



# LIVELIHOODS

The Trust Fund strategically finances a wide range of actions that fall under the broad definition of livelihoods, and which encompass support measures for employability, vocational and entrepreneurial skills training programmes, cash assistance for refugees, IDPs and vulnerable host community members, as well as MSMEs.

To date, the Trust Fund has promoted numerous different livelihoods strategies, including training, job creation, cash for work (CfW), cash transfers and MSME support, through **20 and 15 lead implementing partners**. More than **60 Trust Fund projects include a**

**livelihoods component** linked to basic and higher education, WASH, protection or social cohesion in Lebanon, Jordan, Türkiye, Iraq and, to a lesser extent, Egypt, Western Balkans, or Armenia. Partners, such as the French Agency for Development (AFD), the Austrian Red Cross (AutRC), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Euromed Feminist Initiative (EFI), FAO, GIZ, UN Women, ILO, the ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Denmark, Oxfam, Save the Children, TOBB, UNHCR, UNDP, UNESCO, UNRWA, VNG International and the World Food Programme (WFP) have been implementing actions that promote access to more livelihoods opportunities. While most projects

include employability-oriented training in various sectors, others emphasise cash for work components (e.g., AFD, DRC, GIZ, UN WOMEN), cash transfers (ILO-UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP), direct access to job opportunities (EFI, FAO, ILO, UNESCO, UN WOMEN, etc.) or MSME training and funding (AutRC, EFI, ILO, Oxfam, UNDP, MoFA).

At an individual level, **all projects aim at improving the economic situation of refugees, IDPs, and vulnerable host communities. Some also include institutional strengthening goals** (FAO, Oxfam, UNDP, etc.), **while fewer actions aim at legislative and policy changes** (Oxfam, UNICEF/ILO, UN WOMEN) to facilitate access to labour markets and related social security benefits. 32 actions and/or components are still being implemented in the period.<sup>11</sup>

During this reporting period, overall progress has continued to improve. **Planned output delivery is fully**



