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The Community Support Program (CSP) in Lebanon

November 2022 Newsletter

USAID Administrator Samantha Power Visits USAID/CSP's Solar-Powered Pumping Station in Majdel Anjar, and Meets with Agricultural Cooperative Members Benefiting from CSP Provided Equipment

On November 9, 2022, USAID Administrator Samantha Power visited Majdel Anjar during her three-day visit to Lebanon, where she, along with the U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Dorothy Shea and USAID/Lebanon Mission Director Mary Eileen Devitt toured the town's water pumping station which is currently being operated through a CSP-installed solar farm. In the presence of the Mayor of Majdel Anjar Said Yassin, the delegation also met with some of the town's women cooperative members whose livelihoods increased following CSP's provision of commercial equipment to expand the cooperative's agri-production.

Home to around 25,500 Lebanese residents and 32,000 refugees, Majdel Anjar's significant refugee presence has long strained the municipality's ability to meet the town's basic water needs, which was further exacerbated by the ongoing electricity and fuel crises. The worsening economic crisis has also limited the ability of the town's agricultural cooperative to modernize its outdated and inefficient equipment, affecting farmer production and leading to decreased livelihoods. In response, USAID's CSP installed solar panels to operate the town's water pumping system, as well as rehabilitated its pumping station and upgraded its chlorination room, enabling a clean energy solution that is ensuring continuous water access for around 19,000 beneficiaries while also decreasing associated costs on residents and the local government. In parallel, and to improve livelihoods, CSP also provided the town's cooperative with equipment to expand production, including commercial stoves, ovens, and freezers, as well as vacuum packing machines and fruit and vegetable dehydrators to ensure food safety. This intervention has increased income generation opportunities to an estimated 100 underserved farmer households.



Administrator Power receives a gratitude plaque from the Mayor of Majdel Anjar



Administrator Power and U.S. Ambassador Shea taste few of the preserved foods produced by the Majdel Anjar cooperative



[Click here to watch a video on CSP's interventions in Majdel Anjar](#)

"These panels are saving the local government money, more than \$95,000 worth of fuel annually, and saving each household \$80 a month because those households no longer have to truck in water or buy bottles. This is a very significant savings here in Majdel Anjar where household income, monthly, averages around \$40. So, despite the fuel shortages and the high prices, more than half of the residents here can count on receiving clean water" – USAID Administrator, Samantha Power

CSP Enhances the Livelihoods of Small-Scale Olive Farmers in North and South Lebanon during the 2022 Olive Harvesting Season

In response to the worsening economic crisis and its significant impact on livelihoods, USAID's CSP continued to provide needed support to underserved olive farmers in North and South Lebanon who, in October 2022, started harvesting and cultivating their olive trees. The crisis has been especially difficult for small-scale farmers who have been struggling with rising production costs coupled with a significant decrease of profit margins due to the devaluation of the local currency. The increased competition combined with limited profits is leading to tensions among residents over limited livelihoods.

As such, and for the past three years, USAID's CSP has supported olive farmers in Barghoun, Badbhoun, and Akroum (North Lebanon), and Tanbourit and Saidoun (South Lebanon) by providing agricultural cooperatives in each respective area with modern harvesting and handling equipment. This allows farmers to rent better equipment at minimum costs to expand their production and increase their livelihoods. Farmers benefiting from these interventions are currently producing better quality olive oil at a much lower cost due to efficiency in harvesting and less reliance on expensive daily labor.

USAID/CSP Interventions Supporting Olive Farmers



CSP provided the 'Cooperative for Development' with 15 mechanical harvesters (including 15 trolleys and 15 battery chargers), 30 nets, and 400 plastic crates. This season, more than 13 farmer households saved \$200 per ton of harvesting each.



CSP provided the 'Cooperative for Production and Processing of Olives in Akroum and Surroundings' with a centrifuging and pressing machine, a 250-KVA generator, as well as constructed a storage and waste processing room, with 6 septic tanks, to enable wastewater recycling. This season, more than 500 farmers benefited from this support.



CSP provided the 'Cooperative of Olive Farmers in Tanbourit' with 8 mechanical harvesters (including 8 trolleys and 8 battery chargers), 200 plastic crates, and 16 harvesting nets benefiting more than 50 farmer households.



CSP provided the 'Saidoun Agricultural Cooperative' which serves the villages of Deir Qattine, Hidab, Rimate, Saidoun, and Sanaya, with 6 mechanical olive harvesters, 200 crates, and 12 nets for olive harvesting, benefiting more than 100 farmer households.

"Thanks to CSP's assistance, we were able this olive season to market this new harvesting technology, fully renting out the equipment for the entire season at low cost, and benefitting hundreds of local olive farmers."

