Full_lowres.pdf; UNHCR. September 2018-April 2019. Summary of Findings: Impact of Cash Based Interventions (CBI) on Protection Outcomes – MENA PS Research project, [5e3a9c914.pdf \(unhcr.org\)](https://www.unhcr.org/5e3a9c914.pdf); UNHCR. 2016. Global Report 2016. [Book GR 2016 ENGLISH complete.pdf \(unhcr.org\)](https://www.unhcr.org/5e3a9c914.pdf).

<p>vulnerable families. It helped them to meet their basic needs and reduced the use of negative coping strategies; it is possible that cash assistance increased tensions between refugees and host communities.</p>	<p>coping strategies. These families received a monthly payment in USD (depending on their location).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Gender focus:</u> According to the appraisal memorandum, there was specific attention for women as vulnerable group. Indeed, the cash support was given to the most vulnerable refugee families, which mainly concerned women, children, elderly, disabled persons and LHBTI people. However, there was no mentioning of these specific vulnerable groups in the project proposal. - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> During the field visit, IOB learned about the funding gap for cash assistance, especially during wintertime (weather conditions have been harsh during winter). Because the Dutch contribution to the multipurpose cash assistance by UNHCR was provided in the months, November and December 2018, the cash program was able to reduce the finance gap and provide some direct basic support to vulnerable families during wintertime. - <u>Balanced support:</u> There was no balanced support provided because cash assistance was mostly given to Syrian refugee families (were the most vulnerable). Nonetheless, in general, cash support does not exclude local people or non-Syrian refugee families. - <u>Social cohesion:</u> Field visits pointed out that the provision of cash assistance created tensions between host communities and Syrian refugees. Indeed, the perception among local people that access to cash assistance is solely for refugees, has fuelled tensions between host communities and refugees. Especially in Lebanon, tensions were (and still are) on the rise and the most Lebanese people now also live below the poverty line. Most of the humanitarian assistance was provided to refugees, yet local people were not excluded from the cash support. UNHCR was aware and mentioned that this risk was mitigated through the MADAD social protection program.
<p>Effectiveness + Cash assistance provided and appeared to make people less vulnerable to exploitation and resorting to negative coping mechanisms; the number of vulnerable families who received cash assistance was lower than planned and of short term.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level:</u> In total, it appears that in both countries (50/50 divide) around 30,000 vulnerable families were financially supported with USD 175 per month for a period of 2 months (November and December) (=EUR 9300000/ (0,88*175 dollar*2)). UNHCR made use of the ATM banking network equipped with iris scan technology. Most of the beneficiary population was Syrian. Most of the cash (95%) was multi-purpose, meaning that it was disbursed without restrictions allowing receivers to choose how to meet their own needs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to a Samuel Hall report about multi-purpose cash assistance in Jordan¹⁰: <i>“the feedback on service delivery is generally positive, with most respondents receiving their cash assistance on time. Problems to withdraw cash were mostly related to the iris scan (although the Bank purchased new ATM machines and new iris cameras to improve speed). Another concern was the overcrowding near the withdrawal point, with implications on time spent and feelings of insecurity. The report mentioned that UNHCR’s helpline phone number is both well-known and universally appreciated by the respondents.”</i> When IOB asked about the UNHCR helpline during the field visit to Lebanon, it was mentioned that people experienced difficulties in communicating with UNHCR since the line is not answering most of time. - <u>Outcome level:</u> Evaluations demonstrated that multi-purpose cash assistance over a longer period prevented displaced people from resorting to negative coping strategies, such as child labour, selling or exchanging sex, early marriage, or premature return to conflict zones. In line with this, a study to the impact of cash-based interventions on protection outcomes highlighted that the positive psychosocial effects of cash assistance are clear, with the many respondents noting that cash assistance had reduced their feelings of stress, the financial burden on their households and allowed them to improve their living conditions. However, the UNHCR global report of 2019 showed that because of funding gap, the operation in Jordan was unable to assist nearly 10,000 households of the 41,700 families that needed cash assistance. Similarly, in Lebanon, UNHCR was only able to reach 42% of the 84,000 vulnerable Syrian refugee families in need of assistance. - <u>Gender targets:</u> UNHCR found through research in Ecuador, Lebanon, and Morocco that cash assistance could limit the vulnerability of women and girls to sexual exploitation... <i>“In Lebanon, female cash recipients reported feeling stronger, more equal and more independent, thanks to the control cash gave them to meet their most pressing needs”</i> (UNHCR global report 2019, p.198). In Jordan, a similar pattern was visible: FHHs that received cash assistance over time, experienced a decrease in vulnerability. - <u>Refugee participation:</u> IOB did not find information on whether cash assistance increased the participation of refugees in host communities. Nevertheless, cash assistance did enable families to send their children to school, hereby avoiding child labour and limiting their expenditures on education. Thus, access to education for refugee children was enhanced. - <u>Economic benefits:</u> The appraisal memorandum underlined that cash assistance contributes to the development of the local economy because of increased self-esteem and resilience of