## LIVELIHOODS PRIORITY SECTOR OUTPUTS

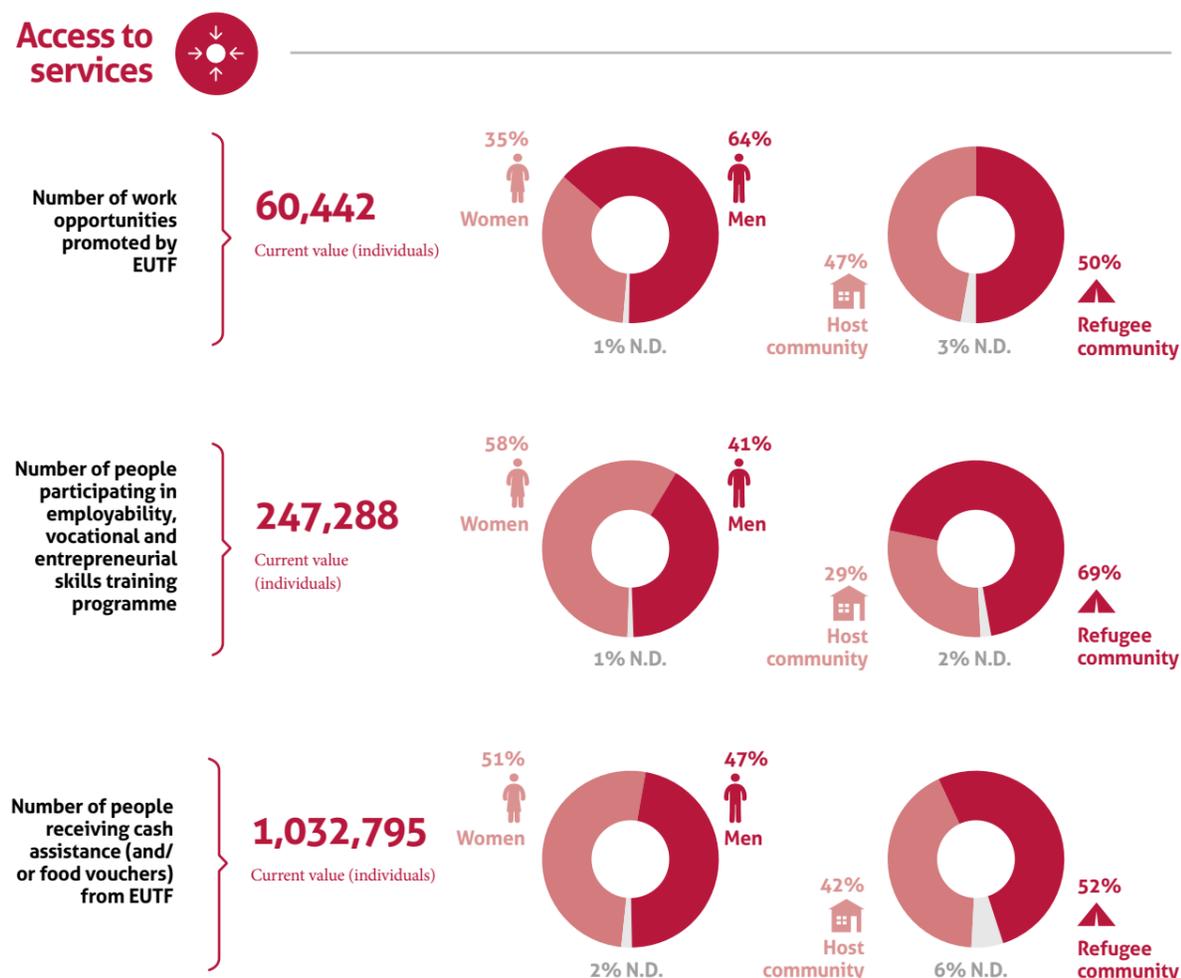


**achieved for employability training and MSME support.** The number of jobs created and of cash assistance beneficiaries show a high degree of accomplishment, at 84% and 81%,

respectively. Women and refugees have accessed employability training programmes to a larger extent than men and host communities, respectively. Cash assistance has been distributed

### Livelihoods - Disaggregated results

EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis



**Figure 10:** Trust Fund: Livelihoods results disaggregated by sex and community of origin (as of 31/03/2023)  
\*N.D.: Not disaggregated.

evenly between women and men, while refugees have been reached slightly more than host communities.

The performance of the KPI 'Number of work opportunities promoted' has improved in this reporting period, with the Trust Fund having supported **60,442 job opportunities** (35% of women, 64% men, 50% from refugee communities and 47% host communities), equal to 84% of the planned targets, compared with 61% in the previous reporting period. This indicator includes people accessing cash for work programmes, rapid employment schemes, self-employment support, temporary and seasonal employment, jobs created through new business start-ups and access to other income generating activities. It also encompasses students employed after having received higher and vocational education with EUTF support.

### LIVELIHOODS OUTCOMES IN LEBANON

The outcome evaluation differentiates that, while livelihood interventions have helped to increase short-term income and skills of refugees and

host communities, stabilising the situation of those families for the duration of the job placements and/or CfW schemes, longer-term jobs face a wide range of structural challenges. Apart from the political situation and the economic crisis, Syrian refugees also face legal restrictions to access the formal labour market. Regarding **individual behavioural changes**, the outcome evaluation highlights that more access to skills improvement and CfW schemes have become *"crucial in the Syrian response and continue to be important, especially in Lebanon"*. The report states that improvement in technical skills is confirmed, underlining the importance of improved soft skills (Regional Development and Protection Programme -RDPP II). Despite Lebanon having relaxed some constraints limiting access to the labour market for refugees, refugees continue to face multiple financial and bureaucratic hurdles to obtain a work permit. Sectors, where they can work formally, remain limited. That is why CfW schemes are more popular, since refugees do not need any permit. The main CfW limitation is, however, that most CfW schemes are linked to sectors, such as construction that have predominantly a male work

→ 14. The following actions are still ongoing: Lebanon: UNICEF: T04.143, T04.257; World Vision, T04.205, Oxfam: T04.229, GIZ: T04.231, DRC: T04.241, T04.286, Save the Children: T04.243 and T04.302, ILO/UNICEF: T04.292. Jordan: EBRD: T04.92, KfW: T04.112, GIZ: T04.208, UNHCR: T04.233, ILO: T04.235, GJU: T04.215, UNICEF: T04.245, UN Women: T04.249, EFI: T04.290; Iraq: SPARK: T04.208, UN Habitat: T02.247 and Türkiye: TOBB: T04.68, ILO: T04.70, UNDP: T04.76, EIB: T04.155, SPARK: T04.168, FAO: T04.187, SPARK: T04.270. Lebanon and Iraq: UNDP/UN Habitat: T04.132. Lebanon and Jordan: FAO: T04.149; Jordan and Iraq: T04.185; Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq: GIZ: T04.200.



