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COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM



Photo: CSP delivers solar-powered welding machine to Ainata el Arz farmers, Beqaa.

Community Support Program in Lebanon

July / August 2021

CSP Improves Livelihoods in Ainata el Arz and Supports Local Farming Cooperative

Known for the cultivation of apples, Ainata el Arz is an agricultural village in the Beqaa Valley that is home to around 750 farmers. While the village had established a cooperative to improve farming practices and enhance local economic opportunities, farmers still faced higher production costs when compared with neighboring villages due to the village's remote location and consequent increased transportation costs. To support farmers' livelihoods, USAID's CSP provided the village with ten electric pruning shears, five semi-automatic rotary tillers, two wood shredders, and two trailers. In addition, and following the recent nationwide fuel crisis, CSP provided the village cooperative with a solar-powered welding station to repair irrigation lines and maintain production.

"The USAID-provided equipment is supporting farmers reduce production costs while applying more efficient agriculture techniques in irrigation, pruning, and soil management. The solar welding machine has also been crucial given the ongoing fuel crisis," said Mr. Rahme, head of the COOP and mayor of Ainata el Arz.

CSP Supports Fnaideq Cooperative to Increase its Sales Through Technical Assistance and the Provision of a Mobile Kiosk



In the village of Fnaideq, Akkar, Fadwa Zahraman learned to defy challenges early on and became a role model for women in her community. Thanks to her determination and her belief in the potential of women, Fadwa set up and runs an agricultural cooperative that employs as many as 30 local workers, including seven women. In support of Fadwa's initiative, USAID's CSP provided a mobile kiosk that can be hitched to a vehicle and parked at various trailheads to feed hikers and eco-tourists. Through USAID's support, the cooperative was able to increase its production and sales of preserved food, including fruit jams and butter, and even up its marketing approach to draw in new customers.

"In addition to providing the mobile kiosk, CSP also trained us on food safety, marketing and social media outreach which enabled us to start selling our products online," said Fadwa Zahraman, founder and head of Fnaideq Cooperative.

USAID-Funded Scholarship Students Engage in Community Service Activities Across Lebanon



Photo: Scholarship recipients supporting a disabled person on his way to get vaccinated in Saida



Photo: Scholarship recipients volunteering at a community center to serve meals to vulnerable individuals in Zahle

With the objective of improving the employability skills and increasing job opportunities for Lebanese students from underserved communities, CSP provides scholarships to students seeking Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in three promising sectors in Lebanon: home-based healthcare, repair and maintenance, and IT. As part of the scholarship's community service requirements, CSP's 189 scholars at eight private partner TVET institutions are volunteering in various organizations and establishments. In Saida, South Lebanon, students are volunteering in a hospital and orphanage; while in Zahle, Beqaa, they are volunteering at a community center to serve meals to vulnerable individuals; and in Tripoli, North Lebanon, they are giving back to the community in three local charity organizations.

"Volunteering taught me how to work in a group and help others; community service is one of the most important activities young people should experience. It teaches us to give back to the community whilst gaining valuable experience," said Sanaa Kendakji, a CSP scholarship recipient currently pursuing her Baccalaureate Technique BT3 in Accounting and IT at the St. Elie Technical Institute.



[Click here to watch a video on USAID's support to workforce development in Lebanon](#)

CSP Improves Livelihoods and Promotes Tourism in Ain Ebel, South Lebanon



Photo: Trained tour guides lead the first tour on the newly inaugurated cultural trail in Ain Ebel in July 2021, with the support of USAID's CSP

As the financial crisis further decreased income-generation opportunities to residents and weakened communal relations due to competition over scarce resources, USAID's CSP supported the municipality of Ain Ebel to develop a cultural trail to support local economic development and cultural tourism. By the end of July, CSP had trained municipal staff on the trail's maintenance, guest house management, planning, and management of public events. CSP also trained the cultural trail's tour guides who conducted the first official tour of the trail on July 24, 2021. The cultural trail aims to attract more local and international visitors to the community, consequently contributing to enhanced economic opportunities in the village.

"This project represents an opportunity to develop Ain Ebel and place it on the touristic map of Lebanon. It is creating new job opportunities amid these difficult circumstances." said Imad Lallous, Mayor of Ain Ebel.

Photo Of The Month



USAID's CSP is distributing 120-litre recycle bins to 400 households and installing nine recyclables collection points across the village, in addition to running a community awareness campaign to ensure the effective and sustainable use of USAID provided equipment.

Photo: CSP installs a recyclables collection bin Ras Nhash, North Lebanon in August 2021

Photo by: Mohamad Madani