



Expertise France Grant - Syria Program Evaluation

Final Report
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Introduction

In December 2018, Expertise France (EF) started planning for the implementation of a program in North-East Syria, in Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates. The program aimed at:

1. Identifying and strengthening local civil partners to improve the living conditions of the conflict-affected populations;
2. Improving resilience and coping mechanisms of communities and individuals through the development and management of sustainable (longer-term) and/or highly efficient short-term delivery projects through local civil partners.

As a result, grants were allocated to eleven local organizations as implementing partners that implemented activities within livelihoods (agriculture and vocational skills training) and rehabilitation sectors. These livelihood activities were implemented from April 2019 to October 2019, with an average budget of 25,000€ per each of the funded implementing partner. This evaluation mainly aimed at assessing the efficiency of the grants. The evaluation further assessed the relevance, impact and sustainability of specific project deliverables of each implementing partner. The evaluation findings are expected to support EF in validating interventions, readjust future similar projects, collect data and identify lessons learned for the implementation of such grants either as upscaling or replication in future.

Assessment Objectives

The overall objective of this evaluation assignment was to provide a post-project evaluation report for the overall program. The evaluation estimated the efficiency/impact of each of the eleven project activities/grants, particularly towards livelihoods and rehabilitation sustainability. The report focuses on: General introduction about the evolution of the context during the duration of the project; Evaluation of each project activity/grant followed by recommendations per sector.

The evaluation was drawn upon the following questions for each project:

- **For agriculture grants:** did the beneficiaries improve their livelihoods during the project? Did the livelihood status improve in three months after the end of the project?
- **For training grants:** did the beneficiaries find an occupation/job after the training related to the training? Did their livelihoods increase? Did they find the training useful?
- **For rehabilitation grants:** Were the infrastructures still functioning three months after the end of the grants? Were the infrastructures providing the expected outputs?

Methodology

The information used for the evaluation was from the following sources

Desk Review:

All project documents shared by EF and the eleven implementing partners were reviewed. This included concept notes, final reports, project documents, and Monitoring and Evaluation documents.

Context Analysis:

Broad context analysis of Raqqa and Deir-E-Zor governorates of Syria covering the period of December 2018 through October 2019.

Semi-structured Interviews with Project Managers:

Representatives from each of the eleven implementing partners were interviewed regarding project activity planning, monitoring and evaluation approaches, project impact, sustainability measures, and project efficiency and effectiveness. Collectively the information was analyzed, along with project documents. For rehabilitation projects, partners were asked to revisit the rehabilitated sites and evaluate their current situation.

Limitations

1. The evaluation was based on the final reports of the implemented projects and interviewing the projects managers, and the rehabilitation sites were visited by the program team. Field data collection was not possible due to security reasons and limited timeframe. Therefore, the information collected from the project managers were not triangulated with field observations and data.
2. Interviewing program beneficiaries was a challenge, due to the limited time frame, and unreliable internet connection.

Results

I. Geo-political Context Analysis

The following is a general introduction on the prevailing political, social, and humanitarian conditions in the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF)-held territories in the governorates of Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor for the period 2018 – 2019. This introduction provides a general context of the overall political situation, identifies key stakeholders, and, lastly, addresses sectoral data pertinent to Expertise France’s programming in these locales.

Key Takeaways

- Following successful military operations in Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates, the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) replaced the Islamic State (ISIS) in territories north and east of the Euphrates River.
- Military operations have resulted in dramatic loss of life, property, infrastructures, and displacement. For instance, fighting over Ar-Raqqa City rendered more than eighty percent of its urban space virtually uninhabitable.
- The progressive de-escalation of the conflict since Ar-Raqqa’s liberation in December 2017 and, more recently, Deir ez-Zor in February 2019, have led to improved access of humanitarian partners in both governorates. However, humanitarian actors still face significant information gaps determining priority needs, population movements of IDPs and returnees, impact on host communities, and cross-sectoral needs of conflict-affected communities.

Population Movement

SDF-held areas in Ar Raqqa and Deir ez Zor governorates north of the Euphrates river held comparatively less IDP camps than elsewhere in Syria. In Deir ez Zor, the biggest camp is in Abu Khashab in the northern edges of the governorate. Opened in 2017, the first residents arrived in November of that year and by December 2018 its population had grown to 4,115 individuals, or 728 households.¹ In May 2019, the size of camp and its population grew nearly a third to 6,295 residents, or 1,167 households. The average tenure in the camp also increased from 9 months to about 11 months.² Further south, smaller informal camps, collective centers, and transit points dot the northern banks of the Euphrates and Khabour rivers. There are an estimated 21 collective centers and 6 tent cities with a reported total population of 3,724 residents in December 2018. For the most part, the majority of Deir ez Zor IDPs were relocated toward safer locations in Al Hasakeh governorate, although a minority preferred to remain on site in case conditions allowed return to areas of origin. Indeed, this became possible after the defeat of ISIS.

¹ REACH Syria Factsheet, “Camp and Informal Sites Profiles, Northeast Syria” December 2018, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/reach_syr_factsheet_northeastysria_campandinformalsiteprofilesroun_d4_allprofiles_feb2019.pdf

² REACH Syria Factsheet, “Camp Profile: Abu Khashab, Deir ez Zor Governorate,” April-May 2019, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/reach_syr_factsheet_northeastysria_campandinformalsiteprofilesroun_d5_abukhashab_jul2019.pdf

Ar Raqqa possesses two similarly large camps, in Ein Issa and Twahina. Ein Issa, the largest of the two, was first established in 2016 and, by May 2019, its population had expanded to 12,901 individuals or 2,092 households. An extension camp, built in 2017, grew a year later to 12,226 individuals and contained, in part, family members of ISIS fighters. In contrast, Twahina's population in October 2019 stood considerably smaller, at 1491 individuals, or 274 households.³ Although in need of significant assistance, given the relatively lower intensity of conflict in Northeastern Syria at the time, the situation of IDPs in these camps was comparatively better than elsewhere in Syria. Ein Issa's households, for instance, reportedly enjoyed a high level (96%) of financial independence, and thus food security, primarily resulting from humanitarian aid and cash assistance (57%), supplemented by employment outside the camp (32%), and cash for work programs (26%).⁴ For the same, Abu Khashab and Twahina reported even higher levels of financial independence, respectively 100% and 99%.⁵ This afforded residents the ability to buy goods as needed rather than rely entirely on humanitarian food baskets. Indeed, a majority even enjoyed the freedom to buy on credit.⁶ Relatively similar positive conditions are cited for all clusters including health, shelter, NFI, WASH, education, and etc.