force. The selection of local grassroots organisations trusted by refugee and host communities has also been a contributing factor. An unexpected outcome of livelihood interventions is that self-employment is *“the preferred strategy of women”* who find a more flexible and safer working approach therein. The evaluation also underlines that more successful projects on employment creation were those where a strategic partnership with private sector companies was developed (RDPP II). A perception of aid bias has been reported by a qualitative study, 2022 Compass Study commissioned by GIZ. In a context of deep economic crisis, this aid bias might have contributed to increased social tensions in the country.<sup>12</sup>

The outcome evaluation also highlights **changes in local institutions**

**capacity** to promote livelihoods-related services, especially in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions and some efforts to promote new structures around social enterprises, farmers, and dialogue with local organisations. The TVET system has improved (GIZ), and according to the evaluation, TVET public schools *“have radically improved training by offering competency-based curricula, involvement of third-party assessment, the establishment of advisory boards, and the development of four new curricula (carpentry, photovoltaic installation, construction and dairy products)”*. The Oxfam project has prepared an online Social Enterprise (SE) platform to support the establishment and growth of social enterprises by providing them with tailored access to a digital support ecosystem. This is also a strategy (a) conceived for women, since they prefer

flexible working hours and struggle to find decent work job opportunities, and (b) to promote businesses with social impact. At institutional level, an Economic Development Policy Unit (EDPU) was established to provide support to the European Commission (EC) on understanding the living conditions and resilience of Syrians and hosting communities, which led to the Decision of 15.12.2021 on the financing of the special measure in favour of Lebanon for 2021. Legal regulations for social enterprises were discussed at high policy level. The Social Entrepreneurship National dialogue to produce a Social Entrepreneurship Legal Framework had been promoted. A graduation model, established by the DRC project, applying a new organisational approach to promote livelihood strategies has not been able to provide linkages of the cash assistance beneficiaries with other livelihood components, such as vocational training, employment, CfW or small grants to set up small businesses to sustain cash assistance effects. Another new formal institutional structure is the farmers' registry, promoted by the FAO project. The *“MoA has drafted a law on farming that specifically includes the farmers' registry”*, according to the outcome evaluation. Although with some delays, the registration process has begun. Due to the instable political and

economic situation, it is not certain yet, if the Ministry will be able to assume maintenance costs. In the context of RDPP II, owing to the partnership between LebRelief and RDPP, Syrian and Palestinian refugees were able to earn income, as well as secure longer-term employment upcycling and sorting of second-hand clothing facilitated by LebRelief's sub-partner, FabricAid. LebRelief is also engaging in the dialogue with the Lebanese Ministry of Environment (MoE) for the formulation of a National Recycling strategy where second-hand clothes are considered part of waste management and therefore environment, which is one of the sectors where refugees are allowed to work. The outcome evaluation highlights that RDPP II had supported a greater demand for self-employment, especially for women, as a creative way to overcome restrictions in the formal labour market.

Regarding **national policy and regulatory changes** related to livelihoods in Lebanon, the outcome evaluation underlines difficulties in policy dialogue, limited government capacity and low responsiveness from ministries. Some positive outcomes are also mentioned, such as GBV legislative reforms in the workplace and beyond (RDPP II), potential effects that might

→ 15. According to the outcome evaluation and the quoted report, some host communities are perceiving of “aid bias whereby Syrians receive undue aid at the expenses of hosting communities”. They also perceive refugees “as an economic and resource burden” and “a threat to security”. In response to this, refugees are feeling unsafe and insecure.



result from the agricultural registry (FAO) and/or from the the social entrepreneurship legislation. To date, no changes in regulations of the labour market have taken place. Apart from restrictions in the labour market for Syrian refugees, legal restrictions also apply for them regarding access to services *“hindering potential outcomes of livelihoods enhancement activities and of the graduation models”*. In the context of RDPP II, the outcome evaluation highlights the landmark law on sexual harassment that was passed, because of an advocacy campaign organised by ABAAD, a local RDPP partner. *“The Anti-Sexual Harassment Law No. 205 does not limit the protections against sexual harassment to just the workplace, but also covers harassment in any place.”* In the agricultural sector, there is high buy in from the Ministry of Agriculture for the farmers’ registry. Nevertheless, changes in the legal framework have not yet been implemented. The Oxfam-led action supported the development of a draft law document as part of the advocacy efforts to adopt a Legal Framework for Social Entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, this is not expected to be approved due to the current political situation. The EDPU *“has developed a research paper on blended TVET and distance learning that fed into the 2023-2027 national strategic framework for technical and vocational education and training in Lebanon”*. Other projects, such as those led by DRC and Save