¹⁰ Samuel Hall. 2019. p. 3

	<p>refugees who receive cash assistance. However, no information was found on how this increased self-esteem/resilience would stimulate the local economy.</p>
<p>Coherence + Aligns with 3RP, there has been a collaborative cash delivery mechanism among big multilateral organizations, and an information system, which avoid duplication of support.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> The Dutch contribution to multipurpose cash assistance falls under the cash assistance chapter of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP) 2018-2019 for the Syria region. The 3RP focuses on acute support to refugees in the countries neighbouring Syria, to increase the resilience of refugees and their host communities. - <u>Reference to coordination with other donor interventions:</u> In one of the yearly reports by UNHCR¹¹, it was mentioned that UNHCR pursued collaborative cash delivery mechanisms to make sure that aid was provided efficiently. A common cash facility clause was implemented in 45 countries and the High Commissioner endorsed the Common Cash Statement – reaffirming UNHCR’s commitment to provide cash through a common cash system used in crises globally to avoid parallel systems among operational agencies or duplicate financial instruments. UNHCR implemented the common cash statement in seven priority countries and through global systems, along with OCHA, UNICEF, and WFP. The system is collectively owned, jointly governed (with clear and predictable roles, responsibilities, and arrangements) and is available to multiple partners. Implementation built on existing good practices, such as LOUISE in Lebanon, the Common Cash Facility in Jordan, and the Greece Cash Alliance. Among other achievements, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP launched the Guidance for Collaborative Procurement for Humanitarian Cash Transfers and developed a minimum core data set. - <u>Reference to coordination with broader MFA policy:</u> The Netherlands actively contributed to the yearly Executive Committee and the Standing Committees and was an influential donor within the UNHCR. Every year a policy dialogue was organized during which the Dutch priorities and UNHCR priorities and needs were discussed. - <u>Coordination structures:</u> There is a Refugee Assistance Information System, by which all organizations document the services that they have provided to each household. Hereby duplication of service provision to the same household was avoided.
<p>Efficiency + Low overhead costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Management of funds:</u> A PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) study to UNHCR’s three largest cash programs in 2016 (Lebanon, Afghanistan, and Jordan) found that up to 93 cents of each dollar went the target group. Following this line of thought, the program support costs (overhead) of this project was around 7% (EUR 700.000) - It concerned a one-off contribution by the Netherlands to UNHCR’s cash interventions in Lebanon and Jordan. At the time of the program implementation, the Netherlands was developing a partnership with amongst others UNHCR. There was a strong demand for funding of social protection interventions during this set up stage. Hence, the MFA NL decided to allocate a one-off contribution to UNHCR’s cash interventions in Lebanon and Jordan.
<p>Sustainability +/- Financial sustainability under Prospects; not a sustainable mechanism.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Financial sustainability:</u> The Netherlands has partnered with UNHCR under the Prospects partnership, allowing for a continuation of funding, amongst other to UNHCR’s cash assistance in Lebanon and Jordan. - The cash support provided short term solutions of humanitarian kind, rather than sustainable longer-term results. The most vulnerable families depend on these contributions to meet their basic needs, putting them in a position of dependence. This specific contribution enabled UNHCR to provide cash assistance for only 2 months.
<p>Quality of design + Contextual and program risks considered, although these risks were low; numbers of beneficiaries unclear; no government cooperation; UNHCR has comparative advantage in delivering CBI as a protection tool.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Overlooking contextual factors:</u> UNHCR provided a clear overview of the contextual risks, including the political instability (especially in Lebanon), social tensions between Syrian refugees and their host communities, and corruption and program risks, like the abuse of the cash-program or the possible risk of beneficiaries not receiving the cash provided by UNHCR. UNHCR assessed that the contextual and program risks presented were low. - Numbers as presented in the log frame (15,100 vulnerable households in Lebanon and 14,728 vulnerable families in Jordan received cash assistance) and the proposal did not match with those numbers presented in the appraisal memorandum (15,100 most vulnerable Syrian refugee families in Lebanon and 29,865 vulnerable families in Jordan receive cash assistance) - <u>Implementing partners:</u> UNHCR had a comparative advantage in effectively delivering cash-based interventions (CBI) as a protection tool that is informed and optimised based on robust protection data, and is well-integrated into complementary protection interventions, including case management and other assistance services. - <u>Government cooperation:</u> UNHCR has limited dependency on the Lebanese government and works mostly at the local level. - <u>Monitoring and Evaluation framework:</u> The progress was reported via the Grand Bargain mechanism, this includes accountability to the beneficiaries.