In the period since the liberation of Ar-Raqqa from ISIS, spontaneous movements of both IDPs and returnees continue. Thus, in November 2017 the recorded human population of the governorate in SDF-held territories stood at 541,812 people. In December 2018, numbers decreased to 515,349 and remained roughly at the same level until October 2019. The greatest variance of spontaneous movements was observed in the population of Ar-Raqqa city. Although such population estimates should be treated with caution, there is some consensus among operational partners of a dramatic outflux from the city during the last stages of the conflict and massive returns thereafter. In July 2017, Ar-Raqqa city's population was estimated at between 20–50,000 people, or less than half what it was in early June. Five months later, in November, that number had dropped to less than 5,000. By October 2019, the population of the city had exponentially increased to 156,870.

In the SDF-held portion of the Deir ez-Zor governorate, the estimated population ticked up by 8 percent, from 384,163 in November 2017, to 417,521 in December 2018, before declining to 368,443 in October 2019. In May 2019 the estimated number of IDPs stood at more than 77,000, despite a large number of spontaneous movements toward the Al Hasakeh governorate since January 2019. The overwhelming majority of these IDPs – mostly women and children – are sheltered at the Al Hawl refugee camp at the border with the Al Hasakeh governorate.

³ REACH Syria Factsheet, "Camp Profile: Twahina, Ar Raqqa Governorate," April-May 2019, https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/reach_syr_factsheet_northeastysyria_campandinformalsiteprofilesround5_einissaoriginal_jul2019.pdf

⁴ REACH, Ein Issa, 2019

⁵ REACH, Abu Khashab, 2018; Ein Issa, 2019.

⁶ Ibid.

Key Stakeholder Profiling

1. Civilian Bodies

The Self-Administration of North and East Syria (SNES), is the multiethnic federated territory in northeastern Syria—most of which is located north and east of the Euphrates River. Its overall administrative structure has undergone multiple reorganizations, in large part the result of pressure from the US to create a broad-based alliance as a political-military counterweight to ISIS and subsequent military successes of the SDF. The population of SNES is diverse, predominantly Arab in Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor, but increasingly Kurdish further north, closer to the Turkish border. Pockets of significant Assyrian, Turkmen, and Armenian minorities exist throughout.

Syrian Democratic Council (SDC) is the political wing of the SDF established in December 2015. It is a largely secular and multiethnic body whose leadership represents different and many Kurdish, Arab, Turkmen and Assyrian political parties. The SDC led past efforts to determine administrative divisions, set up local governance entities to shape its vision of a federal Syria, and organized elections. Its primary task is to coordinate and oversee the governance structures within SNES.

Democratic Civil Administration of Ar-Raqqa (DCAR), is an SDC-formed body of local governance in Ar-Raqqa. It grew from, and replaced, the Ar-Raqqa Civil Council (RCC), in an effort to restructure its constituent offices, expand government participation in Ar-Raqqa, and streamline its institutional capacity. The result was the creation of Legislative and Executive Councils and a series of committees with better defined roles.

Democratic Civil Administration of Deir ez-Zor (DCADZ), is Deir ez-Zor's equivalent of Ar-Raqqa's DCAs. In contrast to DCAR, where the Arab population has voiced complaints of an overrepresentation of Kurds in local governance, DCADZ membership is overwhelmingly Arab. Since late 2018, prominent tribal notables from the Al-Baggara tribe – the largest tribe in Syria with branches in Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey – and the Al Uqaydat tribe have also been included within its ranks.

2. Military and Security

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) is the military arm of the SNES. It is an umbrella organization that includes different militias of many factions, but whose core strength consists of the People's Protection Units (**YPG**), the Women's Protection Units (**YPJ**). Before the consolidation of the broader multiethnic alliance, the YPG/YPJ existed as the military arm of the PYD. In addition to these core groups, more provided direct support for military operations in Raqqa.

Internal Security Forces (ISF), are a security force operating in SNES. Recognized by that name in Arab majority locales in the Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates, in Kurdish-majority areas they are called **Asayish**. Thus, for instance, ISF service members in Ar-Raqqa are 80% Arab and 20% Kurdish. Their main task is to oversee security in both urban and rural areas. Trained by CJTF-OIR, the first batch of graduates became operational in Ar-Raqqa and later to Deir ez-Zor. Each subdistrict in both governorates operates

its own ISF base, which, in turn, reports to the defense committees of the executive councils of its respective DCA. Although primarily a rear security force they have, on occasion, engaged in direct combat duties as well.

CJTF-OIR, or the Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve, is the US-led international coalition that proved to be vital link to SDF’s growth and military successes against ISIS. Under CJTF-OIR aegis, the SDF received significant training, equipment, funding, technical experience, and direct combat support.

Sectoral Considerations

1. Situated on the fertile banks of the Euphrates River, on a steppe landscape, the **Economy** of SDF-held Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates traditionally relied on agricultural (crops and animal husbandry) production. Other forms of income included remittances and regional trade. Ar-Raqqa governorate’s inhabitants were reportedly the poorest with 91.6% of its population living below the poverty line. Among the most commonly cited problems that affect the return to stable economic productivity are inflated prices, loss of markets, lack of fertilizers, extensive damages to the irrigation network by the conflict, and weather variability marked by excessive rainfall followed by lengthy droughts. Indeed, the last two factors are primary culprits for low agricultural yields in both locales. As a result, even as price levels have stabilized since mid-2018, food items continue to be less affordable. In Deir ez-Zor governorate, the primary source of income in the Hajin, Basira, Thiban, Susat, and Sur subdistricts is remittances, followed by livestock and crops. In Kisreh, the situation is the exact reverse.
2. **Protection** will remain a priority need for humanitarian partners in both SDF-held portions of the Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates for the foreseeable future. Improved access in both governorates, has afforded humanitarian partners a better understanding of key protection issues. In 2019, in both governorates, the most commonly and universally held children protection risks are early marriage and child labor (younger than 16 years-old). In the subdistricts of Basira and Sur of the Deir ez-Zor’s governorate, residents cite the high cost of transportation as a barrier to movement. The rest of the subdistricts, however, cite no such barrier. In contrast, in Ar-Raqqa, theft and arbitrary conscription into armed groups are cited as most problematic. Child labor is perceived to be the most prevalent child protection issue in the city itself. Other issues include drug abuse among the unemployed youth, gender-based violence (GBV), and threats from unexploded ordinance and mines.
3. Closely related to protection, the state of **education** remains rudimentary in both Der ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa governorates. The overall estimated attendance rate in both governorates continues to decrease, and, as of the first quarter of 2019, IDP children frequent schools at much lower rate than the host community. Persistent problems affecting attendance are varied. In Kisreh, impediments include, first, child labor and obligations assumed by them as head of households, second, traditional norms like early marriage, and, lastly, lack of opportunities to pursue

education. East of Kisreh, in Hajin, Basira, Thiban, Susat, and Sur, impediments include first, lack or poor conditions of facilities, second, absence of teaching materials and teachers, and lastly, customary traditional norms. The same trends are observed in Ar-Raqqa as well.