the Children, encountered some challenges to work at national level with the Ministry of Social Assistance (MoSA) to facilitate changes in livelihood pathways. Alternatives are being sought with municipalities, Social Development Centres (SDCs) and local NGOs to promote a referral system for the livelihood programmes. From the World Vision-led project, the outcome evaluation highlights challenges youth is facing at different levels around employment opportunities. Refugee populations are excluded from participating in youth committees promoted at municipal level.

### LIVELIHOODS OUTCOMES IN JORDAN

The **outcome** evaluation positively assessed livelihood results in Jordan. As in Lebanon, the report highlights that while those interventions helped to increase income and stabilise the situation of those families for the duration of the job placements or CfW schemes, longer-term jobs confront a wide range of structural challenges linked to the political situation, the wider economic context, and the limitations for Syrian refugees to access the formal labour market. Regarding **individual behavioural changes**, the outcome evaluation reports improved short-term access to livelihood opportunities through



cash transfers, and therefore, increased income during the CfW engagement. It also underlines increased set of skills and qualifications of target groups. An unexpected outcome is that self-employment is *“the preferred strategy of women”* who find it to be a more flexible and safer working approach. Based on the findings from the final evaluation of the UN Women led action, it is important to note that Jordanians had a significantly higher weekly income than Syrians, because Jordanian women were more likely to have a permanent employment compared to Syrian women. This is also related to labour market regulations that continue to be restrictive for Syrian refugees, consequently, the informal sector is often the only option for refugees. In general, according to the outcome evaluation, the perception about employment opportunities has improved, as well as the awareness

about those opportunities and women’s rights (EFI). The pilot projects experimenting with a graduation approach (UNHCR and ILO/UNICEF) that links cash transfer and job creation have not yet delivered tangibles results, due to some weak design elements. The last ROM assessment of ILO/UNICEF’s action (10/22) reports the design of the graduation model is being reviewed. There is still scope for cooperation between both projects to expedite the process. No specific outcomes have been reported yet. The effect on Syrian refugees still needs to materialise, since work permits have not yet been issued and profiling has prioritised vulnerable Jordanians. The National Social Policy Strategy (NSPS) does not explicitly focus on refugees, although they are not excluded either. The ROM report of the UNESCO-led (11/22) cultural heritage project has promoted 466



jobs in the sector (31% of the target), 24% accessed by women and 27% by refugees. It is uncertain if the unskilled jobs will be sustained once the project ends. Regarding the certified skilled ones, they might be able to access the cultural resources market (CRM), job placements in other networks or local NGOs at a later stage.

The outcome evaluation also highlights **changes in local institutions capacity** to promote livelihoods-related services, especially in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institutions and among RDPP II implementing partners. TVET public schools *“have radically improved trainings by offering new competency-based curricula”* and, *“the support provided in Jordan included the adoption of new criteria for the accreditation and selection of workplaces for Work Based Learning (WBL) by relevant authorities”*, in this case, the Technical and Vocational Skills Development Commission and the TVET Council. Two new curricula have been also developed, one in aluminium/blacksmith and the other in carpentry/furniture. The TVET sector is undergoing a high-intensity reform process and policy dialogue with the donor community is ongoing to ensure access for refugee communities. Challenges remain in terms of access to vocational work for refugees outside the open sectors, where quotas for Syrians and/or expensive

working permits are required. In the case of RDPP II, local organisations with EUTF support have developed various strategies on gender, anti-harassment strategy, security, whistle-blower, standard operating procedures, and/or a digitalisation of payment management system. More partnerships with the private sector were actively sought by RDPP and UN Women, leading to self-employment promotion. This has been successful since the legal framework in Jordan changed to allow refugees to work in more sectors when running home businesses. According to the evaluation, the continued commitment of the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) to sustain the services of the women-only centres -highlighted as a good practice- was due to targeted advocacy, technical assistance and capacity development provided by UN Women on policy issues on equality, prevention of GBV and discrimination. A circular economy model with focus on solid waste management has been fostered as part as one environmental project in Za’atari and Azraq camps (GIZ). Not only access to jobs has been achieved, but increased recycling rates and a renewed waste management model established by local farmers groups, other non-governmental organisations, and municipalities. Regarding the social protection system, linked to the labour market, the ROM of the ILO/ UNICEF project (10/22) had underlined the issuance and implementation of