¹¹ UNHCR. 2019. P. 198

Project 13 War Child – The Future is Ours			
Project characteristics			
Project name	The Future is Ours: An integrated approach to protection and education for vulnerable children and youth in Lebanon		
Project number	4000002609		
Country	Lebanon (North Lebanon, Akkar, Baalbek-Hermel en Bekaa)		
Budget	Total project budget EUR 3,997,132 <i>This budget stems from the Subsidy framework for Migration and Development (2018-2023)</i>		
Project partner	War Child Foundation		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children and youth that are out of school or at risk of dropping out of school. - Boys at risk of recruitment into groups involved in violent conflict and child labour. - Girls at risk of early marriage - Children and youth with disabilities - Children and youth who have been or are experiencing emotional, physical, and sexual violence or bullying. - Caregivers and community members (War Child perceived these people as duty bearers in the protection of children) 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 June 2019	1 June 2019
	End date project	31 July 2021	28 February 2022
	Duration	2 years and 2 months	2 years and 8 months
Main themes	Children protection, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), and education		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective Children and young people have improved well-being.			
Outcomes and outputs			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children are adequately protected from violence, exploitation, abuse, and neglect. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Children and youth at risk access support and have access to appropriate services. 1.2 Community actors strengthen their knowledge, skills, and attitudes to protect children and youth at risk. 2. Children, youth, and caregivers have reduced distress and caregivers have a greater capacity to support their children. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Children and youth have access to quality psychosocial support. 2.2 Caregivers have access to quality psychosocial support. 3. Children and youth have improved academic and social emotional learning outcome through access to quality education in safe learning spaces. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Children have access to safe and quality learning opportunities. 3.2 Children have access to a safe and protective learning environment. 			
Assumptions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community actors agree to prioritise child protection, education, and wellbeing within their communities. • Outreach, social workers, and CP officers are accepted and trusted within communities. • Community and families enable access to outreach and identification of children at risk. • Other service providers have the capacity to accept new referrals. • Caregivers are willing and able to commit to the intervention. • Families and children can invest time in education 			
Assessment			
Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment		
Relevance ++ Addressed needs of vulnerable children through education assistance and CP/MHPSS; gender focus included; sensitive to local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Addressing needs</u>: This project was relevant for those children in Lebanon that experienced barriers to education, including long distances between home and school and insufficient existing public-school facilities, inability to successfully (re)integrate into formal education and language barriers. Over half a million of displaced Syrian children (3-18 years), around 58,000 Palestine school aged refugees (6-18 years) and 451,323 vulnerable Lebanese children needed education assistance. Besides, the project considered protection issues that vulnerable children faced, such as violence (incl. gender based and sexual violence), exploitation (e.g., child labour and early marriage) and abuse. War Child provided integrated and targeted child protection and psychosocial support through the project. - <u>Gender focus</u>: The program placed emphasis on the inclusion of children with disabilities and incorporated gender considerations across all project cycle steps with the help of a detailed 		