4. **Electricity** remains a priority need in both Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates. Although located near the Euphrates River and the Tabqa Dam, the largest hydroelectric dam in Syria, years of conflict have undermined the latter's capacity to generate and provide sufficient electricity. Recent improvements have succeeded in partially rehabilitating the network in Ar-Raqqa City. Only the residents of the Meshleb and Andalus neighborhoods, however, report an average access of 10-12 hours per day. Elsewhere in the city, communal generators are the main source of energy, but access is conditional upon monthly usage fees. Depending on availability per neighborhood, these vary between 4,000 – 6,000 Syrian Pounds (SYP). Elsewhere in the governorate similar conditions and mixed reliance on either the main network or communal generators are reported. In Deir ez-Zor, communal generators are the most commonly cited source of electricity, providing an average of four hours per day. The central Sur and Basira subdistricts tend to fall within the higher margin of this average (3-4 hours), whereas the northern and southern Kisreh, Hajin, Thiban, Susat, report lower averages (1-2 hours).

Post-Programming Political Developments

Expertise France's end of programming in Northeastern Syria on 1 October coincided with the Turkish Peace Spring offensive in the region. On 9 October, Turkey began heavy airstrikes and artillery bombardment, targeting the SDF-held border towns of Tell Abyad and Ras Al Ayn, respectively in the Ar Raqqa and Hassakeh governorates. Ground operations began a day later, on 10 October, resulting in severe clashes between Turkish-led and aligned forces on the one hand, and the SDF on the other. Despite active local resistance, the Turkish-led offensive proceeded apace and, on 14 October, Tell Abyad fell. On 17 and 22 October, Russia and the United States separately signed agreements with Turkey to first, stem the fallout from the latter's operations and second, pressure the YPG to acquiesce to a 30 kilometers-deep "safe zone" in northern Syria. Yet, while the SDF announced that it would abide with both agreements, Turkey did not. Consequently, it continued its offensive, engaging both the SAA and SDF forces. A brief ceasefire on 17 October sponsored by the United States, and agreed to by Turkey, to allow the SDF to withdraw from the would-be Turkish-held "safe zone" did not see an appreciable decline in hostilities. Ultimately, however, on 20 October, the YPG withdrew from Ras Al Ayn.

The offensive's fallout was significant for a number of reasons. First, an estimated 70,000 people fled the Turkish-Syrian border areas, adding to the IDP numbers in Northeastern Syria. Second, most humanitarian partners withdrew their staff, thus limiting access, endangering continued programming, and risking aid diversion, at least in the short term. Third, although the United States had already announced the withdrawal of most military personnel ahead of the Turkish offensive, it now sped up that process. Nonetheless, seeking to deny GoS, Russia, and/or ISIL access to the oil fields in eastern Syria, the US began deploying conventional mechanized forces on location. Despite this, the US' partial withdrawal did create

a vacuum in the region which Turkey, GoS, and Russia sought to fill. Fourth, the offensive led to a temporary rapprochement between Turkey and Russia on 22 October, which produced a 10-point memorandum. Called the Sochi Agreement, this memorandum reaffirmed the need for the “safe zone,” called for the withdrawal of YPG from the area, and included a number of stipulations that increased Russian and Turkish influence. Fifth, following the capture of Tell Abyad by Turkish forces and the Free Syrian Army, the SDF reached an agreement with GoS, whereby the former would allow the SAA to establish a foothold in several SDF-held cities and act as a future deterrent against any possible Turkish military expansion beyond the “safe zone.”

II. Evaluation of Rehabilitation Projects

A. **Partner's Name:** ENMA

Project Name: School Rehabilitation **Governorate:** Ar-Raqqa

Project overview

ENMA organization targeted three different schools in Al-Karama sub-district for rehabilitation work, where local authorities and the local council's Education Committee were consulted to prioritize which schools were most in need of rehabilitation. The organization's manager revealed in his interview, the organization regularly hosts social meetings with community leaders and the different Local Council⁷ committees to ensure the organization's interventions are aligned with the needs of the community.

Al-Maraid, Al-Oruba and Al Hamra Ghanam schools were selected. Accordingly, ENMA conducted a primary needs assessment in coordination with the Local Council's Education Committee to identify the rehabilitation requirements for each school and developed a work plan based on the allocated budget.

Relevance

As of November 2018, the aftermath of the ISL occupation left Ar-Raqqa city with 87% partially damaged schools and 6% totally or severely damaged schools.⁸ As a result of the high influx of internally displaced people in Ar-Raqqa governorate, and the fact that many families returned to Ar-Raqqa after the liberation, more pressure was induced on local schools in villages to host a higher number of students. The three schools were prioritized on that basis, for instance, one of the targeted schools is the only school in the village and the closest operating school is 3km away. The main goal of the project was to increase the capacities of the selected schools.

Impact

The organization's project manager reported in his interview that the number of students and teachers in each school increased upon the end of the rehabilitation work. The number of students in Al-Mareih school increased by 125 students; AL Oruba school by 65; and Al-Hamra Ghanam school by 75. It was also



Picture 1 Rehabilitation work in Al-Maraid School

⁷ In the program evaluation section "Local Council" refers to Democratic Civil Administration of Ar-Raqqa/Deir ez-Zor

⁸ Urban Analysis Network, Urban Syria, "Ar-Raqqa City Profile May 2019"

reported that, the rehabilitation work focused on making the schools more accessible to students with a physical disability, by installing ramps in school buildings.

