

RESULTS SUMMARY

Providing Individuals with Income Generating Opportunities in Syria

Author: Mission East – Emergency and Development (MEED), 2024

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PROJECT	<i>Title:</i>	Supporting vulnerable populations affected by the protracted Syria displacement crisis to respond to and recover from vulnerabilities and shocks
	<i>Partner:</i>	Social, Humanitarian, Economical Intervention for Local Development Association (SHEILD)
	<i>Country:</i>	Syria
	<i>Period:</i>	2023

CHANGE

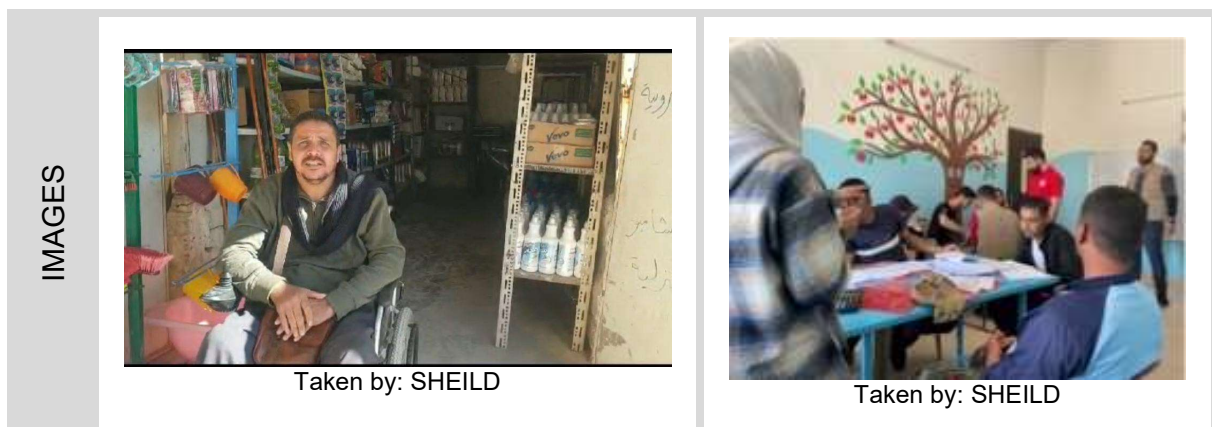
57 new or existing microenterprises were supported with the inputs, skills sets, knowledge, and expertise to sustainably restore, revive and start up their livelihood activities and to improve their ability to meet basic needs themselves and thus build longer-term resilience to shocks and crises in the district of Mleiha (Rural Damascus Governorate). Among the businesses supported were home-based businesses run by female-headed households and businesses run by persons with disabilities.

CONTEXT

12 years of conflict have had significant impact on Syria. Families have been affected by factors such as the continued loss of value of the Syrian pound (five devaluations in 12 months), increases in the prices of commodities, fuel shortages/cuts in fuel subsidies, and regional conflict. In Syria, small business play a key role in providing jobs, reducing poverty, and fostering social cohesion. However, they face limited access to finance and almost no access to the external market, which leads to struggles to remain afloat or grow.

CONTRIBUTION

By empowering microenterprises in Syria, MEED supported sustainable economic recovery, focused on the people and their needs. The provision of microenterprise support provides households with a steady mechanism to build assets, earn steady income, and build resilience to attain sustainable livelihood strategies. Moreover, the development of businesses provides services and/or resources to the local community, as well as contributes financially to the local economy.



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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITIES

In the district of Mleiha, community members expressed their interest in the assistance. SHEILD studied applications on a case-by-case basis, looking into different criteria and factors, including vulnerability (promoting women-run businesses and businesses run by PwD), motivation, knowledge, expertise, and market-demand. 57 existing or new microenterprises were selected and supported with relevant trainings and inputs, benefitting 57 households. The trainings covered topics such as marketing, customer service, and book-keeping. Close follow-up was done by SHEILD to ensure the business owners had all of the information and support needed, as well as providing them with a platform for feedback and complaints. Ultimately, a myriad different businesses were supported including tailoring, hair dressing, car mechanics, creation of small leather goods, detergent shops, and sweet making.

LESSONS

- Flexibility was essential in a volatile context like Syria. MEED and its partners were able to adapt and redesign, where needed, in response to changing needs and context on the ground.
- Good community relations and a participatory approach were critical to design and maintain successful programming. This approach facilitated implementation, and ensured that the most urgent needs on the ground were being met and the most vulnerable households were targeted.
- Close and regular follow-up with targeted businesses, coupled with business development trainings, played a large role in ensuring meaningful impact and change.
- Having referral mechanisms in place was key, due to the high levels of needs present on the ground.

EVIDENCE

The impact of the intervention was documented through the completion of a baseline survey pre-implementation and an endline survey post-implementation. The endline surveys concluded that 86% of the 57 households supported have experienced an increase in income. 100% of the interviewed households stated that as a result of the assistance, they would not need to resort to negative coping mechanisms in case of a future shock. Prior to the assistance, this figure was only 8%. The households also reported positive changes such as increased food consumption scores and better ability to meet basic needs. The value of the trainings were also showcased, with participants confirming that their skills were built due to the trainings.

DOMAINS

<i>Development strategy priorities:</i>	Creating hope
<i>Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability</i>	X
<i>Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people's rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people's rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability</i>	-
<i>Changes in local leadership of development and humanitarian work</i>	-