

CONTEXT

The Syrian crisis has greatly affected Jordan and Lebanon on various levels: economic, social and political. With high levels of unemployment, especially among youth, and an unfavourable business environment, SMEs face an additional challenge of providing decent employment to both national and Syrian workers. Such challenges call for a targeted intervention that could help increase the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs in a context of massive influx of Syrian refugees.

OBJECTIVES

The project aims to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of SMEs in the agro-food and printing and packaging sectors in Jordan and Lebanon by improving industrial relations and worker representation. Specifically, it targets:

- SMEs with capacity building programmes to improve working conditions, productivity and business management;
- Employers' and workers' organizations to ensure a more sustainable and conducive business environment.

COUNTRIES



Jordan



Lebanon

2 SECTORS



Agro-Food



Printing & Packaging

PROJECT PARTNERS



Jordan Chamber of Industry
General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions



Association of Lebanese Industrialists
National Federation of Unions for Workers and Employees

STATUS



ONGOING

DURATION



January /
December
2015

BENEFICIARIES



Enterprises

29



Agro-Food

15



Printing & Packaging

14



24



16



08



PROJECT PHASES



INCEPTION PHASE: Endorsement by project partners, employers' and workers' organizations, in Jordan and Lebanon.



PRE-INTERVENTION ASSESSMENT PHASE: Assessment of selected enterprises in the agro-food and printing and packaging sectors to measure and assess their performance and needs in terms of workplace improvement and business management before ILO capacity building intervention.



CAPACITY BUILDING PHASE: Training of trainers and training of enterprises on improving working conditions, productivity and business management.



COACHING AND FOLLOW-UP PHASE: Coaching visits to selected enterprises and information collection to monitor progress after ILO capacity building intervention.



POST-INTERVENTION ASSESSMENT PHASE: Assessment of selected enterprises to evaluate the impact of ILO intervention on productivity and competitiveness.



FINAL REPORT: A study will be developed to make the case for an effective intervention combining workplace improvement and business management and its impact on SME productivity and competitiveness in Jordan and Lebanon.

ENTERPRISE BASELINE ASSESSMENT RESULTS

PROFILE OF ENTERPRISES

		
MAIN SUB-SECTORS	Agro-Food Dairy, Confectionery, Baked Products	Printing & Packaging Hygienic Paper Packaging, Plastic Packaging
AVERAGE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	45 	56 
GENDER DISTRIBUTION	13% 	13% 
EXPORTS	30% 	15% 

		
MAIN SUB-SECTORS	Agro-Food Dairy, Confectionery, Baked Products	Printing & Packaging Printing, Digital Printing
AVERAGE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES	58 	40 
GENDER DISTRIBUTION	25% 	22% 
EXPORTS	30% 	12% 

PRODUCTIVITY AN ALIEN CONCEPT

The majority of selected enterprises do not undertake productivity measurement nor are they familiar with such concept. SME managers are more concerned about delivering required orders rather than setting productivity targets to improve efficiency. For enterprises that measure productivity, a lot of elements such as training of workers and machinery depreciation are missing.

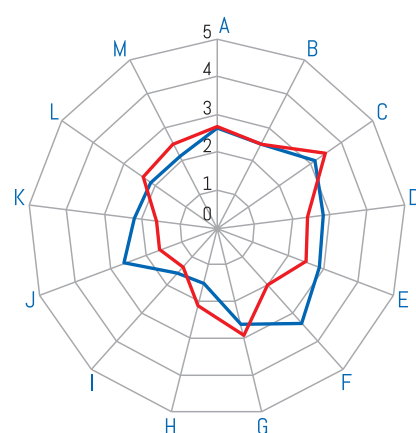
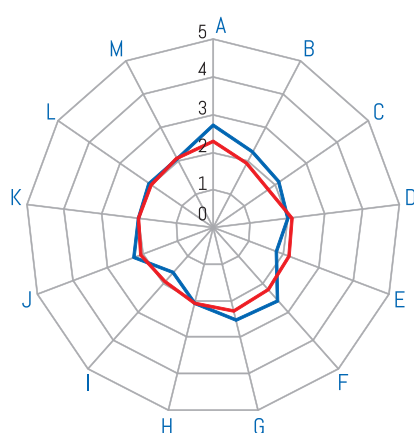
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IS LIMITED TO RECRUITING AND PAYING WAGES WITH NO SYSTEMATIC APPROACH

- + Limited communication between employers and workers: absence of team meetings, provision of feedback and information sharing.
- + Lack of formalized procedures to manage and motivate workers such as clear job descriptions, organization charts, performance evaluations, orientation and incentives.
- + Absence of formalized procedures to manage wages and benefits such as salary scale systems, fair compensation packages, and promotion schemes.
- = High employee turnover and absenteeism rates

MARKETING IS CONFUSED WITH SALES AND BASED ON A REACTIVE RATHER THAN PLANNED APPROACH

- + The marketing function is handled by the general manager/owner and limited to the utilization of his/her personal networks.
- + Absence of robust marketing strategies across sampled enterprises: marketing plan, market segmentation, targeting, positioning, product development and innovation are missing practices.
- + Limited market intelligence and research on industry trends, competition, and political/economic developments.
- = Decrease of sales turnover and loss of market shares

WORKING CONDITIONS IN SELECTED ENTERPRISES



The assessment of working conditions is based on the ILO Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE) training program.

— Agro-food — Printing and Packaging

A. Materials Storage and Handling
 B. Workstation Design
 C. Productive Machine Safety
 D. Control of Hazardous Substances
 E. Lighting

F. Work-related Welfare Facilities
 G. Premises
 H. Understanding Productivity
 I. Managing and Motivating Workers
 J. Designing and Managing Work Time

K. Managing Wages and Benefits
 L. Family-friendly Measures
 M. Creating a Respectful Workplace

Indicators: structured around five levels, 1 weakest, 5 strongest.