

Action Fiche for Lebanon

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Improving infrastructure in Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon (ENPI/2012/023-394)		
Total cost	EU contribution: EUR 5,000,000		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach – centralised (direct) and joint management with United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)		
DAC-code	72030	Sector	

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

In spite of their longstanding presence in Lebanon, Palestine refugees remain excluded from key facets of social, political and economic life in this country. Poverty has remained very high among Palestine refugees, particularly within the camp enclaves, wherein two-thirds of refugees reside. In spite of the continued growth of camp population, the surface areas of the camps have not increased since they were first built. General living and environmental health conditions are therefore extremely poor.

En 2010, an EU-funded study, undertaken by American University of Beirut (AUB), considers that the situation of the Palestine refugees living in Lebanon is precarious. This research has highlighted that over two-thirds of Palestinians residing in Lebanon are poor (subsisting on less than USD 6 per day) while 6.6% of these exist in extreme poverty (less than USD 2.17 per day).

In 2005, the Government launched the *Camp Improvement Initiative* to address the problems in the camps. Meantime, some reform initiatives have been taken including the establishment of the Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, the decree of the Minister of Labour allowing Palestinian refugees the right to work in 70 professions and the efforts to legalize non-ID Palestinians living in Lebanon. The most positive steps recently taken by policymakers on Palestine refugees are the legal amendments to the labour and social security laws approved by the Lebanese Parliament on 17 August 2010 in addition to the commitment of the Government of Lebanon to reconstruct Nahr el-Bared camp. In December 2011, the Council of Ministers finally approved the Master plan for Mohajaheen in the adjacent area of Nahr el-Bared to accommodate around one hundred Palestine refugee families. With this long waited positive decision, the suspended EU-funded project (“*reconstruction of the Mohajaheen area*” – EUR 3.3 million) can now be implemented.

In the absence of access to public services and infrastructure, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) is responsible

for co-ordinating the provision of education, health, relief and social services and the delivery of infrastructure within each of the twelve camps in Lebanon.

The programme is coherent with the priorities set down in the Joint Communications of the European Commission and of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy entitled "A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean"¹ and "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood"².

2.2. Lessons learnt

For the last three years, the EU has been involved in reconstruction or rehabilitation of Palestinian camps, shelters or collective works through different projects funded under various instruments. Those projects are mainly implemented by UNRWA who acquired experience in the reconstruction as well as the rehabilitation of infrastructure works (Health infrastructures project in Beirut camps and the reconstruction of the Nahr el-Bared camp). All Results Oriented Monitoring (ROM) and evaluations have highlighted the high relevance and the real impact of those reconstruction/rehabilitation projects. Nevertheless, the two main lessons learnt for infrastructure projects are the need to prepare in details and prior to signature of the EU funding the detail design, including the feasibility study and the tender dossier for the rehabilitations foreseen as well as to closely monitor with the authorities to avoid blockages in the actual implementation of the project.

2.3. Complementary actions

This action is complementary to the support provided by the EU in the infrastructures for Palestine refugees in Lebanon through different lines and thematic and to the assistance of some members states: European Union is rehabilitating through European NGO some houses in the adjacent areas in Nahr el-Bared and shelters in the gatherings; on the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI) and Instrument for Stability (IfS), the infrastructure projects implemented in Beirut camps (EUR 4 million) and Nahr el-Bared (EUR 19.9 million) have adopted an innovative approach that will be used for this action.

A closed co-ordination is foreseen with the EU Member States and particularly the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, currently rehabilitating some health centres in Shatila, Mar Elias camp and Wadi el-Zeina ; the Italian co-operation, currently funding the rehabilitation of buildings in the adjacent areas of Nahr el-Bared around the Mohajaheen area; the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) water project in the adjacent area of Nahr el-Bared and the French Agency for Development (AFD) who is going to reconstruct the Health centre and a new school in Nahr el-Bared camp.

The co-ordination will be also done with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) who have just started a new project for the remediation and upgrading of camp water supply networks in seven Palestine refugee camps in Lebanon.

