



AID DEVELOPMENTS

Islamic Development Bank supports infrastructure sector in Lebanon

On 31 December 2012, the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) and the Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR) signed a loan agreement for \$ 20.33 million for upgrading the infrastructure of the city of Saida. The project covers the improvement of infrastructure services in three areas in Saida city, namely the commercial area located West of Riad El Solh road, Sit Nafissa area and Al Taamir.

European Union supports the agricultural sector in Lebanon

On 28 January 2013, the Ministry of Agriculture, the European Union and Kafalat signed a grant agreement on small loans for agricultural and rural development for Euro 3.5 million. The project entitled Credit for Agricultural and Rural Development (CARD scheme), is part of the Agricultural and Rural Development Program, a European Union-funded initiative. The program aims at increasing access to credit by small-scale farmers and agricultural cooperatives and will complement the Kafalat agriculture guarantee scheme. The small credit scheme will include two financial products, one targeting short-term loans up to Euro 35,000 and another meeting long-term credit needs of the sector, including tree farming. Rural women and young farmers will be the main target groups for the project. With the cumulative European Union and Kafalat contributions totaling Euro 7 million, the fund could guarantee up to Euro 36 million of loans due to the multiplier effect offered by the guarantee fund mechanism.

European Union increases its support to the judicial system

On 28 January 2013, the European Union and the Judicial Studies Institute launched a new program funded by the European Union for the training of all Lebanese judicial actors. The launch took place in the presence of the Minister of Justice, Minister of State for Administrative Reform, the Head of Delegation of the European Union, ambassadors of EU Member States, many personalities from the judiciary, and as well members of the European consortium that provides public expertise in the field of justice. The program is specifically designed to contribute to the professionalization of all stakeholders in the Lebanese judiciary. This initiative, which benefits from Euro 900,000 from the European Union, will promote exchanges between actors, particularly judicial counterparts from European countries where legal systems are close to the Lebanese system.

European Union continues the support programme to local authorities

On 29 January 2013, the European Union and representatives of nine unions of municipalities and of municipalities launched their projects funded by the European Union. Following a call for proposals in 2012, unions of municipalities and municipalities were granted financial support from the European Union totaling Euro 620,000. The selected communities are the Union of Municipalities of Jezzine, Union of Municipalities of Hermel, Union of Municipalities of Jabal Amel, Municipality of Hermel, Municipality of Izza (Nabatieh caza), Municipality of Hammama, Municipality of El Mina (Tripoli), Municipality of Zgharta and Commune Odos (France) in collaboration with the Association for the Development of Rural Capacities (ADR). The main objectives of the newly funded projects are to strengthen the capacity of the municipalities and unions of municipalities in terms of planning, financial management, procurement, project design and supervision, and to increase the efficiency of municipalities in services delivery. The awarded projects cover a wide range of socio-economic activities in the fields of environment, housing and eco-tourism, urban planning, culture as well as community development.



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Italy allocates a fund for communities affected by the Syrian crisis

In January 2013, the Government of Italy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, allocated a fund of Euro 400,000 (previously approved on 19 October 2012) to the Italian Cooperation Office in Beirut, to carry out direct-managed interventions and launch a call for proposals to NGOs in the framework of the emergency intervention AID 9931. Interventions aim at providing relief to communities affected by the Syrian crisis.

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AID COORDINATION

Lebanese Government continues to support the displaced Syrians

On 27 January 2013, the League of Arab States convened at the level of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to discuss the approach to the problems of Syrian displaced persons in the region. In this meeting, Lebanon, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Social Affairs, requested the help of the Arab countries to cope with the humanitarian emergency.

On 30 January 2013, Kuwait hosted the first international donor conference for Syrian displaced to look into pledges for assistance and funds to the Syrian population inside and outside Syria and support the hosting countries in the region. In this meeting, donors pledged \$ 1.5 billion, which will be channeled through international humanitarian organizations operating in these countries.

Meanwhile, the Government of Lebanon pursues the implementation of its plan with limited national resources available, and in addition funds from different donors following the extensive mobilization undertaken by the Government. The European Union declared an additional contribution of Euro 30 million, to be dispatched soon. A contribution of \$10 million by Norway, additional to a previous initial commitment, was announced by the Assistant Minister of Development in a conference on shelter management organized lately by the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). Both assistance will mainly support the activities of UN agencies already operating in cooperation with Ministries of Education, Social Affairs and Health. The Islamic Republic of Iran donated in kind 30,000 family rations of food, non-food items and blankets to be distributed by the High Relief Committee (HRC) to Syrian displaced and Syrian Palestinian refugee families. Distribution will be done in phases; HRC is keen to reach families that were not registered so far and are not included in any scheme of assistance.

The number of registered displaced families increased by 1,200 per day in January 2013 and reached 220,000 at end-January 2013. As the options for sheltering the displaced families are becoming very limited, shelter experts are searching for buildings to rent and/or renovate as collective shelters for new arrivals, while looking at the option of establishing transitional reception sites in case of a massive influx.

Second EU-Lebanon Cooperation Days to take place in UNESCO Palace

On 18 and 19 March 2013, the European Delegation to Lebanon -in close collaboration with the EU Member States -will organize the second EU-Lebanon Cooperation Days. This two-day event will be open to all interested audiences and will provide a unique opportunity for Lebanese and EU partners to showcase their activities, present their results, extend their professional networks and increase their knowledge about EU-Lebanon cooperation in general. Whilst the exhibition area will be composed of various thematic booths, a series of panel debates and question and answer sessions will elaborate several topics in more depth. The sectors that will be covered in this event range from Economic Development, Human Rights and Governance, to Social and Cultural Development and Heritage, Humanitarian Aid, and many more. For more information contact: silke.hofs@eeas.europa.eu