The project had an inclusive short-term impact on the communities from another dimension, where workers from the local community were hired to perform the rehabilitation work. A total of 103 people were hired of which 25% were women. The selected workers were experienced painters, carpenters, blacksmiths and construction workers. The rehabilitation project had a double pronged aspect of positive impact on the livelihoods of the targeted people, provided a short-term livelihood support with temporary employment to people from vulnerable Syrian households including at least 25% of the targeted people being women.

Sustainability

The organization handed and passed the rehabilitated sites to the Local Council's Education Committee. The agreement was officiated through a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed by both parties, in September 2019. This ensures that the rehabilitated sites will remain regulated and monitored after the completion of the project. With higher levels of enrollment as influenced by rehabilitation, this translate to more school children fees paid to the school for the purpose of operation and maintenance of the school. This will go a long way for the school to be able to self-generate funds to maintain its infrastructure.

B. Partner's Name: Furat Al Amal for Education

Project Name: Buds of Hope

Governorate: Deir ez-Zor

Project Overview

The project targeted the rehabilitation of a school that was severely impacted by war activities and had a number of facilities destroyed. The targeted school is in Deri ez-Zor Governorate, Kisreh sub-district. Similar to ENMA's project, the coordination was through Kisreh's Education Committee. Furat Al-Amal had limited experience in rehabilitation work, therefore the organization consulted Sanad, an experienced organization in construction and rehabilitation projects, which is one of EF partners in another project.

Relevance

Deir ez-Zor governorate has recently been liberated from the Islamic State, where the recovery from the aftermath of ISL control is still evident in many of the villages. Several school facilities were targets in the war and some of the school facilities were destroyed. For the targeted school in this project, the school's external walls were demolished during ISIS occupation. This issue and other internal rehabilitation needs were addressed in this project.

Impact

The direct evident impact on the school was the increased number of students upon the completion of the rehabilitation work. Interviews with the organization manager revealed that the number of students reached 450 students from 400. However, this number was not validated with the school principal as he refused to be interviewed due to personal security reasons.

Sustainability

Following ENMAA's approach, Furat Al-Amal signed an MoU with the Education Committee handing full responsibility for maintaining and monitoring the rehabilitated sites after the completion of the project.

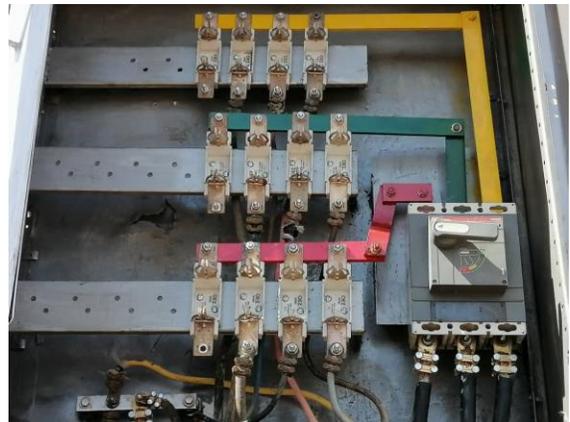
C. Partner's Name: New Horizons

Project Name: Electricity Rehabilitation

Governorate: Ar-Raqqa

Project Overview

The project worked on rehabilitating electrical public networks in two different villages, in Hettin community in Ar-Raqqa. Two electrical transformers were installed in Hettin village and Shaneeneh Shamali village, with a capacity of 400KVA and 100 KVA respectively. The selection of the two villages was in coordination with the Energy and Communication committee, who prioritized the highly populated villages that host the most vulnerable people. The project manager revealed through the interview that for every project the organization implements, the organization collect secondary information, interview community leaders, conduct field visits to validate the information with the actual situation on the ground and design the activities accordingly.



Picture 2 New transformer installed in Hettin Village

Relevance

According to the project manager, prior to New Horizons interventions, Hitten village was partially connected to the public electricity grid with only 3 out of the 4 neighborhoods in the village connected. As for, Shaneeneh Shamali the entire village was disconnected from public electricity. People in these areas used to depend on personal generators or shared generators that were being operated by various communities or private investors. This induced high cost on the community, where it was reported in October 2018 that the cost to access electricity supply in Ar-Raqqa ranged between 5,000 and 8,00 SYP per month with daily access between 8 and 12 hours per day⁹. However, the Expertise France funded

⁹ Urban Analysis Network, Urban Syria, "Ar-Raqqa City Profile May 2019"

project managed to restore electricity coverage other areas like Shaneeneh Shamali village and parts of Hitten village.

Impact

The tangible short-term impact of the project is the household's saving from fuel expenses to run generators. Approximately about 1,745 people in both villages benefitted from the rehabilitation electric transformer. One person from Hitten reported ***“Now we are able to use all the electrical home appliances, and my family are saving a significant amount of money after we stopped using the generators”***

The organization worked on elevating the communities' knowledge about electricity consumption best practices. Several awareness sessions were conducted in addition to the distribution of flyers and brochures. Provision of electrical energy to a community would likely bring with it, other multiplier effects of promoting other livelihood options for diversified household income generation activities, women sewing using electrical machine, welding, computer technology use and refrigeration of agricultural produce etc.

Sustainability

New Horizons handed the rehabilitated sites to the Energy and Communication committee who will be responsible for maintaining and regulating the consumption. When asked about whether the rehabilitated transformers are still operating, it was reported in the project manager interview (February,2020) that both sites are still operating. With repaired electric transformers and increased electricity usage by the local people, then the local Energy authority will be able to collect electricity user fees from consumers, and this contribution of user fees will enable the local energy authority to operate and maintain the local electricity supply system in a sustainable manner.

D. Partner's Name: Together for Al-Jarnya

Project Name: Working hand in hand to restore light to our countries

Governorate: Ar-Raqqa

Project Overview

The project targeted Hawi Al-Hawa community in Ar-Raqqa. In coordination with the Energy and Communication committee, the electricity transformer that serves the entire neighborhood was replaced with 640 KVA transformer, in addition to repairing the main low-tension grid and the connections.

Relevance

The organization conducted a survey with 20 families living in the area to learn about their electricity consumption practices. The survey revealed that prior to the project, 85% of the respondents used to depend on shared generators that were run by the community, and 15% depended on personal individual electric generators. Moreover, on average families spent between 4,500 SYP to 7,500 SYP per month on

generators. It was reported that electric generators did not provide a consistent electrical current which in some cases causes damage to the electrical appliances. It was relevant and important that provision of electrical energy was restored in Hawi Al-Hawa community.