¹ COM(2011)200 of 08.03.2011.

² COM(2011)303 of 25.05.2011.

In September 2011, under the Instrument for Stability, the EU has decided to grant an additional EUR 12 million on shelters and rentals subsidies. The activities are already been implemented and are, indeed, complementary of this action proposed. This action is also complementary of the EU support in Education, scholarships as well as our support to the Global fund for UNRWA.

The 4th component of this project is complementary of the on-going project supporting the reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared camp and specifically of the contract ENPI/2009/210-254 “Reconstruction of the Mohajareen Area in Nahr el-Bared” implemented by Norwegian Refugee Council.

2.4. Donor co-ordination

The EU has a close working relationship with the Lebanon-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC), which is an inter-ministerial government body formed by the Lebanese Council of Ministers, as well as the Palestine political representation. Throughout the implementation of this project, the strengthening of these relations will be ensured. On a monthly basis, UNRWA organises a donor meeting which the EU always attends as well as the main donors. Further ad hoc meetings are organised to discuss specific areas of intervention or new initiatives. At the local level, a continuous and regular dialogue is maintained by UNRWA with representatives of Lebanese municipalities, and among Palestine refugees with popular committees and local political leaders. UNRWA and the EU Delegation in Lebanon have developed a strong partnership and the EU is always informed of any difficulty faced in the implementation of the projects.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The overall objective of this project is to improve the life of Palestine refugee families.

The specific objective of this project is to contribute to the rehabilitation of the following collective and individual infrastructure:

- Camp infrastructure in Ein el-Hilweh camp.
- Six Health Centres in Mieh Mieh, Ein el-Hilweh, El Bus, Beirut Polyclinic, Beddawi and Burj el-Barajneh camps.
- Some of the most badly deteriorated shelters belonging to the poorest families in the Palestine camps in Lebanon.
- The Mohajaheen area in the adjacent area to the Nahr el-Bared camp.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

- (1) *Upgrade camp infrastructure in Ein el-Hilweh camp*

The main problems identified are the corrosion of the sewer system and the dearth of a storm water drainage system. With this project, UNRWA will install new and separate storm water drainage and sewage systems, replace the old water supply network with a new system, provide proper household connections, connect the camp storm water and sewer networks to the municipality, clear out the internal sewers and water channels, and upgrade old roads and pathways to an acceptable standard. 66,000 residents from Ein el-Hilweh camp will benefit from a better environment through the elimination of flooding in the southern sector of the camp and access to potable water will be provided to 15,000 residents.

(2) **Rehabilitate six Health Centres in Mieh Mieh, Ein el-Hilweh, El Bus, Beirut Polyclinic, Beddawi and Burj el-Barajneh camps**

The rehabilitation of the primary health centres has two broad objectives. The first is to improve overall safety in the health centres and in particular to decrease the risk of hazards to both patients and staff by upgrading the physical fabric of each building, electrical rewiring, ventilation and air conditioning. The second objective is to enhance the quality of care provided through upgrading equipment for patient care. Over 100,000 persons will benefit from improvement primary health care.

(3) **Rehabilitate some of the most badly deteriorated shelters in priority camps in Lebanon belonging to the poorest families in the camps**

UNRWA's new approach to shelter rehabilitation is built upon five pillars: target group, physical evaluation of shelters, self-help approach, revised specifications and a revised scoring system for targeting those families most in need. Instead of relying on external contractors to carry out the work, UNRWA is introducing a self-help approach by directly involving camp residents in the improvement of their housing. The refugees will receive financial support in order to do the unskilled work themselves and/or to hire local tradesmen for the skilled work required. UNRWA will also provide technical support throughout the process. To ensure that vulnerable families are not discriminated against in this approach, alternative approaches will be adopted for those who lack the capacity to undertake or manage the work. In such cases, the work will be tendered to external contractors. This intervention will benefit at least to 1,000 persons.