<p>changes, incl. COVID-19; serious focus on including Syrian refugees after interference MFA NL; focus on social cohesion appeared to be limited.</p>	<p>gender analysis. War Child provided gender disaggregated data and mentioned that it focused specifically on reaching out to and engaging male caregivers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> Since 2019, Lebanon faced multiple crises, such as the socio-economic collapse and sky rocking inflation, the outbreak of COVID-19, the Beirut explosion, and the continuous effect of the Syrian crisis. These crises resulted in more than 80% of Lebanon’s residents being unable to provide for their basic needs and rights, like fuel, electricity, healthcare, education, housing, and clean water. Consequently, child protection (CP), Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) and Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) risks worsened during these years of crises. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When COVID-19 started, War Child quickly switched to remote/online modalities, including online classes and provided internet bundles and SD cards and tablets to beneficiaries to continue with the sessions. The team was prepared because they already created videos to proceed with sessions during the riot and road blockages in 2019. Because of the switch to online modalities, War Child was able to reach more beneficiaries than anticipated (20,000 compared to targeted 8,400, particularly more girls). Moreover, War Child distributed food parcels, Covid19 prevention and hygiene kits. • The electricity shortages negatively affected internet connectivity for children and led to an increased burden on caregivers to provide basic needs. Therefore, War Child transitioned from sending learning videos to providing memory cards for children to access their lessons without relying on internet connectivity. - <u>Balanced support:</u> War child advocated for an integrated project program directed at vulnerable children in Lebanon, including Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian children. However, initially, there was no balanced support and the MFA NL interfered. MFA NL urged War Child to reach out to more Syrian refugee children, because the 2nd shift schools had not opened (low engagement from Syrian children living in remote areas and teachers were unwilling to teach during 2nd shifts) and these children were missing out on education. This became a priority in the end of 2020. War Child offered Syrian children retention and classes in line with curricula to make sure that they were not losing their academic year. The final narrative report mentions the involvement of 75% refugees against 25% host community participants. - <u>Social cohesion:</u> In the proposal, War Child identified the risk of a deteriorated relationship between Syrian refugees and host communities. To mitigate this risk, they emphasized the need for activities that build understanding and cohesion and that include host communities as beneficiaries, e.g., by working through local CBOs. However, the MFA NL mentioned that the analysis on strengthening social cohesion between refugees and host communities could have been clearer. No mentioning of this component in the final narrative report.
<p>Effectiveness + Most outputs were overachieved, War Child adjusted the project to the country context when needed, yet results were somewhat negatively impacted because of e.g., COVID-19 and the Beirut Blast; gender-based barriers were considered; economic benefits are likely but more indirect.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level:</u> Most outputs were overachieved by the end of the project implementation, although some of the intended results for 2019 and 2020 lagged behind. Changes in the country context, incl. Covid-19 and Beirut blast, had impact on the achievement of outputs in these years, e.g., % of children with improved well-being because of access to psychosocial support activities was lower than anticipated. On the other hand, the no cost extension made it possible to reach 2243 children with psychosocial support activities compared to 700. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school attendance rate increased (partly because of flexibility of online modalities). This was most beneficial for working children and females who had to adhere to strict social norms that prohibited them from attending school with other boys. Moreover, teachers had more space to offer support to children who needed more attention. • From the disaggregated data presented under outcome 1 and 2, it seems that the project targeted many more refugees than host community members. - <u>Outcome level:</u> (under outcome 1) War Child’s project contributed to addressing incidences of child abuse, child marriage and child labour by responding to the immediate needs of children and youth at risk through child protection and case management, while simultaneously building preventive and protective environment. Moreover, the knowledge, skills and attitudes of caregivers were strengthened, enabling them to better protect children and youth at-risk. (Under outcome 2) Despite challenges in the country context, the well-being of children has been improved through caregiver support sessions and caregivers had greater capacity to support children. (Under outcome 3) War Child enhanced access to quality non-formal education, which enabled children to improve their academic performance and transition to the next level of education. Teachers’ capacity (also at remote level, like making videos) increased. Nevertheless, War Child’s non-formal education program was not able to reduce school drop-out under children in Lebanon, which generally increased. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Lebanon, War Child has shifted its child protection and psychosocial support approach from centre-based to community based, as most children at high risk are better identified within and by community members. War Child has also shifted from one-off CP and PSS training to long-term capacity building based on competencies. This has increased impact, reach and sustainability.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For children who weren't enrolled in schools, War Child provided education, as well as MHPSS services. For children who were already in school, War Child tried to follow up on the dropouts and make sure to keep them and bring them back to school. - <u>Gender targets:</u> Implementing partners adopted a mobile approach to ensure access to the highest number of children at risk, also in informal tented settlements. Most sessions were to be conducted in the informal tented settlements as this ensured improved participation of girls and women, responded to caregivers' concerns and it was more cost effective. Under outcomes 1 and 2 there was an equal share of female and male beneficiaries. - <u>Refugee participation:</u> This project contributed to better access to safe and quality learning opportunities (in non-formal education system) and built a stronger protective learning environment for vulnerable children by strengthening capacity amongst teachers, caregivers and community leaders and other actors. Therefore, IOB considers it highly likely that War Child's activities had a positive effect on refugee's effective participation in host communities. - <u>Economic benefits:</u> Although the main objective lies more with improved socio-protection, it might have created/will create (more indirectly) some economic prospects.
<p>Coherence +/- War Child mentioned synergies, alignments, and coordination structures with host country plans and other donor interventions. Yet, the final report did not set out how coordination and synergies were sought.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> The intervention aligned with national response plans, amongst other the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan (under strategic objective 1: Ensure protection of vulnerable population and strategic objective 2: Provide Immediate Assistance to Vulnerable population), Government of Lebanon National Mental Health Strategy. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • War Child has been an active member of the Child Protection Working Group led by UNICEF, which followed the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Justice's policies and priorities, supported the objectives of the Higher Council for Childhood, and provided technical inputs to the National Plan for Childhood. • War Child project supported access to MEHE certified learning activities and was based on the BLN curriculum which was developed by War Child upon appointment of MEHE. • War Child has been an active participant in several coordination forums including the Child Protection in Emergency and Sexual & Gender Based Violence working groups at national and field levels; the national PSS Committee and MHPSS Task Force; the Case Management task force and the Education Working Group led by MEHE and UNICEF on national and regional level. • War Child has been part of the national online mapping of MHPSS actors developed by the Ministry of Health as a service provider for level 2 and 3 and referring to other actors through the interagency system. - <u>Reference to coordination with other donor interventions:</u> Since 2013, War Child and UNICEF have worked together to identify, refer, and integrate out of school children into the formal education system, as well as to provide non-formal education alternatives. - <u>Reference to coordination with broader MFA policy:</u> War Child also ran a DAFD project focused on improving social cohesion through sport activities and noticed that synergies and complementarities with the existing program are evident. - <u>Coordination structures:</u> According to the proposal, natural synergies existed among the different program components: "the proposed intervention will draw from proven methodologies and lessons learned in supporting children and communities and from existing coordination mechanisms." However, the final report did not present information about coordination and synergies in the final report. - The MFA critically noticed that the proposal set out plans to coordinate with and complement other activities in the same domain and/or geographic region but does not provide clarity and detail about how coordination and complementarity are sought.
<p>Efficiency + Flexible response through budget revision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MFA NL and War Child agreed upon a no cost extension of 5 months due to the Covid pandemic. Because of COVID-19, planned workshops were held online instead of face to face, which resulted in an under-spending of EUR 742.000. War Child was able to allocate this budget to other activities, hence more children were reached. - Overhead costs were around 8% (normal overhead costs)
<p>Sustainability +/- Focus on local ownership and capacity building of local structures, yet unclear how this was ensured after the project ended; no financial sustainability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - War Child tried to ensure sustainability through 1) continuous engagement, cooperation, and advocacy with relevant sectors, like education, to improve referral of children to needed services and sharing of knowledge to ensure support to national plans and alignment with longer term strategies; 2) support in building the field staff capacity on technical aspects to transfer knowledge and expertise; 3) building children and caregivers' resilience through PSS and life skills methodologies. - However, the MFA NL showed concerns regarding the sustainability of the project during the appraisal period, notably: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening the capacity of public and semi-public institutions and other local structures was the way by which War Child wanted to sustain the project results and activities after the program life span ended. However, the capacity of the local structures was not analysed making the discussion rather superficial and not convincing.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was unclear how individual or collective ownership was ensured. • While the focus was mainly on institutional sustainability (how to make sure that institutions will carry on), financial sustainability was not guaranteed. It remained unclear if and how the project activities continued after Dutch funding ended.
<p>Quality of design +/- Potential context and program risks considered; stakeholder analysis conducted; local implementing partners were involved early on; can be questioned whether outputs were set too low, and no information provided on how 2 outcomes were achieved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - War Child provided a Theory of Change as annex to the full proposal. The project partner did not report on 2 outcomes mentioned in the ToC (Policy and legislative reform achieved at national and international levels to better support children in conflict & Families' socio-economic conditions are improved to better support children). - <u>Overlooking contextual factors:</u> War Child acknowledged the potential risk of children and youth dropping out of the program because of family priorities. This can result in working children's attendance to be low or in drop-out by these students. Consequently, the most vulnerable children are not reached through the project. War Child tried to mitigate this potential risk by increasing the capacity to respond to the needs detected through a referral system, community engagement through volunteers and continuous dialogue with caregivers will make sure that those who (tend to) drop-out are kept on board. - <u>Realistic goals and outputs:</u> most outputs have overachieved. This can be partly attributed to adjustments in the project due to COVID-19. - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessments:</u> War Child performed its needs assessments in pre-existing communities where refugees have settled down. In all areas, programmes were tailored based on the community needs, identified in cooperation with local government authorities and committees. - <u>Implementing partners:</u> War Child collaborated with five local organisations who have an established presence in the targeted areas, like Akkar Network and Development (AND). To ensure the programme responded directly to the specific community needs, War Child and partners jointly developed an action plan: War Child benefited from local partners' knowledge of the context – in particular acceptance from the community they work in - while investing in a comprehensive capacity and competency enhancement plan. - <u>Government cooperation:</u> War Child involved the authorities from the very early stages of planning and had good working relationship with leaders of municipalities where projects were implemented.