Impact

The direct impact of the project was on the families living in the targeted area who used to solely depend on fuel powered by electric generators. People reported that repairing the main electricity source in the area contributed to multiplier positive effect of flourishing trade and other industrial activities like carpentry and motor vehicle maintenance. One of the beneficiaries reported ***“The fact that my profession is car mechanical maintenance, the electricity contributed in supporting my business and enabled me to utilize all the electrical machinery in my workshop, the grinder, welding torch as well as the compressor”***

Contribution to the safety and security situation was one of the major impressions that was highlighted in the survey. Prior to the project, the number of theft incidents was higher due to the absence of streetlights and home electricity at night. People believe that the maintenance of the main electricity grid will tremendously contribute to improving the security situation.

Sustainability

Corresponding to New Horizon’s approach, together for Al-Jarnya signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Energy and Communication Committee and handed the rehabilitated electricity grid. The Energy and Communication Committee will ensure that the grid is regularly maintained and monitored. Again, with the local Energy authority collecting electric energy users’ fees, this monetary contribution will go a long way to support operation and maintenance of the local energy system. Sustainability is ensured by the capacity to self-fund the operation and maintenance of the electricity supply system

III. Evaluation of Vocational Training Projects

A. Partner's Name: Wifaq

Project Name: Carpenters for Rehabilitation

Governorate: Ar-Raqqa

Project Overview

The project had two main streams, the first stream worked on establishing and fully equipping a wood workshop. For the second stream, Wifaq worked with 25 beneficiaries from Ar-Raqqa City, where they were trained on carpentry and furniture making skills. Upon the end of the training, Wifaq selected the top-performing and most committed 10 trainees, where the ownership of the workshop was transferred to the selected trainees. The trainees are currently managing the workshop after electing a manager and accountant to lead the administration and marketing work of the project.

Wifaq selected the beneficiaries based on their income and employment status, where the most vulnerable and unemployed were selected. The organization strictly rejected applications from children under 18 years old. Amongst the 25 beneficiaries, two women participated in the training and were amongst the top 10 trainees. Both women are still working in the workshop with their other male colleagues.



Picture 3 Part of Wifaq's carpentry training

Relevance

Demolished buildings and damaged infrastructure are the most observed feature following the war in Ar-Raqqa. Reportedly in May 2018, about 36% of the housing units in Ar-Raqqa city were severely damaged or destroyed, 24% sustained moderate damage, followed by 13% encountered minor damages and 26% received no discernible damage¹⁰. Such numbers validate the project manager's statement regarding the current high demand in the market for housing rehabilitation. Moreover, Wifaq conducted interviews with market actors who confirmed the need for skilled workers in the field of rehabilitation. As a result, since the opening of the workshop, most of the requests were received for windows and doors replacement, in addition to furniture for newlyweds. The project is relevant based on the fact that as returnees' throng back into the project area they would need to access household furniture which is now locally produced and is available, thanks to the Expertise France grants initiated project.

¹⁰ Urban Analysis Network, Urban Syria, "Ar-Raqqa City Profile May 2019"

Impact

The workshop has provided the 10 beneficiaries with an opportunity to retain a sustainable income since the ownership of the workshop and equipment was transferred to them. In addition, those 10 beneficiaries have gained a competitive advantage over other competitors in the market given the machinery purchased is more advanced and modern compared to those available in other workshops. As a result, it was reported from one of the participants, that some of the technicians in the market come to the workshop to use the advanced machinery. This has generated a new revenue stream for the workshop from renting the machinery to other technicians in the market.

The project provided a great example of including women in professions that culturally are more acceptable for men. According to one of the female workers, ***“I don’t have previous experience working in carpentry, I learned from Wifaq’s training. Currently, I’m working from the morning until evening time in the workshop, we work on repairing windows and making furniture. My parents supported me from the beginning, however, it was obvious that the community around us was skeptical but now they are accepting the idea more”***-Batoul, 25 years old.

Sustainability

Wifaq will continue supporting the 10 beneficiaries in the new workshop until August 2020, from when the beneficiaries will have full autonomy over the workshop. Wifaq has been providing guidance on how to manage the workshop, distribute the effort and manage the finances. Accordingly, a manager and an accountant were elected from the 10 beneficiaries. This plan will ensure that in August 2020 the team will be trained to fully manage the workshop by themselves. Currently, the profits of the workshop are divided equally amongst the workers. The workers’ major incentive in this model is that they do not earn a monthly salary, it all depends on their efforts of targeting more customers and receiving requests.

As for the beneficiaries who were not selected to be part of the workshop team, Wifaq linked them to other organizations that are working in the rehabilitation work. So far, two have been selected by another local NGO to work in one of their rehabilitation projects.

B. Partner’s Name: Farah

Project Name: Vocational Training

Governorate: Ar-Raqqa

Project Overview

Farah provided two months of vocational training for 80 participants in the field of plumbing and blacksmith. The training had a soft skill component in addition to the technical component, and upon the end of the training 18 participants were selected for in-kind grants that included start-up equipment to encourage students to start their own business. Drop out was one of the challenges faced during the training, where the number of the final trainees who completed the training was 61.

Farah was in direct contact with the local council to ensure that the training would contribute to the gaps in the market and is in synergy with other initiatives within the community. The selected beneficiaries were between the age of 18-35, all the applicants within this age group were selected to meet the target given that the number of applications was less than expected. In addition to the training, the organization equipped and rented a space for a workshop in order to be utilized by the trainees after the end of the training.

Relevance

The project manager states during the interview, the two sectors were selected upon conducting a market assessment to identify the technical skills gaps in the market. Blacksmith and carpentry were the most needed labor skills according to interviews with employers and key informants. In addition, organization representatives discussed the current reconstruction phase Ar-Raqqa city is going through. This confirms as well with the facts mentioned earlier, that in 2018, 36% of the housing units in Ar-Raqqa city were severely damaged¹¹. Again, the project outputs of trained plumbers and blacksmith ensured that such service ideal for rehabilitation of houses and other equipment is locally available in the project location with returnees' influx trying to re-set up their homesteads.

Impact

3iS requested to contact the beneficiaries, however, Farah reported that contact with project beneficiaries had been lost since the Government of Syria (GoS) forces had announced that they might move into the SDF controlled areas in Ar-Raqqa city. Therefore, the beneficiaries had relocated to other areas as they feared being captured by the GoS to serve in the Syrian army. Accordingly, measuring impact was challenging at this point due to the limited information available regarding the beneficiary's status after the training.