new regulations for the inclusion of the agricultural workers in the Social Security Corporation (SSC) as a positive outcome for the agricultural sector. Health insurance to agricultural workers has been extended. The National Aid Fund (NAF), also involved in the NSPS is benefitting from a Graduation Tracking System strengthening the capacities of its teams, not only nationally, but also locally. UNESCO’s ROM mission reports how all the selected cultural sites have now a Site Management and Tourism Development Plan (SMTDP) to organise cleaning and conservation works. It is still too early to assess any potential effects of the modernised cultural monuments on the municipalities or governorates’ revenues. It is also uncertain how governorates, jointly with the Department of Antiquities (DoA) will provide maintenance. The work is also too incipient to see any effects on the cultural resources market or community impact once the sites have been all upgraded.

Although it cannot be directly attributed to specific EUTF actions, regarding the **national policy and regulatory** context, the Jordan government has recently **changed** its approach and relaxed restrictions for Syrians to establish a home business in more sectors than previously. According to the outcome evaluation, national authorities are not interfering in EUTF projects that are using CfW schemes. The evaluation also notes further national



policies facilitating employment for Syrian refugees, such as *“issuing flexible (independent) work permits in certain sectors (e.g., agriculture and construction), the introduction of grace periods for refugees working without a work permit, waiver of fees to obtain a work permit in selected sectors, and simplification of document requirements for employment”*. There are still challenges since the lack of clear information about procedures and the complexity of getting a license for a home business or a work permit deter refugees and employers from choosing this option. The Jordan Ministry of Labour had issued 215,668 work permits for Syrian refugees since 2016. On the one hand, the

EFI led action achieved only a limited number of permits for women, due to lower achievements in terms of jobs than expected and concerns about possible loss of their humanitarian cash aid. On the other, the target of UNHCR project with 35,000 work permits is, according to the recent ROM, unlikely to be achieved due to the remaining implementation time. Outcomes at national level were also found with the establishment of a national farmers’ registry in Jordan. Although the data collection for the registration is still ongoing, the farmers registry, when completed, is expected to allow targeted interventions for the agricultural sector. The NAF in Jordan, engaged with the graduation approach for cash transfer beneficiaries, will now provide a gradual exit from cash assistance for Jordanians who found employment. According to the outcome evaluation *“this result is important in order to promote graduation models and formalisation of jobs and it was achieved through the advocacy provided by an RDPP partner”*. The ROM of ILO/UNICEF’s project (10/22) underlines the strong ownership of MoSD. This is made evident by its progress in adopting an integrated planning and coordination of the NSPS. A Higher Coordination Committee and technical committees for each pillar of the strategy are now established and operating. The Implementation Support Unit, which

is also institutionalised within MoSD and funded by the Ministry, has been endorsed by the Council of Ministers. In addition to the MoSD, the NAF and SSC, are also improving capacities to implement, plan, coordinate, communicate and monitor the NSPS, so that institutional systems are being strengthened. The ROM assessment also highlights a statistical working group and a statistical bulletin. The supporting coordination mechanisms within MoSD and strengthening capacities for the expansion and enhancement of the social protection systems strengthens governance of the social protection sector in Jordan. However, the dismantling of the Ministry of Labour is now one of the biggest institutional challenges that may jeopardise further positive effects. In relation to the UN Women led project in Jordan, a protection platform for private sector employees to report violations against their labour rights has been created and is now regularly used by the Ministry of Labour to address violations against employees. In the context of labour rights, the Jordanian government adopted two policy documents on Gender Based Violence (GBV), one on GBV within MoSD and, another on gender mainstreaming within the MoSD social protection services. At the time of the evaluation, a consultation process was ongoing between the Ministry of Labour, the Parliamentarian Committee for Labour, Social Development, and

Housing, and different community representatives from civil society organisations (CSOs) to discuss the revised Labour Law amendments. The focus was to ensure that workplaces become free of all forms of violence and harassment, aiming at enhancing women’s access to all occupations. Regarding UNESCO’s cultural project, although the Ministry of Tourism (MoTA) and the DoA are involved in the project coordination and administration - no specific additional activities have been conceived, and therefore, institutional changes at this level are not expected (ROM report 11/22). Potential effects on the touristic sector are not materialised at this stage.

