



AID DEVELOPMENTS

European Union supports the Lebanese Customs through cross border cooperation initiative

On 13 December 2011, the Lebanese Customs Authority and the University of Genoa signed a Partnership Agreement for the Custom MED project, which is part of the European Neighborhood Partnership Instrument Cross Border Cooperation for Mediterranean Countries (ENPI CBC MED). The purpose of the project is to improve the goods circulation between the Middle East and the European Union by networking and adopting shared procedures and technologies among selected Mediterranean ports, including Lebanese Customs Port of Beirut, Piraeus Port Authority, Alicante Port Authority, Aqaba Development Corporation and the Port Institute for Studies and Co-operation of the Valencian Region. The project officially started on 12 April 2012 and will extend over a period of 30 months. The Lebanese share of the project budget, which totals Euro 1.163 million, is Euro 120,224.

Italy supports UNRWA health reform

On 12 March 2012, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs approved a financial contribution of Euro 1 million for the UNRWA Health Reform Programme in Lebanon. The objective of the project is to expand and improve hospitalization services for Palestine refugees at the secondary and tertiary levels. More than 30,000 Palestine refugees will benefit from improved secondary and tertiary care services. By further strengthening the monitoring and evaluation system included in the reform, the project will help achieve a more rational and efficient access of Palestine refugees to hospitalization services.

Switzerland, through IFC, provides funding for the Lebanese Mediation Center

On 4 April 2012, the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and of Mount Lebanon launched the Lebanese Mediation Center (LMC) to support the business community, particularly the small and medium enterprises, to resolve commercial disputes through mediation, without resorting to the long and expensive judicial process. Its mission covers training and accreditation of mediators, conducting commercial mediation cases and raising awareness of the benefits of mediation. The center was established through a cooperation agreement signed between the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and of Mount Lebanon and the International Finance Cooperation (IFC). Switzerland (Swiss State Secretariat for Economy - SECO) has provided project financing to IFC for this development initiative aimed at encouraging mediation as a means of commercial dispute settlement mechanism in three countries, namely Egypt, Lebanon and Morocco. The project budget amounts to \$2.9 million, of which \$0.8 million for Lebanon for a duration of two years.

Increased support of the European Union for reforms in Lebanon

On 26 April 2012, the European Union announced an additional Euro 30 million allocation to Lebanon from the Support for Partnership, Reform and Inclusive Growth (SPRING) instrument, which comes on top of the allocation for this year to Lebanon of Euro 62 million. The support will be for reforms in institution-building, democracy, including civil society, good governance and human rights, and inclusive economic growth.



AID COORDINATION

World Bank workshop to support Lebanon's drive to turn capital inflows into long-term growth

On March 30 2012, the World Bank organized a workshop to review and discuss the findings and recommendations of the report entitled *Using Large Capital Inflows of Lebanon to Foster Sustainable Long-Term Growth*. The report analyzed the determinants of foreign financial inflows to Lebanon and examined policy options that would unlock and increase endogenous growth potentials of Lebanon over the long-term, hence generating jobs to the high-skilled youth looking to migrate. Representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank, and the Office of the Prime Minister, leading bankers, economists, academics, and experts from civil society organizations participated in the workshop.

A Lebanese delegation attended the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings

A Lebanese delegation including the Governor of the Central Bank and the Director General of Finance participated in the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings on April 20-22, 2012 in Washington, D.C. The delegation updated and discussed fiscal, monetary and economic developments and issues with officials from international financial institutions and representatives of donors.