Sustainability

Farah evidently had a plan to ensure continuity after the end of the project, through the workshop that was equipped, in addition to linking the graduates with employers. However, the workshop was able to sustain the business for two months only and had to eventually close due to 1) having only two beneficiaries out of the 61 utilizing the workshop; 2) the reports and rumors spread in August 2019 regarding Turkey's plan to invade the northern borders of Syria induced fear among the people living in Ar-Raqqa.

¹¹ Urban Analysis Network, Urban Syria, "Ar-Raqqa City Profile May 2019"

- C. Partner's Name:** Emma Al-Furat
Project Name: The Pantry House
Governorate: Ar-Raqqa

Project Overview

The project targeted 15 widowed and divorcee women to work on producing homemade processed food, like cheese, jams, and pickles. Emma Al-Furat rented a location that included a working space and a showroom for the women to market their products. The project plan aimed to transfer the trademark to the fifteen women, in addition to the ownership for all the purchased equipment. As for the rent, Emma Al-Furat paid the rent of the showroom for one year in advance, until August 2020, subsequently the plan is for the business to sustain itself in the future.



Picture 4 The pantry house production

The selection criteria gave priority to widowed and divorcee women; women who are head of large households; unemployed women; women with limited financial capacity; and women with relevant previous experience. The project did not include a heavy training component, as most of the women had previous experience in food processing. However, the women were given training related to business management, and personal hygiene and safety.

Relevance

Emma El-Furat was directly coordinating with the Women Committee and Local Council offices to plan activities that ensembles the status of the critically targeted group of widowed and divorced women. The aim was to come up with a project that fits well with the women's technical capacity and busy schedule at home being the head of their households. Moreover, the project manager expressed during the interview that, culturally in Ar-Raqqa governorate pickles, cheese and many other homemade processed foods are essential in every families' diet, therefore it was anticipated that the demand would be adequate to sustain the business in the future.

Impact

The direct short-term impact of the project was evident during the first two months since the women received a certain amount of cash per month. This amount of money allowed the women to focus on establishing the business in the first couple of months. After the first two months, women's income was supposed to retain from the returns of the business. However, when asked whether the business had earned any profits, the project manager expressed that by that time, their sales were barely covering the operational cost. This was attributed to the timing of the project which started in August 2019, whereas the season for processing is between March and June when fruits and vegetables can be purchased for

lower prices. Processing during the off-season limited the business's production capacity and increased the cost. The economic impact of the project was hard to measure at the time of the interview since the women were still not benefiting from the business.

Sustainability

Emma Al-Furat will continue to support managing the business until August 2020, afterward, the 15 women will be fully responsible for running their own business. In the interview, the project manager did not give a clear plan of how the profit will be distributed, or who from the 15 women will be in charge of leading the management of the project. Moreover, during the interview, it was sensed that currently the organization is leading the management and women's managerial role was limited. The major concern that was raised during the interview was whether the business will overcome the current low production and low demand in the market.

- D. Partner's Name:** The Environment Protection And Sustainable Development Organization (EPSD)
Project Name: Stronger Women
Governorate: Deir ez-Zor

Project Overview

The project targeted 15 women from three different villages in Jazaret Elbuhmeid and Jazaret Milajt Communities, in Deir ez-Zor, of which 7 out of the 15 women were internally displaced from other areas. EPSD trained the women on modern sewing techniques and granted the graduates at the end of the program a sewing machine and equipment as start-up kits. The goal is to encourage the trained women to either find a job in the textile industry or start their own business.

The targeted women were the head of their households, aged between 18 to 35 years and had limited financial capacity to meet their household needs. EPSD worked on linking the graduates with interested employers after the end of the training

Relevance

Corresponding to Emma Al-Furat's approach, EPSD consulted the Local Council and the Women Committer on selecting the sector that can accommodate the women's schedule and is culturally acceptable. Moreover, the EPSD management believed that this profession will grant the women flexibility to work at home using their own sewing machine and equipment or apply to a full-time job commercial sewing workshop.

Impact

The project manager reported that none of the beneficiaries decided to take a fulltime job, rather chose to work from home. When asked about details whether the women are benefitting from the machine and the skills gained, EPSD had limited details about the women's current situation. Due to internet

connection challenges, 3iS team could not do any further follow up calls with the beneficiaries to learn more about the impact of the project.

Sustainability

EPSD claimed that the tailoring profession by itself allows the women to have a flexible skill that can be utilized at any time and location. However, the interview and limited information around the project's beneficiary prevented a comprehensive evaluation regarding the sustainability

IV. Evaluation of Agriculture Projects

A. **Partner's Name:** Oxygen Youth

Project Name: Maneeha

Governorate: Ar-Raqqa_

Project Overview

The word “Maneeha” is a self-explanatory name for the project, “Maneeha” in Arabic means helping a family in need with milk from another family’s productive livestock. In this project, Oxygen youth distributed 100 productive female sheep on 50 vulnerable families in five different villages in Jurneyyeh community, Ath-Thawra sub-district. The main goal of the project was to provide a productive asset that the family can benefit both on the household-level for food consumption, and eventually start selling milk and milk products. In addition to the direct distribution of livestock, Oxygen Youth provided the families with 100 kilograms of animal feed and conducted training about animal health care.



Picture 5 Maneeha's livestock distribution

Oxygen Youth made sure to target the most vulnerable households in the community where the selection criteria included, female-headed households; priority for widowed women; and households that had physically disabled members. According to the interview with the project manager, the total number of targeted households was 50, of which 45 (90%) are widowed women-headed households and 10 (20%) households with physically disabled family members.

Relevance

Generally, Ar-Raqqa’s main livelihood revolves around agriculture-related activities this includes cultivation, herding livestock, and trading agriculture and livestock production. According to the project manager's interview, many of Jurneyyeh people have experience in livestock rearing either on a commercial level or on a very small scale for household consumption. The targeted group in this project are mainly women who lost their husbands during the war and were left with lean financial capacity to sustain their household needs. Livestock rearing and milk provision is very relevant to vulnerable people as it brings the provision of nutritious milk and protein rich meat to the household diet.

Impact

Oxygen Youth conducted a follow up call after one month from completing the project activities. The follow up revealed that 100% of the households were still owning the livestock and none of the families

attempted to sell their livestock. Some households reported pregnancy and are expecting their livestock count to increase to 3 or 4 sheep.