(4) **Contribute to the construction of the Mohajaheen area**

Under the EU funded project "Support to the Reconstruction of Nahr el-Bared (ENPI/2009/019-624), a grant contract was signed "Reconstruction of the Mohajareen area in Nahr el-Bared" (ENPI/2009/210-254) with the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) for the reconstruction of houses for 101 Palestine refugee families. The design was done and approved by the community and the local authorities in 2010. NRC launched two tenders for design-supervision and for the reconstruction. But some derogation for the Master Plan needed the approval of the Council of Ministers. Due to the political situation, this approval was only given in December 2011. Because of this long delay, the estimated costs exceed the available budget (EUR 3.3 million). The additional cost is estimated at EUR 600,000. NRC will contribute for 50% of this additional cost and the EU will provide through this project the other 50% (EUR 300,000). It has to be mentioned that given that this

project is the only reconstruction project in the adjacent area of Nahr el-Bared it should ensure a very good visibility for the EU.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

As with all construction projects, regular maintenance operations and works can be negatively affected by disruptions to the security situation in Lebanon and any violent eruptions can derail progress at any point. Regarding the sensitive issue of access to Palestine refugee camp, UNRWA has experience in dealing with it through continuous dialogue with the Lebanese Army, the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee, and relevant municipalities. Potential community frustration is dealt with by community participation and ongoing dialogue with stakeholders. Considering the volatile environment of Ein el-Hilweh camp, a communication officer will be recruited and a communication strategy will be drafted to enhance communication with the community by including a participatory approach, increase transparency and neutrality about the project implementation and develop channels for community participation. Beyond the project implementation per se, there is always the risk of an unexpected increase in construction material prices (steel, concrete, etc.) as well as an increase in the price of oil.

3.4. Cross-cutting Issues

The action is consistent with many of the cross-cutting issues identified in the European Union Consensus on Development.

Gender – Women, Men, Children and Young People: The action is gender-sensitive, in that the measures will benefit all men, women, children and young people living in the communities which are being rehabilitated. For the shelter rehabilitation, the involvement of women in the discussions related to the needs and the rehabilitation works of their shelters is foreseen.

Governance and Ownership: the sub-project to renew the camp infrastructure in Ein el-Hilweh is innovative in that it reflects a more community-oriented approach to promoting good governance as part of the implementation and ongoing sustainability of the project. While the Popular Committees are largely responsible for issues relating to camp governance, there has historically been little consultation with community residents themselves in relation to their needs. Sector Committees will be established and will be consulted in relation to the detailed design and implementation of the project. The Sector Committee will endorse the final proposals and will convene meetings with the community interest groups (including youth and women's groups). Finally, the Sector Committee will also liaise with UNRWA in relation to the sequencing of works so as to ensure minimum disruption to the community and will also assist UNRWA in solving problems during the construction programme as required. On the other hand, under the Instrument for Stability, a study of governance mechanisms in Palestine refugee camps has been conducted. Its conclusions could allow a better integration of this dimension.

Environment: The infrastructure rehabilitation in Ein el-Hilweh and the shelter rehabilitation works in this and other camps will also contribute significantly to improving environmental sustainability of the camps concerned. The rehabilitation of shelters will mean improved levels of hygiene, protection from the rain and cold, as

well as better ventilation to reduce the risk of illnesses. Shelter rehabilitation will also provide families with increased safety and security, hopefully reducing stigmatisation and marginalisation from the rest of the camp community.

3.5. Stakeholders

All the stakeholders were consulted during this preparatory period.

