

**Early Recovery Assistance for the Horticulture Smallholder
(US\$ 1.3 m) Completion date: September 2008**

The project is designed to provide assistance to vulnerable horticulture farmers in the governorates of the South and Nabatiyeh who have sustained significant losses related to war-conflict. The major interventions would have quick impact on early recovery and will contribute to restore some form of normalcy to the lives of war-affected resource-poor and low-income households. The project's main objective is to provide 1 600 farmers (11 200 beneficiaries) with sufficient inputs to cultivate 0.05-1 ha of land each, depending on the type of crops (greenhouse, perennial or seasonal).



The project responds to the risk that farmers will be unable to pre-finance the 2007 crop because of cash-flow shortfalls due to 2006 hostilities-related losses (the project will not target the government-subsidized crops). Consequently, the aim is to address the critical situation of accumulated debt amongst farming communities through appropriate supply of indispensable farm inputs and implements –working capital in kind- crucial to kick-start the revitalization of the sub-sectors.

The project supports the resumption of the horticultural activities with the following achievements:

- Procurement of high yielding adapted varieties of vegetable seeds and other agricultural inputs and undertake intensive vegetable production.
- using an improved greenhouse design that is available in the country resulting in the production of higher yields of vegetables with minimum use of pesticides; and
- water and fertilizer-use efficiency improved through rational use of water using localized/adapted drip irrigation systems.



The development goal of the project is to improve horticulture practices in Lebanon (by use of improved varieties, planting densities, greenhouse structure, GAP, water-use efficiency, rational use of fertilizers and pesticides and production of safe vegetables). The key immediate objective of the project is to provide assistance to the lives and livelihoods of 1 600 resource-poor and vulnerable horticulture war-affected farmers – with critical crop harvest losses – from the severely war-affected areas of Lebanon – the South and Nabatiyeh governorates (as a first phase, while

the second phase of the project shall include assistance to the rest of the war-affected farmers in Lebanon).

Output 1: Small-scale farmers enabled to resume crop production activities, and technical improvement of the production systems.

The distribution exercise for 1 600 open field farmers was completed. Each farmer received different varieties of high quality, high yielding vegetable seeds in addition to four bags of fertilizer (two bags of fertilizer and two bags of organic fertilizer).

Farmers had previously been notified to prepare their lands and later they were able to begin planting in late April. Households will benefit from the availability of fresh vegetables to supplement the nutrients in the family diet and also provide additional income through the sale of surplus produce



Output 2: Soil, water- and fertilizer-use efficiency improved through effective use of water using localized/adapted drip irrigation systems



In the south of Lebanon, most of the soil has low-fertility with poor mineral characteristics, aeration and water holding capacity. Also, large areas of farm lands are non-irrigated due to the scarcity of water supplies.

FAO procured localized/adapted irrigation equipment for open-fields vegetable farmers to be utilized under a low tunnel technique. In addition, FAO is constructing and upgrading 90 vegetable production greenhouses which will also be equipped with a drip irrigation system.

Output 3: Training Capacity of farmers and stakeholders built on the needs and means to rehabilitate the horticulture sector.

To ensure maximum impact of the project and the attendance of all beneficiaries to the training sessions, the trainings and capacity building activities was carried out in parallel with the delivery of inputs to the open field farmers.

The first training session was completed for 1 600 open field farmers. The second training session for the vegetable production greenhouse farmers will take place in n September during the planting season so the farmers will receive hands-on training.



Output 4: South Lebanon open field concept, greenhouse design improved for higher quality harvest and increased yields.



Installation of greenhouse nurseries:

The installation of four double span greenhouse nurseries was completed by 30 May. Each nursery would produce around 567 000 plantlets each season. While each greenhouse capacity for planting vary between 600 and 800 grafted plantlets per season, the said nurseries would then serve an additional 1000 greenhouse (farmers.



Installation of 50 greenhouses:

The installation of the 50 crop production greenhouses is underway and is expected to be completed by 25 July.



Upgrading of 40 Greenhouses:

FAO upgraded 40 existing greenhouses with new high quality. The greenhouses were equipped with anti-drip plastic sheet covering, side ventilation, insect net, double door system and drip irrigation systems. This new design will allow greenhouse farmers to increase crop production, have less pest infestation, thus reducing the quantity of pesticides and producing safe vegetables. Greenhouse farmers will be able to buy plantlets for their crop production greenhouses from the professional plant nurseries installed by FAO.

Planting of the greenhouses:

The installed and upgraded greenhouses (four plant nursery greenhouses, 50 crop production greenhouses and 40 upgraded greenhouses) will begin planting for fall crops in September. Given the new technologies that are to be introduced within the project, and in order to maximize impact, the greenhouse project beneficiaries shall undergo extensive trainings and will serve as trainers to other greenhouse farmers in Lebanon.