Evidently the provision of productive assets contributes to stabilizing the family's food security situation and opens the opportunity for families to start selling milk to the market for household income generation. When the project management was asked whether the project worked on linking those families to milk collectors, the answer was that most of the villagers in the targeted areas are livestock owners where milk collectors have a strong connection with the people and regularly visit the villages.

Sustainability

Oxygen Youth sustainability plan included training the beneficiaries on the best animal husbandry practices and provided them with a vaccination schedule to prevent some disease development in future. Most of the distributed livestock were either pregnant or expecting to give birth soon. Regarding veterinary services and availability of medication and vaccines, the project manager reported that there are a number of suppliers and professional veterinary services provider for reasonable prices. Moreover, the beneficiaries were trained on how to vaccinate their livestock. The provision of household income generation from sales of milk will sustain the operation of livestock production at household level.

B. Partner's Name: Sanad

Project Name: The Artery

Governorate: Ar-Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor

Project Overview

The project targeted the agriculture areas in the Al-Jazra and Al-Ahwas villages by repairing the irrigation system network linked to the main canal that feeds from the Euphrates River. Sanad repaired 7 points in different locations along the irrigation system network for both villages. Controlling gates for water flow was maintained in five locations, the other two locations were targeted to repair two bridges.

Sanad coordinated with the Irrigation Committee and Local Council to prioritize the location that were most in need of rehabilitation. The actual technical fieldwork was performed by a local contractor, who has work experience of more than 10 projects related to irrigation network installation and maintenance. The Irrigation Committee was supervising the fieldwork directly to ensure that it meets the standards of the overall local irrigation network.

Relevance

The prime livelihood activity for the two targeted villages, Al-Jazra and Al-Ahwas is agriculture even before the war escalated. However, the aftermath of war activities had resulted in damaging the irrigation infrastructure across Deri ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa. According to the project manager's interview, Sanad conducted a needs assessment prior to drafting the concept note. The needs assessment revealed that farmers who live close to the Euphrates established small corporations to directly pump water from the

river, as for those who live further depended on pumping groundwater. Both solutions induced extra cost on farmers, whereas groundwater tends to include high salt levels especially during summertime. Moreover, based on the environmental point of view, the current situation does not resemble the optimal way of utilizing local water resources and might jeopardize the region's water reserve. Such irrigation challenges contributed in preventing farmers from maintaining their agriculture activities and resulted in many abandoning their lands.

Impact

The main irrigation system is based on gravity force therefore, fuel cost will be eliminated. However, at the time of the interview, the maintained part of the network by Sanad was still not operating as the Local Council was working on repairing other parts of the main irrigation canal that feeds into the whole irrigation system network. At this time of year, farmers mainly depend on rainfall to irrigate their crops. The project manager anticipated that the network will be functional by March 2020. Therefore, the impact on local farmers could not be measured up until the network starts flowing water to the farms.

Sustainability

Under an MoU agreement, Sanad handed the rehabilitated part of the irrigation network to the Irrigation Committee of the Local Council, who from their end will be directly responsible in managing the water flow and maintaining the network in the future. The project manager reported that at the time of the interview, February 2020 (four months after the end of the project), one of the rehabilitated points was damaged due to the extra water pressure from excessive rain. The Irrigation Committee is working on repairing the damaged area in coordination with Sanad and the contractor.

C. Partner's Name: IPV

Project Name: Supporting the most vulnerable women in West Deir Ezzor

Governorate: Deir ez-Zor

Project Overview

The project targeted 18 women living in Kasra community in Deir ez-Zor. The activities focused on building the agricultural capacities of the targeted women by training them on modern agriculture techniques, vegetable planting, personal hygiene, and product marketing. Upon the end of the training IPV distributed summer crop seedlings (cucumber, tomato, eggplants, zucchini, and pepper), fertilizers, pesticides and farming equipment for each participant.

The project focused on targeting the women who owned a piece of land with a minimum area of two Dunams (0.2ha) and had previous agriculture experience. In addition to the distribution of the aforementioned material, IPV introduced modern irrigation solutions to the beneficiaries and distributed irrigation pipes to be installed in their farms.

Relevance

Corresponding to Ar-Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor's main livelihood activity is relevant to agriculture activities, and people living in rural areas inherited agriculture practices from their families. IPV conducted a survey prior to the start of the project, which revealed that the majority of people were still using traditional irrigation methods and farming practices. In another survey with project beneficiaries conducted by RMTeam, all project beneficiaries reported that the project activities were either "to some extent" or "very" relevant to their livelihood and basic needs.

In terms of coordinating with local authorities and ensuring synergies with other projects, the project managers confirmed in their interview that there was direct coordination with the Local Council and Agriculture Directorate to ensure that the project is aligned to needs in the community.

Impact

As reported in the evaluation exercise that was conducted by RMTeam, the survey revealed that the training contributed to improving the beneficiaries' technical knowledge and felt reconnected with their lands. The beneficiaries reported an increase in their profit compared to the previous harvesting season by 55,000 – 60,000 SYP per household per month. However, 11 out of the 18 (61%) households reported that the generated income to "some extent" was sufficient to meet their household need, followed by 4 out of the 18 (22%) who reported that their income was not sufficient and only 3 out of 18 (17%) reported that their income was sufficient.

Sustainability

IPV's vision at the beginning of the project was to support the families during the summer season, where eventually they can sustain their activity from the profit and money saved from switching to more efficient irrigation systems. However, results from RMTeam's survey were not promising, 11 out of the 18 beneficiaries (61%) anticipated that their agriculture activities would sustain for one year only, followed by 5 out of 18 (28%) respondents who believed that it would take only 2 years to self-operate the irrigation systems. However, 2 beneficiaries had reported that they would not be able to continue planting their lands under the irrigation system. These results coincide with the project manager's reports regarding several beneficiaries who were reported to have attempted to sell the irrigation equipment shortly after they were distributed. The reason according to the project managers was that, many families feared the rumors of the Peace Spring Operation or simply did not believe in switching to more modern solutions.

V. Overall Efficiency and Effectiveness

All eleven project managers reported during the interviews that they had adopted certain procedures that promoted cost-effectiveness and value for money approaches throughout the project cycle management. **Projects that required the direct purchase of inputs** were made sure that all procurement transactions were made with US Dollars instead of Syrian Pound, given the highly fluctuating and unstable local exchange rates.