Additional projects Lebanon

Project 14 ABAAD – NASEEJ 2 Improving Prospects for Refugees and Vulnerable Host Communities & Project 15 COVID-19 ABAAD Lebanon Response (* adaptation of NASEEJ 2 to COVID-19)			
Project characteristics			
Project name (full)	Project 14: NASEEJ 2: Improving prospects for refugees and vulnerable host communities – Strengthening Gender Based Violence Prevention and Response ¹²		
	Project 15: COVID-19 ABAAD Lebanon Response <i>*Adaptation of NASEEJ 2 to the COVID-19 situation</i>		
Project number	4000002769 (project 14)		
	4000003882 (project 15)		
Country	Lebanon		
Budget	Total project budget of project 14 was EUR 3,400,785.40 <i>This activity is funded under the Subsidy framework for Migration and Development (2019-2022)</i>		
	Total project budget of project 15 was EUR 1.000.686 <i>This budget comes from the additional COVID-19 budget of 2020</i>		
Project partner	ABAAD – Research Centre for Gender Equality		
Main project beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable women and children survivor or at risk from Gender Based Violence (GBV) or Child Protection (CP) violations. - Men with abusive behaviours - Media personnel, reporters, and journalists - Host and refugee communities - Official stakeholders, NGO actors and civil society practitioners, frontliners working in the GBV and CP sectors in Lebanon, Mental health practitioners and psychotherapists and educators. - Internal Security Forces (ISF) 		
Project duration		Planned	Actual
	Start date project	1 July 2019	1 July 2019 <i>Project 15 began on 1 June 2020</i>
	End date project	30 June 2021	30 June 2022 <i>Project 15 ended on 30 November 2020</i>
	Duration	2 years	3 years
Main themes	Gender based violence (GBV) and child protection, gender equality, sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR)		
Other donor involvement and the role of NL	The Netherlands was the only donor of this project.		
Overall objective To improve protection prospects for refugees and host communities in Lebanon.			
The project consisted of 2 interventions: Part 1: Regular grant which aimed to achieve outcomes and outputs set in the original project proposal (Project 14). Part 2: Ad-hoc emergency grant of 6 months, which was tailored to meet the needs of affected communities at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in Lebanon in line with the ongoing project implementation (Project 15).			

¹² This project is a continuation of project 11 ABAAD – NASEEJ Protection and Mitigation of Gender Based Violence in Lebanon (see p.34)

Part 1: NASEEJ 2 Improving prospects for refugees and vulnerable host communities (activity number 4000002769)

Outcomes

1. Refugees and vulnerable host communities are better protected against violence and abuse.
2. Increased quality SRHR education and vocational training for refugees and host communities.

Theory of Change (ToC)

If a protection space for vulnerable refugees and host communities is enhanced, and if the legislative frameworks and policies that affect them directly are addressed and modified, and if an enabling environment is created in which social norms around violence against women and girls will be shifted, then opportunities for development, prevention, safety, and protection for vulnerable refugees and host communities in Lebanon are ensured.

Part 2: COVID-19 ABAAD Lebanon Response (activity number 4000003882)

Adaptation Strategy

The repurposing of funds continued to serve the fulfilment of the project’s overall objective and outcomes with adaptation to ensure its fulfilment under pandemic conditions. Online and remote modalities will continue until the general mobilization and movement restrictions are lifted. Once clearance to open centres and in person services are allowed, ABAAD will ensure protective and physical distancing measures are in place for beneficiaries and staff safety.

