

LEBANON



Amal al Hilabi, a W-GDP project participant, owns and operates a pre-made, home-cooked meal and catering business where she employs vulnerable people searching for work, including Syrian refugee women.

Corus organization Lutheran World Relief has worked at the nexus of humanitarian assistance and development in the Middle East since 1948, and in late 2017, we began working in Lebanon to address the diminishing economic opportunities and improve social cohesion between Lebanese locals and Syrian refugees. When the devastating explosion shook Beirut in 2020, we acted swiftly to provide relief and support. Today, we remain steadfast in our commitment to strengthening the resilience of the most vulnerable populations as the ongoing impacts of conflict continue to affect Lebanon and the surrounding region.

Project Highlights

QUEST Recovering Businesses I & II

After years of political and economic instability in Lebanon—marked by the Beirut Port explosion and the COVID-19 pandemic—Corus organization Lutheran World Relief, with funding from Kerk in Actie (KIA), launched the QUEST: Recovering Businesses project. QUEST aims to foster social cohesion and equality in Lebanon by driving economic empowerment, raising awareness about violence against women, and advocating for fair and safe working conditions.



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OUR GLOBAL APPROACHES

Economic Development

In partnership with farmers, businesses, communities, civil society and governments, Corus works to realize agriculture's potential to grow rural economies where everyone can sustainably earn a living. The four strategic pillars of our approach are: agriculture and food security, environment stewardship, private sector engagement, women and youth economic empowerment.

Education

Corus collaborates with governments, the private sector, school systems, and local communities to transform education systems and increase access to technologies and wrap-around support services that can equip individuals with the knowledge they need to thrive. The three strategic pillars of our approach are: education data systems to improve access, technology for development, and local capacity strengthening.

Environmental Sustainability

Corus thoughtfully integrates environmental sustainability efforts into our rural economic development, health and humanitarian action work. The five strategic pillars of our approach are: regenerative agriculture, natural resource management, disaster risk reduction, health systems strengthening, and global health security.

Humanitarian Action

When man-made or natural disasters strike, Corus responds to meet immediate needs and then transition our support into increasing community resilience to future shocks and stressors over the long-term. The four strategic pillars of our approach are: market-based programming, local capacity strengthening, social and behavior change, and environment-sensitive solutions.

Public Health

Corus collaborates with governments, health facilities and actors across all levels, and community leaders to deliver effective and sustainable solutions to global health challenges. The five strategic pillars of our approach are: global health security, health systems strengthening, social and behavior change, local capacity strengthening, and integrated primary health care delivery.

A key focus of the initiative is empowering women entrepreneurs to grow their micro and small businesses, thereby creating new job opportunities. In its second phase, the project shifted its emphasis toward strengthening the business-enabling environment and ecosystem for entrepreneurs and enterprises. It also prioritized improving access to finance for micro and small enterprises, with the goal of driving business expansion, job creation, and broader economic empowerment.

AMAL Project I & II

With funding from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and in partnership with Al Majmoua Microfinance Institution, Lutheran World Relief is currently implementing phase II of the AMAL project, which means “hope” in Arabic. The project expands financial and economic inclusion across Lebanon by providing subsidized financing, digital financial services, financial literacy programs, and business development support to sustain businesses during times of insecurity. The project especially works with women, youth, displaced individuals, and host communities to improve access to affordable microcredit, promote cashless transactions via e-wallets, and enhance financial literacy through training and advisory services.

Returning Evacuees To Urban Residences Now (RETURN)

Through the RETURN project, funded by USAID's Bureau of Humanitarian Assistance, Lutheran World Relief facilitated the safe return of 2,000 of the most vulnerable survivors of the Beirut blast to their residences, repairing damaged homes to habitable status and affording some stability to families already coping with economic, political and pandemic crises.

Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP): Expanding Women's Labor Force in Lebanon (EWLFL)

This W-GDP project supported women entrepreneurs as catalysts for positive change in business, as well as in their families and communities. Through the project, Lutheran World Relief provided a tailored, externally accredited certification to the women entrepreneurs of USAID's private sector development programs in Lebanon, some of whom may not have access to higher education or other formal certification programs, to demonstrate their knowledge and gain external corroboration for their businesses in the market. Lutheran World Relief also carried out complementary activities to improve the enabling business environment and link the women to business opportunities that strengthen their resilience capacities.

Agriculture for Peace in Lebanon

Through the Agriculture for Peace in Lebanon project, Lutheran World Relief offered Lebanese families and Syrian refugees specialized training on crop production, quality control and marketing, as well as employment opportunities,

including an opportunity for women and men to learn how to produce crops in greenhouses. Lutheran World Relief also employed the local workforce to repair and improve irrigation canals and water networks. This work was complemented by training in conflict resolution and prevention techniques, easing social tensions between Lebanese locals and Syrian refugees through income generating collaborations.

Improving the Livelihood Conditions of Host Communities & Syrians Working in Agriculture

Lutheran World Relief worked with Lebanese farmers from host communities and Syrian refugees working in agriculture to strengthen the capacity of 52 small and medium enterprises. The project installed drip irrigation networks and provided technical training to the Lebanese farmers and Syrian refugees. By the close of the project, participants were effectively using water from the drip irrigation schemes, producing higher quality crops with higher yields and saving money.

Conflict Management and Community Livelihoods Development

The goal of this project was to defuse tensions between Lebanese locals and Syrian refugees through mutually beneficial local economic development. Key municipality staff and Lebanese and Syrian community leaders were trained in local resource management and conflict prevention to help mitigate resource-based tensions and defuse local conflicts as project participants engaged together in agriculture-based livelihood strengthening activities.

The Corus Effect

Corus International is an international development organization that unites an array of nonprofit organizations and businesses, each with specialized expertise. Alongside communities and local partners in fragile settings, our expert teams integrate disciplines, approaches and resources to overcome poverty and suffering for those living in the world's toughest and most difficult circumstances.

Corus features global public health leader IMA World Health, international development and aid organization Lutheran World Relief, technology for development consultancy CGA Technologies, impact investing firm Ground Up Investing, and direct-trade company Farmers Market Brands.

