



International
Labour
Organization

► ILO interventions in Lebanon's agricultural sector

Key areas of support, partnerships, and implementation

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► The agricultural sector at a glance: context, challenges, opportunities and activities

Lebanon's agriculture faces deep structural challenges, fragmented land, limited finance, outdated practices, weak markets, and informality, worsened by economic crisis and regional conflict. Productivity and decent jobs remain limited, especially for smallholders, women, and Syrian workers. Despite these constraints, the sector remains a vital pillar of rural livelihoods, food security, and export potential, employing a significant share of the workforce, including women and Syrian workers. There are also pockets of innovation and resilience, with farmers, cooperatives, and agribusinesses increasingly adopting climate-smart practices, diversification, and value-added production.

The ILO applies a market-led, systems-based approach to enhance productivity, resilience, and inclusiveness through interventions in value chain development, access to finance, infrastructure,

occupational safety and health (OSH), cooperative strengthening, and labour governance. By building on local strengths and fostering partnerships among government, workers, employers, and communities, these efforts aim to transform Lebanon's agriculture into a driver of sustainable growth, decent work, and social stability.

1. Strengthening agricultural value chains & market system

Value Chain and Market System Development Assessment: A national assessment identifies high-potential value chains in Bekaa and Akkar for export growth and job creation. It analyses production, market linkages, competitiveness, working conditions, and systemic constraints to design targeted interventions.

Access to Finance for Farmers: A revolving loan fund with Al Majmoua piloted subsidized loans (US \$1.33 M / 419 loans), training over 1,500 farmers and workers in financial literacy and business skills. Around 2,000 jobs were created or sustained (70% for Syrians). The next step is to link finance directly to value-chain interventions.

Expanding Export Market Access: With the Ministry of Agriculture and the Chambers of Commerce, the ILO developed export guidelines and training on Responsible Business Conduct. The initiative improved the quality of stone fruits, linked farmers with buyers in the European Union and the Gulf, and promoted fair working conditions. In 2024, it supported 145 farmers and 774 workers, achieving higher prices through new buyers. In 2025, participation expanded to more than 150 farmers.



Lebanese and Syrian workers prepare the soil for new seedlings in a modern ILO-supported greenhouse in Lebanon. (Elisa Oddone, December 19, 2024)

Expanding Local Market Access: Through contract farming, 15 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) were supported and 35 agreements signed between farmers and processors ensuring fair pricing and stable markets.

Improving Productivity & Technology Adoption: Six Lebanese manufacturers upgraded capacity to produce multi-span greenhouses, increasing yields by 40%. Smart irrigation and fertigation pilots achieved up to 50% savings in water and fertilizer. Technologies are now available via local agropharmacies.

Solar Energy in Agriculture: The ILO connects solar providers and cooperatives to tailor affordable clean-energy solutions, cutting costs and emissions.

Entrepreneurship & Agribusiness: Over 300 farmers and SMEs trained in business planning under the “Improve Your Agri-Business” (IYAB) programme. The ILO, Ministry of Agriculture and Neopreneur launched Souk El 10452, linking farmers directly with consumers nationwide.

2. Supporting agricultural infrastructure - Employment-intensive programme (EIIP)

The ILO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Green Plan, implements environmentally sustainable public works to rehabilitate agricultural land and infrastructure. The initiative enhances productivity and climate resilience while creating green jobs for Lebanese and Syrian workers. To date, 1,870 farmers have benefited, generating 216,600 working days for 4,362 workers (17 percent women and 3 percent persons with disabilities), while the current phase targets 420 farmers and about 50,000 additional working days.



A Syrian woman pauses from her work in the field in North Lebanon. (Elisa Oddone, December 5, 2024)

3. Occupational safety & health (OSH) in agriculture

National OSH Guide Integration: Training of Trainers for 85 extension officers; farmer sessions reached 300 participants.

Greenhouse-specific OSH Tools: Practical guidelines and infographics to reduce accidents and improve working environments.

4. Strengthening cooperative systems & institutional capacities

Digital Cooperative Database and Digitization: In partnership with Directorate General of Cooperatives (DGCOOP), the ILO is updating and digitizing the national database to enable data-driven planning and improved coordination. Assessment and system design to be finalized by Nov 2025.

Cooperatives Tackling Social Issues: Strengthening DGCOOP and cooperatives to help detect and prevent child labour through awareness and community-based mechanisms.

5. Promoting decent work & fair recruitment in agriculture

Fair Recruitment Assessment: Evaluated shawish/wakeel (labour brokerage) systems against ILO guidelines recommendations to pilot agricultural service companies ensuring transparent hiring.

Labour Formalisation & Social Health Protection: In collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Agriculture, the ILO is piloting a flexible work-permit scheme to promote formal employment and extending social health protection as an incentive for formalisation. Joint consultations with both ministries identified key barriers, set digitalisation priorities, and established inter-ministerial mechanisms for follow-up and coordination.

6. Addressing child labour in agriculture

Child Protection and Support: 300 children in the worst forms of child labour received case management and protection cash; 600 at-risk children accessed psychosocial support, and 100 adolescents received OSH training.

Family Empowerment: 100 caregivers benefited from Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) training and grants, while 100 older siblings were linked to skills training and job opportunities.

Community Mobilization: Awareness campaigns and strengthened Child Labour Committees in Akkar, North, and Bekaa improved local coordination.

Policy and Institutional Action: The ILO reactivated the National Child Labour Steering Committee, updated the National Action Plan, and trained ministries, NGOs, and social partners on prevention and case identification.