Specific COVID-19 adjustments

Food assistance; e-awareness and E-Psychosocial support, COVID-19 awareness and response, E-counselling for men, e-case management for women survivors, provision of emergency cash assistance for GBV survivors, self-care for GBV service providers, training for ISF hotline Operators)

Assessment

Evaluation criteria	Explanation/qualitative assessment
<p>Relevance + Addressed relevant needs, yet given the dramatic contextual challenges in Lebanon, MHPSS and GBV prevention became “less important themes compared to securing livelihoods”; no clear focus on social cohesion; all vulnerable groups were targeted including refugees from Syria and others; sensitive to problems of COVID-19.</p>	<p>- Needs addressed: The project was most relevant for those women and girls and boys who encountered (sexual) gender-based violence (like domestic violence). Especially refugees were vulnerable to the risks of GBV incidences and implications on mental health because of their protracted displacement and increased vulnerabilities related to legal status, economic insecurity, and severe living conditions. The protracted displacement situation also changed family dynamics and traditional gender roles for some families resulting in higher levels of domestic violence. During project implementation, ABAAD experienced a 100% increase in calls reporting GBV cases because of the multi-layered crisis. This shows that GBV remained an important challenge in Lebanon. Although women and girls were the main beneficiary group, ABAAD also targeted men with abusive behaviours as an attempt to address factors and root causes affecting violence.</p> <p>- According to the final evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women found distributed food baskets (<i>*part of project 15</i>), awareness-raising sessions on GBV and SRHR, and psychosocial support most relevant to their needs. • Men also found these services relevant, yet increased financial pressures, made mental health concerns less important than securing livelihoods in some instances. • The government agencies that were trained by ABAAD, Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) and ISF, found the training topics very relevant. More practical elements would elevate the curriculum even further. <div style="background-color: #e6f2ff; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>On the COVID-19 contribution (project 15): The final evaluation highlighted that “major cross-cutting issues attributed to COVID-19, the economic situation, as well as quarantines and lockdowns dramatically exacerbated the incidences of GBV against women. During that period, a significant number of women were unable to contact ABAAD and other service providers to report violence or seek help. This was not only due to financial challenges, but also associated with lack of privacy in the home because of all household members – including aggressors – being locked inside (state-mandated quarantines and/or loss of employment), often in tight spaces, which further exacerbated tensions and violence.”</p> </div>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Sensitive to local realities:</u> The relevance of the project design was negatively affected by contextual issues of which the economic crisis, political vacuum and instability, the Beirut Port Blast and Covid-19 pandemic were the most challenging. Despite dramatic price and exchange rate fluctuations, ABAAD was able to keep activities running (like safe shelters) and adjust interventions to the changes in the local realities. For example, ABAAD responded in a flexible way to challenges with its government partners that were dealing with breakdown, brain drain and lack of financial means. ABAAD's priorities shifted more towards an emergency response as institutional capacity building of public institutions was impossible. The Beirut Port Blast made it even more difficult to access ABAAD's GBV services for GBV survivors. Despite these challenges, ABAAD was able to ensure access to GBV services for women and girls and provide continuous psychosocial support to men and boys through its men centre. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the activities, mediation and couple therapy, was implemented in cooperation with religious leaders, because they were the only ones to play such role in Lebanon. Therefore, there was a big need to include these leaders in the programs. <p><i>ABAAD's response to COVID-19 (adjustments in project 14 and emergency humanitarian response under project 15)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MFA NL granted ABAAD with additional funding, which enabled ABAAD to adapt to an emergency humanitarian response for a period of 6 months to provide direct services and basic needs to the most affected population, putting particular focus on women and girls. These include food transfers to the most vulnerable families in Lebanon. • ABAAD took measures to limit the spread of COVID-19 in line with the nation-wide measures and lockdown and protected the residents of Women and Girls Safe Spaces (WGSS) by providing free testing and medical care for those who had the virus and by putting new GBV survivors in quarantine prior to entering shelters. Other organisational preventive measures included the support of women with internet bundles and transportation to reach lifesaving services. • Overall, modalities were adapted to a remote platform, e.g., trainings with ISF, GBV frontliners and social workers were taught online and MHPSS services, awareness-raising sessions in WGSS and the men centre shifted to remote support. – Most beneficiaries mentioned that they preferred in-person training. Indeed, staff that worked with beneficiaries explained that it took a couple of weeks to shift to the online modality, and once the efforts were launched, they did face some resistance. • ABAAD had to quickly switch to remote services while adapting in the interest of Do No Harm and keeping an open line of contact with its beneficiaries. This process was challenged by the inexistence of working guidelines on how to provide remote services. Moreover, ABAAD did not have guidelines on how to adjust shelters in response to COVID-19. Services seekers struggled to access support, and many did not feel comfortable with the remote method. E.g., men centre psychotherapists reported that it took some time for men to adapt to and accept video call. (Final evaluation) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Balanced support:</u> ABAAD partnered with Lebanese associations that worked with Lebanese, Palestinian and Syrian communities, and all other marginalized groups. Still, more refugee women and girls were targeted than local women and girls (children). Although the project targeted both Syrian refugees and host communities as beneficiaries, they were not targeted as communities in relation to each other. In the final evaluation, men underlined that ABAAD widely targeted community members, including those in hard-to-reach areas, and that this contributed to more awareness on SRHR. - <u>Social cohesion:</u> The MFA noted in the project approval phase that the project did not clearly address host community-refugee relations. Refugee and local beneficiaries were only interacting when they happened to be both victims (and perpetrators) of violence. In brief, there was no focus on bringing these groups together or on enhancing social cohesion. - <u>Vulnerable groups (LHBTI):</u> ABAAD did focus on fostering a certain level of tolerance for LHBTQI individuals (who were oftentimes thought to be a threat to society and public morality due to religious beliefs e.g.) based on human rights. ABAAD hereby tried to reduce potential GBV targeted at LHBTQI.
<p>Effectiveness + Had positive effects and (over) achieved targets regarding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Output level:</u> Under both outcome 1 and 2 the picture is mixed with various outputs being overachieved while others have been underachieved or not achieved, mostly due to constraints in relation to the recurrent crises in Lebanon and shifting priorities of the government, which resulted in a decrease in the level of engagement of key ministries. E.g., the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) was unable to commit to the full roll out of the national

