



Title of the action : Agricultural and Rural Development Programme (ARDP)	Total budget for Lebanon: €14,000,000
Beneficiaries: Lebanese agricultural and rural sector	Implementation period: 2011-2015

Objectives

The *general objective* of ARDP is to increase the overall performance of the agriculture sector in order to achieve sustainable food security and to improve the livelihood of rural and farming communities.

The *specific objectives* of the programme are: (i) strengthening the capacity of national institutions to work on a coherent agricultural/ rural development vision and to better implement agriculture strategic orientations; and (ii) supporting and empowering local rural actors (farmers as well as cooperatives) by increasing access to credit and to infrastructure.

Expected results

1. Developing the capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture both at the institutional policy level.

This will involve implementation of the Ministry's strategic plan, revision of the legal and regulatory framework, completion of a thematic census to improve policy/decision-making, performance based budgeting, improved monitoring and evaluation and coordination.

The project will also work towards **improving the organizational/infrastructure capacity of the Ministry** and consequently the improved quality of agricultural products. This will be done through support to extension services, quality control (improved laboratory and quarantine facilities), enhancing Ministry's communication and IT platform and data management systems.

The project will work with individuals to develop human resources. Specifically the project will develop key value-chain training models, organise Training of Trainers programmes for Ministry staff to provide extension services on various products, pesticides and fertilisers, working towards improved collaboration with research centres and technology and undertaking technical studies.

2. Access to rural credit is enhanced:

This result will see increased economic development of farmers and agriculture cooperatives through easier access to credit and a better extension of services. Specifically this will be done through the expanding the scope of Kafalat's agricultural guarantee schemes. The project will also be involved in carrying out studies closely associated with the credit sector.

3. Rural infrastructure are further developed

The first component focus on water and the construction of medium-sized hill lakes and help farmers and cooperatives to manage irrigation networks and to adequately use modern irrigation systems. This construction will be based on assessments taking into consideration the environmental and social impact. The project will also be involved in the establishment of Water users' associations to manage the infrastructure, and linking the associations to credit schemes.

The second component will focus on forestry and rehabilitating forest nurseries implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture. The project will work to improve land management capacities, working with municipalities and cooperatives towards reforestation. The work will also work with local actors to maintain and irrigate the seedlings. Studies will also be carried out related to forest and pasture land management.

In the context of this project cross-cutting issues of gender, environment, poverty reduction and good governance will also be addressed.