



Cash-for-work participant rebuilds stone retaining wall

- Vocational training for 50 students from rural districts in the region in trade skills based on demand such as child care, health and beauty services, computer software training, and computer hardware maintenance and repair, lasting nine weeks and including a tool kit for graduates; and
- 21 Cash-for-work public works projects, focusing on longer-term economic benefits for the village as well as immediate benefits for unskilled labor.

By the end of the project, IRD program staff in Beirut and Tyre disbursed more than \$620,000 in economic recovery and development assistance funds in the region. The project was made possible by the collaborative efforts of IRD, ICOD, and the communities of rural southern Lebanon. IRD works with the express appreciation of, and in cooperation with, the municipal councils and mukhtars in these communities and maintains program offices and staff in Beirut to continue that relationship and explore new program development opportunities.



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IRD builds a road in Boustan



Farmer's grant recipient next to his apiary



Farmer's grant recipient in her tobacco fields

IRD in Lebanon

On July 29, 2006, within the first weeks of war in southern Lebanon, IRD sent an assessment team to determine how best to respond to the escalating crisis with the help of its local partner, the International Center for Organizational Development (ICOD).

In September 2006, the Department for International Development (DfID), the UK Government department dealing with humanitarian aid, awarded IRD a grant to provide assistance to poor rural households in southern Lebanon adversely affected by the 2006 July war. The project focused on ten villages in the Tyre District and is estimated to benefit more than five thousand people.

The project had four main components:

- Vouchers for 870 farmers at local farming supply stores to both replace damaged supplies and equipment and expand agricultural capability;
- Small grants to 100 businesses and trades people based on business recovery needs for structural repairs or restocking of goods;



Small Business Grants to Build Back Better

IRD Helps Villages Rebuild Their Economy

The bombing in Zabqine, Lebanon began last August, and the small supply shop owned by Hussein Bzaih was hit very early on.



Hussein Bzaih



Ibrahim Moslem

“My shop was completely destroyed,” said Bzaih. “But I thought if I sold the goods from my house I might still be able to have an income, even though the war was continuing.”

Unfortunately, Bzaih's house and second shop location were partially destroyed by a second bomb soon following. He had now lost his shop, most of his house, and most importantly, his way of making a living. Recently, however, Bzaih received a small business grant to restock his shop from IRD. Through the UK Department for International Development-funded IRD emergency livelihood recovery project, IRD has disbursed more than \$620,000 in micro-grants to farmers and small business owners over the past four months.

“I could restock the store very quickly,” said Bzaih, “Now we have re-opened and are selling more things here than I did across the street. I sell everything from Coca-Cola to shoes and socks.”

His neighbor, Ibrahim Moslem, also received a micro-grant to expand his car repair business. With his own money combined with the grant from IRD, he was able to buy a hydraulic jack, power drill and a new tool set worth more than \$1,000. He also bought a grinder to smooth out dents so he can begin doing auto body work.

“I want to be able to totally rebuild cars,” said Moslem, “I would like to have a one-stop auto service shop.”

Training for a Better Career Through the Community

Vocational Centers Program Promotes Economic Development in Smaller, Rural Villages

The waiting list for the Saydoun Vocational Training Center in Tyre, Lebanon is more than 100 students long.

“That's always a good measure of success,” said Center Director Jamil Madi. “It's more students than I have room for, because the demand for the classes has grown so much.”

At two vocational training centers in Tyre, fifty students from smaller, rural villages in southern Lebanon have been taking classes for nine weeks. Each session begins with classroom instruction and includes practical, hands-on training in workshops where students practice under the guidance of qualified instructors. Both centers provide vocational training in such areas as computer training and repair, hairdressing and make-up, travel ticketing and booking, sewing, and child care.

“I'm very happy to be in this class. All of us are,” said Faten Saad, a student from Tayr Harfa enrolled in one of the child care courses. “Where I'm from, no one has this kind of education, and this gives us many more opportunities than were available before.”

Madi credits the success of the courses to IRD's outreach in surrounding communities.

“It's a community center, and the more involvement you have from local leadership, the better,” said Madi. “Most of the time, our students are from Tyre, because they're the only ones who are interested in and can afford this kind of professional training. So we're thankful the project was able to both engage smaller rural communities and make the classes available to them.”

Faten Saad shows an art project



Sewing student shows her design



Mixing mortar for the main road



Workers in Deir A'amas

Public Infrastructure Projects Repair Damage and Provide Income

Small-Scale Projects Speed Economic Recovery

Atef Selman is head of the municipal council of Al-Bayyad, a village in the hills of central southern Lebanon. With other council members, he was responsible for meeting with the several NGOs that arrived immediately after the war in July destroyed much of the village.

“We met with many different organizations,” said Selman, “but IRD was the only one that came back, the only one to actually help.”

Through the UK Department for International Development-funded IRD emergency livelihood recovery project, IRD met with community leaders like Selman and the municipal council to identify projects that would help the smaller communities rebuild essential public works such as roads and water and drainage systems. In total, IRD disbursed more than \$100,000 to infrastructure projects in southern Lebanon.

In Al-Bayyad, IRD was finishing the construction of a retaining wall that helped support the town's main road. Skilled laborers were mixing the mortar, then cutting and placing the stones for the wall. Unskilled laborers received cash for digging the base and moving stones for placement. The families in houses next to the road had donated land so it could be widened, and would provide food and drinks to the workers as needed. The total cost of the project rebuilding the wall and the road would exceed \$4,000, of which the community had contributed more than half.

“This road is the lifeline for our community,” said Selman. “That is why we are willing to give so much, why we have been so involved in the project from the beginning, and why we are so glad for the opportunity to work with IRD.”

Vouchers for Farming Equipment

Promoting Economic Recovery by Developing the Agricultural Sector

Wehbe Darwish is *moukhtar*, or mayor, of Al-Bayyad, a village of 1,200 people in southern Lebanon. With four other farmers from his village, he has come to Tyre to have lunch and pick up farming supplies.

“Today I am picking up fertilizer, pesticide, and manual sprayers for the fertilizer,” said Darwish. “I wouldn't have been able to afford this equipment so quickly, before the harvest. This will help not just me but many other small farmers in the village.”

Through the the UK Department for International Development-funded IRD emergency livelihood recovery project in southern Lebanon, over 60 different types of farming supplies have been provided to 870 local farmers through \$495 worth of program vouchers that can be redeemed at the Tyre branch of Debbane, a popular farming supply store.

“Farmers have used the vouchers for everything from water pumps to beekeeping suits,” said Hassan Ghorrayeb, who manages the Tyre Debbane supplier. “In many cases this is just replacing equipment destroyed during the war so they can have a crop to harvest this year. But often the equipment is better quality than they would have had before, and they can produce more.”

In Zabqine, a small farming village about 15 kilometers outside of Tyre, tobacco farmer Ahmad Bzaih talks about how he has been able to improve his farming technique, with both the better-quality equipment and technical assistance provided through the project.

“Before, some plants would survive in the field and some would not,” said Bzaih. “Now, I use the proper fertilizer and protective covering on a much smaller incubation field, and only move the best plants to my regular fields. This year my harvest will be better.”



Ahmad Bzaih



Wehbe Darwish