<p>protection of women and children. ABAAD did not succeed in building capacities among public institutions, mostly due to contextual challenges; ABAAD's covid response was overall effective, yet online modalities were not always working properly, and beneficiaries mentioned that they preferred 'in-person modalities.</p>	<p>Training of trainers (TOT) on national GBV standard operating procedures (SOPs) which resulted in delays and less social workers trained than anticipated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of implemented activities: The provision of protective services at the midway houses (MWH), the creation of five Women and Girls Safe spaces (WGSS) (holistic approach), Men Centres and partner centres, the provision of legal counselling and education sessions, psychosocial support (PSS) activities, and life skills training, as well as Clinical Management of Rape (CMR) and forensic services. • Beneficiaries found the holistic GBV service provision, including WGSS, to be useful. Yet, women mentioned that they did not know about ABAAD or its services before meeting the staff. Information sessions could overcome this issue. <p>- <u>Outcome level:</u> ABAAD's services have contributed to improved protection of women from violence and abuse and promoted gender equality. Women's knowledge empowered them, information changed their perspectives and taught them how to be safe and protect themselves and their children. The final evaluation provided the example of 86% of the surveyed women who noted that the services had positively contributed to their lives especially when compared to before receiving services. Nevertheless, because of the political vacuum, which fed into the challenges of bureaucracy, ABAAD was not able to accomplish building the capacities among public institutions up to what was needed to improve national legislative frameworks and policies for better protection and GBV prevention. <u>Challenges to project implementation in more detail:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E.g., the rollout of the national GBV SOPs and production of a social development strategy could not be launched at the national level because of a political vacuum and collapse (including MPs and Directors who left their positions and limited available budget restricted operations and resources). • The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and ABAAD agreed to revise the national educational curriculum to integrate SHRH and gender equality components. However, the work was significantly slowed down because of instability in Lebanon. • Because of the economic crisis and associated brain drain, Lebanon suffered from a lack of specialized services, specifically in the field of psychiatry. • Refugee women noted that they did not trust local stakeholders, and especially not the ISF, explaining that they did not feel safe to go to ISF personnel. Several reasons such as the belief that the officers did not respect women, did not support refugees, would take advantage of them, or did not have the capacity to deal with GBV cases, out of fear of deportation due to legal status or lack of documentation. <p><i>The effects of COVID-19 on the effectiveness of ABAAD's projects 14 & 15</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although ABAAD ensured the continuation of activities like ToTs during the COVID-19 pandemic through online modalities, the target group reached was lower than planned. E.g., ISF continued to commit to trainings (even though the officers were not getting their salaries), yet the number of officers involved was lower than anticipated. • Amidst the allocation by the MFA NL of COVID-19 funding to ABAAD (project 15), the organization was able to offer food baskets and COVID-19 awareness raising sessions to both men and women. According to the final evaluation, the received food baskets "came at the right time" and were "extremely helpful to the households". • Following the final evaluation, key challenges of the online modality included power outages, weak or no internet, difficulty in hearing one another, and participants dropping in and out of sessions, which hindered their ability to adequately follow sessions. <p>- <u>Unintended effect:</u> A positive effect of group activities was that the women who gathered outside of ABAAD events, made friends which made them feel less alone.</p> <p>- <u>Refugee participation:</u> The final evaluation mentioned that refugee men were overall less satisfied with the services compared to local people, which may be the result of the contextual challenges that refugee men faced and the lack of acceptance within their areas of residence. The life skills training element of ABAAD's project, contributed to building capacities and skills of (refugee) women that were useful to generate income (like home-based businesses).</p> <p>- <u>Economic benefits:</u> the life skills training element of ABAAD's project has potentially benefitted women with generating income. However, benefits of the project were challenged by high inflation, increased unemployment rates, reduced access to cash and savings and a drastic devaluation of local currency which shifted beneficiaries' needs to basic assistance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the operational level, the crisis heavily affected budgeting as extreme exchange rate fluctuations created significant savings which have been allocated to other activities.
--	---