Head of the Saidoun Agricultural Cooperative, Charbel Khawand

USAID/CSP Supports Beqaa Nursery to Produce more than 2.1 Million Seedlings for Local Farmers

Home to around 130,000 residents, of which 55,000 are refugees, the Baalbek-Hermel Governorate in the Beqaa relies heavily on agricultural production. Skyrocketing inflation amidst the country's ongoing socio-economic crisis has placed increasing strain on local farmers as they struggle to purchase crop seedlings, which has resulted in diminished incomes and growing tensions over limited resources. To address this issue and to improve the agricultural sector in the area, a local non-profit organization, Cooperation Without Borders (CWB), provides organic vegetable and aromatic seedlings at discounted prices to local farmers. Since the start of its operations in 2019, CWB has been operating a 1,492m² greenhouse seedlings nursery to produce grafted crops to cut production costs for as many local farmers as possible. However, due to its limited capacity, many were left without this vital support.

In response, USAID's CSP has expanded CWB's seedlings nursery by providing it with a 1,867m² greenhouse and a climate-controlled germination room. Fully operational by September 2022, the expanded nursery had already enabled CWB to produce around 2.1 million seedlings by early November, and yearly production is expected to increase to around 20 million – double that of last year. In parallel, CSP is finalizing the supply and installation of solar panels to sustain the greenhouses' heating and cooling systems, which are expected to be completed by December 2022.

Local farmer Mansour al Khoury used to procure his seedlings from a private supplier for his 8,000 thyme plants, 6,000 tomatoes and 7,000 eggplants for \$15 to \$20 per 1,000 seedlings. "Amidst the crisis, I was forced to reduce my production as I could no longer afford to purchase seedlings," he stated. "Now that CWB is providing higher quality seedlings for around \$10 per 1,000, I am saving more than 40% in production costs."



"Whereas we started by serving only 250 farmers, this new nursery that USAID/CSP provided significantly increased seedling production, which is enabling us to extend our support to over 1,000 farmers and cultivate around 1,200 hectares of lands."

Founding Member of CWB, Elias Ghadban

CSP Places 100th Intern in USAID-Funded Programs in Lebanon Since the Expansion of its Internship Program

In April 2022, two years after CSP launched its collaboration with USAID’s University Scholarship Program (USP) to provide students from the American University of Beirut (AUB) and the Lebanese American University (LAU) with internship opportunities, CSP expanded its internship program to include hundreds of undergraduates and fresh graduates from nine additional Lebanese universities which are partnered with USAID under its “Higher Education Capacity Development Program” (HECD). Accordingly, selected candidates are being placed in 3–6-month internships across all USAID-funded programs in Lebanon, allowing them to enrich their professional and soft skills to enhance their employability, while providing them with much needed financial support during these difficult times. By November 2022, CSP had successfully reached the milestone of placing over 100 interns across USAID-funded programs since the program’s expansion.

PARTNER UNIVERSITIES	
 ANTONINE	 AUST
 AUB	 BAU
	 IUL
	 SAGESSE
	 NDU
	 USEK
	 USJ
	 HAIGAZIAN
	 LAU



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“This is an invaluable opportunity which focuses on people's skills, regardless of the university they come from, which is helping me to expand my horizons and stand out among other candidates”

Ani Sarraf, Business Advertising and Communication graduate intern, from Haigazian University, who is supporting CSP's recyclable waste management Community of Practice.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAM (CSP)

USAID/CSP Completes Access Road to Nmairiye Wastewater Pumping Station, South Lebanon, Ahead of Rehabilitation Works

The wastewater pumping station in Nmairye, South Lebanon, was constructed in 2012 to carry wastewater from the communities of Deir Ez Zahrani, Habbouch, and Kfar Roummame to the treatment plant in El Charqiye, thereby serving an estimated 50,700 residents. However, in the absence of a secure road to access it, staff from the South Lebanon Water Establishment couldn't properly operate and maintain the facility which caused it to fall in disrepair, in addition to a number of health and environmental hazards in the area from uncontrolled discharge of untreated wastewater. In response, CSP is rehabilitating the wastewater pumping station in Nmairiye, while constructing a 410-meter access road to facilitate operators' access to the facility.

By early November 2022, CSP had successfully completed the major works on the access road, including the related curbs, retaining walls, and safety barriers, enabling cars and trucks to safely access the pumping station to carry out the remaining rehabilitation works, which CSP expects to finalize by January 2023.