The strong coordination links between the implementing partners and other relevant stakeholders involved like the Local Council, Education Committees, Energy and Communication Committees are playing critical roles to ensure sustainability of project activities within the community as recorded by the evaluation team. **All projects** designs had to gain approval or permission from the Local Council and these other specific local authorities in order to start implementing the activities. This ensures synergies and complementarities among the different organizations and avoid overlaps and duplication of efforts and resource use within the community. Moreover, the involvement of the Local Council and other relevant stakeholders ensures continuity, suitability and relevance of project activities, specifically for the **rehabilitation projects**.

Regarding rehabilitation projects where there were no direct interaction with the direct beneficiaries during the project evaluation process, the question of “how the actual targets of indirect and direct beneficiaries were calculated?” was raised during the interviews sessions with project managers. The responses were ambiguous and most of the implementing partners’ representatives claimed that those numbers are population demographics of the targeted area, which were retrieved from the Local Council offices. This raises the concern whether this is an efficient approach for quantifying the impact of the overall project and how it can be aggregated on a program level.

No major challenges were reported due to the influence of context and political instability during the implementation of the projects. Several projects raised the concern that in September and October people feared that the Government of Syria Forces might reach their areas in an attempt by the Government of Syria to regain control of Al Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor governorates. For instance, one implementing partner reported loss of contact to beneficiaries as many had fled the area due to these rumors, and other two implementing partners destroyed all their physical record documents once they heard the news.

I. Gender and Crosscutting Themes

Collectively, the project had a strong gender sensitivity component given that 4 out of the 11 projects solely focused on targeting women, and one project challenged the cultural stereotype by including two women in carpentry training. The focus was evident towards female widowed and female divorcees as two of the most vulnerable groups within the community which were targeted by the program. As for people with physical disabilities, a number of projects demonstrated prioritizing families with physically disabled members. It is worth mentioning that even infrastructural designs for rehabilitation recorded

evidence of disability lens at planning, as one of the school rehabilitation projects installed ramps to make the school facilities more inclusive for people living with difficulties. However, the program lacked project activities that directly targeted people with a disability.

VI. Conclusion and Overall Recommendations

Rehabilitation Projects:

Deir ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa governorates are both still recovering from the aftermath of the militias of the Islamic State occupation; therefore, all rehabilitation projects were relevant to the essential needs of the community. The involvement of the local council and other local authorities throughout the project cycle ensures that the activities will remain regulated and maintained after the project life span. The rehabilitation projects included heavy procurement activities, where all projects reported that they were lucky to have found enough stock in the market. Usually, suppliers require longer time to provide goods from other areas in Syria or from Turkey.

Recommendations for rehabilitation projects:

Implications for Food Security and Livelihood programming - Rehabilitation project initiatives from the design stage should have clear mandate and implementation strategy of targeting the most marginalized and vulnerable people as workers providing labor (skilled and unskilled) in return for temporary income (informed by the prevailing Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket value) to meet their household needs. Based on the SPHERE standards and minimum standards for the Early Recovery Programming, rehabilitation projects which are normally implemented through the Cash for Work project designs ought to aim for double pronged aspects of impacting on the livelihoods of the targeted vulnerable people (i) to provide a short-term livelihood support with temporary employment to vulnerable Syrian households, and (ii) the cash for work activities would then include the rehabilitation of common resource properties like schools, irrigation schemes etc, within a community. The present evaluation noted room for improvement on the implementation strategy of the rehabilitation projects by the implementing partners who proved less focused on aspect (i) provision of temporary income to vulnerable people, whereas, there was more focus (ii) on infrastructure rehabilitation. In future, Expert France Grants may need to engage a third-party monitoring entity to capacitate these local NGO to improve their implementation strategies and project designs based on SPHERE standards and minimum standards for Early Recovery programming.

1. Design a better a monitoring and evaluation plan that can quantify the impact of the targeted community, rather than depending on demographic estimates from the local authorities;
2. Continue involving the Local Councils and their counterparts to ensure sustainability beyond the project activities;
3. Assess the market in terms of availability and quality of material, to account for such measures in the project work plan.

4. Provide capacity building training to implementing partners to improve their implementation strategies to be informed by SPHERE standards and minimum standards for Early Recovery programming.

Vocational Training Projects:

The four vocational training projects targeted a variety of sectors (carpentry, blacksmith, plumbing, sewing, and homemade food processing) which allowed the program to accommodate different groups within the community. Wifaq provided a great example of how beneficiaries can be empowered and properly trained to run their own carpentry workshop. This was demonstrated with a clear business plan and leadership elected by the beneficiaries. However, Farah and Emma Al-Furat did not have a proper business plan in place to guide the beneficiaries and did not give full autonomy for the beneficiaries to lead their business.

Recommendations for vocational training projects:

1. Study in-depth the labor market to better identify the skills needed by employers and base the project activities on more solid evidence;
2. Strengthen the market linkages efforts, and plan earlier for building a network of employers relevant to the technical sectors that are being targeted;
3. Consider adopting apprenticeship and internship programs, allowing participants to gain hands-on experience through on job training which might progress to a fulltime job with the apprenticeship/internship hosts.

Agriculture Projects:

As mentioned earlier, agriculture activities related to cultivation, rearing livestock, and trading on agricultural products have long been the prime livelihood activities for people living in both Deri ez-Zor and Ar-Raqqa governorates. Damages to irrigation infrastructure and the displacement activities had depleted the agriculture production of the communities. Therefore, the projects had encouraged a small portion of the population to go back to their roots and lands. However, IPV's project evidently was not based on the actual community needs assessment of the targeted group given that RMT's report stated that 44% of the beneficiaries reported they would have preferred different kinds of support. On the other hand, Oxygen Youth demonstrated a good example of how livestock distribution can be considered a productive asset for its owners.

Recommendations for agriculture projects:

1. Behavioral change of farmers who have been using inherited traditional farming practices for years, require longer planning and training based on evidence which can be availed through farmer field school approach with demonstrations. This will allow farmers to witness the change and gain hands-on experience on how to use new technologies. This approach allows for farmer-

to-farmer extension service delivery which is ideal for conflict areas in the absence of a government supported agricultural extension service delivery.

2. In-depth assessment of the farmer's needs, rather than just depending on the local authorities' vision will ensure that the projects are more inclusive, acceptable to farmers and farmers will be more motivated to invest their time and effort to adopt better agricultural practices.