<p>Coherence +/- ABAAD mentioned alignment with host country policies and UN sector documents. Clarity and detail on how other activities in same domain were aligned, was not presented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Reference to host country policy:</u> The project was aligned with 3 of the strategic objectives of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP): (1) to ensure the protection of vulnerable populations, (2) to provide immediate assistance to vulnerable operations, (3) to support service provision through national systems. Moreover, ABAAD tried to avoid creating parallel systems or replace the government by working through the Emergency Response Plan (ERP). However, during the field visit, IOB learned about the challenges in coordination: A stakeholder mentioned that there have been over 4 responses in the past 2 years instead of 1 needs assessment, which could have avoided complications and complexity. - <u>Reference to other donor interventions:</u> ABAAD did mention that the application documents align with UN sector documents and policy guidelines, as well as various international and local NGOs response plans, WHO health guidelines, and Government of Lebanon’s National Emergency Plan. The activities also aligned with the UN SDG paper. Design and components of food transfers will be done in accordance with WFP guidelines in addition to the recommendations outlined by FAO in 2020 on the impact of COVID-19 on food security. - Clarity and detail on how other activities in the same domain complement and coordinate with this project were lacking. In line with this is that there was no reference to coordination with broader MFA policy. - For the COVID-19 contribution, ABAAD built on the achievements and measurements of completed distributions of hygiene kits financed by other donors; and refined its approach of the distribution of hygiene kits.
<p>Efficiency + NCE were requested and approved to adjust activities and respond to contextual challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ABAAD requested 3 <u>no cost extensions (NCE)</u> for project 14 (NASEEJ 2) until 30 June 2022, which were all approved by the MFA NL. Reasons for the NCE were the challenges that ABAAD faced when trying to complete activities that were coordinated/cooperated with governmental authorities. These challenges were exacerbated by the multi-layered and complex crisis in Lebanon (especially since October 2019, by the banking crisis, the global COVID-19 pandemic, the Beirut port explosion and the current economic and political crisis and vacuum). ABAAD had to adjust activities and training courses were delayed because of these contextual challenges. - <u>Overhead costs:</u> The office operational costs for the project were around 2,5% of the total budget. Head Quarters administration costs were 5% of the total budget.
<p>Sustainability +/- Project partner tried to create incentives to maintain project results. However, ABAAD remained dependent on financial support from donors to maintain and further expand project results.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The proposal described the institutional, social, financial, economic and program sustainability of the intervention. However, the MFA NL assessed the project proposal and concept note as insufficient with regards to sustainability. - <u>Incentives to maintain project results:</u> Sustainability of the intervention was defined in terms of knowledge and skills gained & changing attitudes, motivation, and outlook: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social sustainability was ensured through bringing about changes in the social norms around masculinity and femininity and GBV behaviours. ABAAD invested in broad-based relationships with different local stakeholders. • <u>Working with local implementing partners/institutional sustainability:</u> ABAAD collaborated closely with/provided capacity building to ministries and government institutions to ensure safe and sustainable exit strategy. Indeed, ABAAD trained key stakeholders in national institutions, including MoSA employees, ISF officers and civil society actors. The final evaluation mentioned that beneficiaries that received training, found it useful. “In general, the majority felt that they were easily able to put into practice their new skills and knowledge.” - MFA NL critically mentioned that the project’s financial sustainability plans were insufficient as ABAAD tried to secure funding through other donors.
<p>Quality of design +/- Components of GBV and livelihoods not clearly linked to one another; contextual factors were considered; needs assessments conducted; government cooperation was difficult for some activities; M&E could be improved.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <u>Intervention logic:</u> How the components of GBV and livelihoods have been linked to one another in the project was not clearly presented. It concerned two stand-alone lines of action, following the project proposal. It can also be questioned whether the livelihood activities were based on a sound economic analysis and whether these activities had impact. - <u>Overlooking contextual factors:</u> ABAAD presented a clear risk and mitigation overview in the final progress report. Hence, ABAAD was aware of the contextual challenges and tried to adjust the program in the best possible way (did not always succeed though). - <u>Stakeholder analysis and needs assessments:</u> The final evaluation underlined that ABAAD used a participatory approach as it conducted needs assessments and held regular community consultations with community members before tailoring activities. However, the context analysis presented in the proposal could have been more thorough. - <u>Government cooperation:</u> ABAAD created relationships and signed partnerships with different government bodies including the Ministry of Interior, ISF, MoSA, MEHE, Ministry of Public Health, and the National Commission for Lebanese Women (NCLW). Although the relationships with ministries were positive, the limited resources available at the ministries created operational challenges on two levels: 1) public servants no longer received salaries and

	<p>lost incentives to keep committed to the program and to their work; 2) MoSA centres were no longer able to provide basic services such as water, heating, and basic equipment. This placed heavy constraints on the staff's ability to work. ABAAD was not able to bear these financial burdens. Therefore, the ABAAD management team made a strategic decision to phase out the centres and secure other local centres. (Based on the final evaluation and IOB field visit).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The final evaluation highlighted that the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) component within the program could improve by: (I) Expanding the MEAL unit; (II) Increasing training on MEAL platform; (III) Enhancing internal monitoring and trend analysis; (IV) Improve overall data collection and quality
--	---