Constructed road to facilitate access to the Nmairiye wastewater pumping station

USAID/CSP is Implementing 3 Wastewater Construction Interventions Across Lebanon

Bchaale Wastewater Treatment Plant & Collection System

Serving the village of Bchaale

2,150 beneficiaries
300 m3 wastewater mitigated/day



Nmairiye Pumping Station Rehabilitation & Access Road

Serving the villages of Deir ez Zahrani, Habbouch, and Kfar Roummame

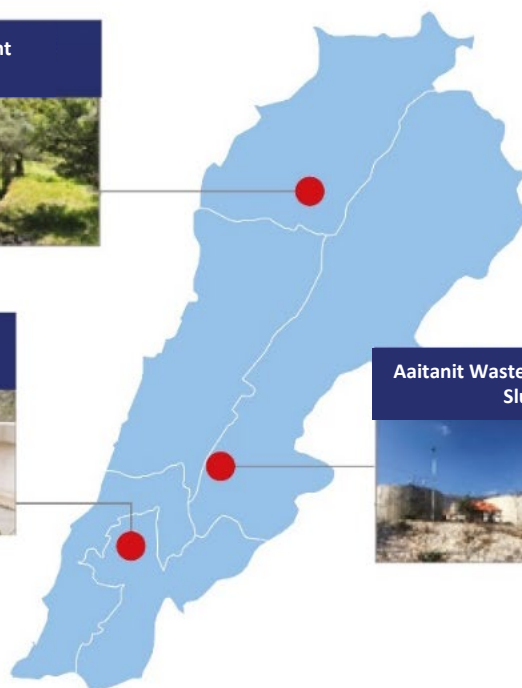
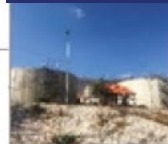
50,700 beneficiaries
6,880 m3 wastewater mitigated/day



Aitanit Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation & Sludge Management Upgrade

Serving the villages of Aitanit, Baaloul, El Qaroun, and Machgara

27,000 beneficiaries
5,000 m3 wastewater mitigated/day



USAID/CSP's Repair & Maintenance Vocational Course Receives Official Accreditation

Under its workforce development component and within its aim to improve employment outcomes for Lebanese youth, CSP is collaborating with partner Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) institutions and technical experts to sustainably improve the quality of and access to technical and vocational education in promising sectors of growth in Lebanon. Accordingly, CSP developed the curricula of its Repair and Maintenance of Industrial Machinery (R&M) vocational course based on input from local industries who shared specific technical gaps and needs within the sector, and consequently included modules on pneumatics, hydraulics, electro-pneumatics and electro-hydraulics, mechanics of diesel generators, and electricity. On October 12, 2022, the Directorate General for Vocational and Technical Education (DGVTE) in Lebanon issued decree 358/2022 which stipulated that the curriculum for CSP' R&M course met all requirements for formal accreditation. While the course will not be incorporated as a technical program (e.g.: BT3 or BP2), the DGVTE approved its implementation as a vocational training course throughout TVETs in Lebanon.

The first cohort of the course is currently being implemented at CSP's partner TVET, Tamkeen Vocational Institute in Tripoli. CSP and Tamkeen are currently in the process of recruiting a second cohort of applicants due to start in December 2022. Students enrolled within the first two cohorts of the course will benefit from CSP's scholarship for TVET education, which covers tuition and places graduates in internships; the scholarship also includes a monthly stipend that covers transportation costs, and medical insurance throughout the duration of the course and internship. By November 2022, CSP has awarded more than 800 TVET scholarships in the sectors of home-based healthcare, IT, and R&M.



[Click here to watch a video on CSP's workforce development interventions with a focus on the repair and maintenance vocation](#)

USAID/CSP-Provided Generator Enhances Residents' Access to Electricity, Streetlighting, Water, and Wastewater in Deir El Ghazal



Municipal members and residents of Deir el Ghazal in front of USAID/CSP's provided generator which is enabling access to essential services for more than 1,750 residents

As the energy crisis in Lebanon continues to worsen, municipalities endure increasingly lengthy power outages and residents struggle with the gradual collapse of other essential services which rely on electricity, such as streetlighting, water and wastewater management. Although the quiet town of Deir el Ghazal in the Beqaa used to boast wide-ranging services and facilities, the municipal backup generator had exceeded its lifespan, causing it to break down frequently and incur increasingly unaffordable repair and maintenance costs on both the municipality and residents. Indeed, the cost of repairing the old generator stood at around \$8000 annually, while its regular maintenance would cost the municipality up to \$10,600 each month. “We tried exploring every option to find a solution to the electricity issue, but given the devaluation of the national currency, purchasing a new generator remained firmly out of reach, and we were slowly forced to reduce the service to the bare minimum of just two hours per day,” stated Rafik Debs, Mayor of Deir el Ghazal.

To enable the municipality and residents to regain access to electricity and other essential services during state power cuts, CSP provided and installed a new 400KVA generator which is enabling important savings for the municipality and the community alike. Thanks to financial support mechanisms from the diaspora and the cuts in operational costs for electricity generation, the municipality is now able to provide regular power to benefit the town's 1,200 Lebanese residents and 550 refugees.

"As access to electricity rapidly declined last year, so did the security situation in Deir el Ghazal. Without electricity, the town plunged into darkness, and we could no longer power the security cameras. We noticed a sharp rise in thefts and opportunistic crime, but thanks to the generator provided by USAID/CSP, the streetlights are functional again as well as the cameras. Our town is peaceful again and the community feels much safer."

Local Police Officer in Deir el Ghazal, George Abu Faisal