The direct beneficiaries are:

- For the three first components UNRWA is in charge of the implantation of the action, the overall co-ordination and the reporting to EU and others stakeholders.
- For the fourth component, NRC in charge of the implementation of the 4th component “reconstruction of the Mohajaheen area”.
- The Lebanese government, the army, the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee (LPDC) and the local authorities (municipalities) who will facilitate the access to the camps, insure the security and stability and facilitate relations between the two communities.
- The population in the camps who will benefit from the project. The beneficiaries in the camps (old camp for the three first components or in the adjacent area, Mohajaheen, for the fourth one) will be closely involved in the implementation of the project.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

Joint management through the signature of an agreement with the international organisation UNRWA in accordance with Article 53d of the Financial Regulation. UNRWA complies with the criteria provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation. UNRWA is responsible for co-ordinating the provision of education, health, relief and social services and the delivery of infrastructure within each of the twelve camps in Lebanon. A Standard Contribution Agreement will be concluded, in accordance with the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) concluded between the European Commission and the United Nations on 29 April 2003.

For the reconstruction of Mohajaheen area, direct centralised management, upon prior approval for a direct grant award to NRC according to Article 168.1.f of the Implementing Rules.

Audit and evaluation activities will be implemented through procurement under direct decentralised management (service contracts).

The change of management mode constitutes a substantial change except where Commission "re-centralises" or reduces the level of tasks previously delegated to

beneficiary country, international organisation or delegate body under, respectively decentralised, joint or indirect centralised management.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

Joint management

All contracts implementing the action are awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the relevant International Organisation (UNRWA).

Direct centralised management

1) Contracts

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by ENPI Regulation. Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in Article 21(7) ENPI.

2) Specific rules for grants

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions. They are established in accordance with the principles set out in Title VI 'Grants' of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget, ENPI Regulation. When derogations to these principles are applied, they shall be justified, in particular in the following cases:

- Financing in full (derogation to the principle of co-financing): the maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is 80% of total eligible costs. Full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget.
- Derogation to the principle of non-retroactivity: a grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only if the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant is awarded, in accordance with Article 112 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget.

4.3. Indicative budget and calendar

The overall indicative budget for the infrastructure component of this proposal amounts to EUR 5,000,000 distributed on the following budget lines:

Upgrade camp infrastructure in Ein el-Hilweh camp(joint management)	EUR 2,900,000
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Rehabilitation of Health Centres (joint management)	EUR 500,000
Rehabilitation of shelters (joint management)	EUR 1,000,000
Contribute to the reconstruction of Mohajaheen area (grant direct centralised management)	EUR 300,000
Audit and evaluation – (service - direct centralised management)	EUR 50,000
Contingencies	EUR 250,000

UNRWA is currently updating all the technical studies for Ein el-Hilweh and the rehabilitation of the Health centres, accessing the shelters in the different camps and preparing the tenders to be launched once the Decision is taken.

For the reconstruction of Mohajaheen area, direct centralised management upon prior approval for a direct grant award to NRC according to Article 168.1.f of the Implementing Rules. NRC has been working on Mohajaheen for the last two years under a grant contract “*Reconstruction of the Mohajareen area in Nahr el-Bared*. For this action, the foreseen operational duration is 48 months from the adoption of the Financing Decision.

4.4. Performance monitoring

Achievements will be monitored regularly by UNWRA and the beneficiary NGO and the results will be reported to the EU Delegation. The key performance indicators will be detailed in the Contribution Agreement and in the grant contract. The EU Delegation task manager will carry out at least one monitoring mission a year for each Component. It is expected that this project will also be subject to the regular ROM monitoring missions.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

The project will be subject to mid term and final evaluations.

If necessary, *ad hoc* audits or expenditure verifications assignments could be contracted by the European Commission on all contracts.

All auditing matters related to the contribution agreement with the international organisation UNRWA are governed by the Verification Clause annexed to and forming an integral part of the Financial and Administrative Agreement (FAFA) concluded between the European Commission and the United Nations, signed on 29 April 2003.

An amount of EUR 50,000 is earmarked for audit and evaluation purposes which will be implemented through procurement under direct centralised management (service contracts).

4.6. Communication and visibility

The European Commission will ensure that adequate communication and visibility is given by the contracting parties to the EU funding. A specific provision is foreseen to

ensure the overall visibility of this project and will be integrated into the Contribution Agreement with UNRWA and in the grant contract.