### LIVELIHOODS OUTCOMES IN IRAQ

According to the outcome evaluation, the livelihood sector interventions in Iraq have been *“less successful, especially compared to other sectors’ relative performance”*. The country is facing a very high inflation rate due to a devaluation of its currency in 2021 and high unemployment rates, which poses serious challenges for projects trying to improve livelihood strategies. At **individual level**, outcomes are related to additional access to short term jobs and income, self-employment opportunities, rather than more sustainable, formal jobs. GIZ, with cash



for work schemes, has delivered 1,780 jobs to date jointly with employment centres; RDPP II promoted 233 jobs with focus on young people through other partners, and VNG International supported 162 jobs in waste collection, recycling, agriculture- and some related to local markets' improvements. Currently, UNESCO has reported the creation of 288 jobs (14% women, 26% refugees) to do improvement works in the cultural heritage site in the Citadel (ROM report 10/22 and EUTF database). Access to short-term decent employment opportunities is welcomed by the beneficiaries, but it is not evident yet to what extent self-reliance will be

improved. Furthermore, an additional five cultural sites have been identified to provide further employment opportunities. SPARK has facilitated 80 internships and job placements (e.g., in media and NGOs, among others) for students. While the UN Habitat led action on Urban Recovery and Peacebuilding in Western Ninewa expects job creation as a direct effect from infrastructure improvements in municipal services, it is still early since people are now enrolled in vocational training as trainees. With the delivery of 1,300 housing units, an effect on livelihoods can be expected in terms of better perception about their family economic situation. No information on the perception of the own economic situation is specifically reported yet. It is relevant to highlight the legacy of the project *"Integrated mine action to enhance resilience of conflict-affected communities in Northern Iraq"* implemented by MAG. Although it was an integrated mine action, contributing to the protection sector, it has led to improved livelihoods. Apart from allowing return to some areas in Sinjar, shepherds and farmers have begun to use again land for agricultural purposes.

In terms of **local institutions and organisations**, the recent outcome evaluation highlights the work of women centres in Iraq, supported by the UN women and EUTF. These centres combined improved access

to livelihoods opportunities with comprehensive protection services, supporting national justice structures to address violence against women. The intervention led by MAG had attracted some local investment to implement additional agriculture and electricity projects. Across actions, the effects of the MSME support are still uncertain as it is too soon to see evidence of outcome or impact. For example, GIZ has provided MSMEs with training and grants in collaboration with local organisations; and SPARK is now supporting student-led start-ups. UNESCO's project aims at creating a framework for a cultural resources market in the cultural heritage sector. Effects are expected from a pool of trained and certified workers and from a pilot public-private initiative supporting the High Commission for the Erbil Citadel Revitalisation, but actions are still incipient (ROM 10/22). Changes in the Erbil Citadel and the interpretation centre might occur in terms of increased tourists and, therefore revenues, but government decisions to ensure funding are uncertain at this stage. Regarding effects on municipalities, UN Habitat continues to deliver training to local authorities on housing, land, and property, but it is also early to assess impact. Another example is VNG International that had provided institutional support to the Directorate of Investment and the Shingal Organisation for Social Development, generating a sustainable waste recycling model. Whilst this is expected to promote local economic development in the area,

actual outcome evidence is pending.

Regarding **national policy or regulatory effects** most of the EUTF actions did not include specific activities at this level. The exception was the UN Women project which focused more on violence against women. Although the government has allowed Syrians to establish and regularise their businesses, integration in the formal labour market remains a sensitive issue. Syrians are now eligible to apply for citizenship (law No.46, 1963) after being in the country for ten years. The evaluation states that the country has changed national employment and social protection policy to facilitate refugee's access to jobs and social protection services *"to some extent"*. However, both Syrian refugees and Iraqis are struggling to find decent jobs in Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) due to the continued conflict within the country, disagreements over budgetary arrangements with the federal government and the previously mentioned inflation since 2021. UNESCO's project also aims at producing some positive effects in the touristic sector. Although the General Directorate for Antiquities and Tourism of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in Erbil and the Duhok Directorate of Antiquates and Heritage are engaging to some extent with the project, there is no public funding available to ensure sustainable effects.