

Success Stories: Providing sustainable work opportunities to refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in the agricultural sector

Irbid, Mafraq and Balqa Governorates - September 2019 to November 2021



Raft system growing onions in shared hydroponic microbusiness, Balqa Governorate, November 2021

ACTED supported agricultural cooperatives and micro businesses to foster sustainable growth and livelihood

In Jordan, **25% of the population** depend on **agriculture as a source of livelihoods**, particularly Syrian refugees whose work permits are, in majority, issued in this sector. However, its **expansion is limited** by scarce support services, technical and financial capacities and seasonal fluctuations in income.

To address these challenges, **ACTED** fostered **innovative agricultural practices** and **business management support** to improve **livelihood** opportunities and resilience for approximately **1,350 vulnerable Jordanian and Syrian-refugee farmers**.

ACTED helped develop **9 agricultural cooperatives** and **248 microbusinesses** through climate-smart agriculture, business and operational capacity building and grant awards.



OUR MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

With ACTED's support, 897 farmers have implemented innovative agricultural practices



Hydroponic system

45 microbusinesses have established hydroponic systems that grow crops directly in **nutrient-rich water**, without using soil.



Volcanic rocks

6 microbusinesses have started using volcanic rocks as an **all-natural way** to improve **roots** systems, reduce water usage and increase **yields**.



Permaculture

One microbusiness has piloted a perma-garden, increasing **productivity** and **soil health** through environmentally-friendly practices and maximizing land space.



Azolla production

6 microbusinesses have adopted azolla farming, which offers a cheap and **water-efficient** alternate **feed supplement** for livestock.

ACTED reinforced capacities of 9 agricultural cooperatives...



Capacity building of 9 cooperatives, through business development and marketing trainings as well as grants award, reaching **450 members**.



In collaboration with **Badia Fund**, establishment of revolving **microloan portfolios for small farmers** within 2 Mafrag cooperatives.



Grant provision for **2 business solutions** to improve small farmers **access to market**.



Facilitated the **engagement among agricultural stakeholders** through the creation of 9 Agricultural Initiative Support Groups.

... and helped start and scale up 248 agricultural microbusinesses.



Supported microbusinesses operating in **9 different sectors** such as hydroponic, conventional agriculture, greenhouses or food processing.



Provision of **222 small grants** to microbusiness owners to support their activity and gain market access.



Following their participation in the project, **89% of beneficiaries** reported that they have observed an **increase in their monthly income**.



Tailored **technical trainings** carried out to **897 Syrian refugees and vulnerable Jordanians** to engage in, restart or expand their microbusinesses.

SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVES



KUFOR SUME COOPERATIVE BASED IN IRBID

ACTED's intervention helped **Kufor Sume** grow its **yearly turnover from 6,000 to 13,000 JDs** between 2019 and 2021 and provide **efficient agriculture development services** to **4,245 annual beneficiaries** such as:

Provision of **47,000 JDs in microloans** to support 34 entrepreneurs business development

Annual distribution of chickens and vegetable seedlings to **820 families** for livelihood activities

Supporting the **economic empowerment of women** through specific trainings



Handicrafts sold at the Kufor Sume restaurant and shop, Irbid

In August 2021, ACTED selected Kufor Sume's proposed **business solution**, designed to **diversify market access** for its members.

Through ACTED's support, the cooperative rented an **heritage Jordanian house** and rehabilitated it into a **restaurant** and a **local shop**. The solution is an opportunity for farmers to expand their **market access** by buying ingredients from local farmers.

The house also serves as an **handicrafts training center** which are sold in the shop. In June 2022, **74 individuals**, both Syrian refugees and Jordanians benefited from the solution.

AEADE AL-BADIA COOPERATIVE BASED IN MAFRAQ



Aeade Al-Badia cooperative provides **water and agricultural services** for its **1,845 annual beneficiaries** as well as the surrounding community to promote **inclusive livelihood development**. Under ACTED's intervention, the cooperative contributed to:

Management of **4 hydroponic cultivation greenhouses** to test sustainable, innovative agricultural techniques

Empowerment of over 45 women to create value added products through dairy processing technical trainings

Improved **water resource management** by raising awareness among over 500 community members



Aeade Al-Badia refrigerated truck, Mafraq

In August 2021, ACTED selected **Aeade Al-Badia's** proposed **business solution**, designed to facilitate **access to bazars** for its members.

Thanks to ACTED's contribution, the cooperative acquired a **refrigerated truck** to increase farmers' access to bazars in Amman and the rest of Jordan. Aeade Al-Badia also signed a cooperation agreement with **Jordan's #1 Bazars coordinator**.

In June 2022, **361 individuals**, Syrian refugees and Jordanians, signed agreements with Aeade Al-Badia to benefit from the solution.

SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES



CONTRIBUTING TO WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT



Ahlam, beekeeping microbusiness owner, Irbid

Ahlam, a Jordanian woman, pictured on the left, has been running her **beekeeping** business in **Irbid** since **2018**. Her husband had an accident in 2019 that prevented him from working. Thanks to ACTED's intervention, Ahlam was able to strengthen her business and **financially support her household** on her own throughout her husband's incapacity.

“ My project was only an idea, but I decided to implement it after participating in the field schools. The project provided me with work opportunities, I was a housewife and now I can support my children and my husband. ”

Ahlam, beekeeping microbusiness owner, Irbid

Thanks to the **field school trainings** and **dialogues in Peer Support Groups** carried out under the project, Ahlam enhanced her beekeeping **skills** and **business knowledge**. Through ACTED's financial support, she managed to buy **11 beehives** and **produced 250 kilograms of honey**.

DIVERSIFYING FARMERS INCOME OPPORTUNITIES



Fouza, a Jordanian woman, first started wheat farming to bake and sell bread in **Mafrq**. However, with ACTED's support she chose to develop **hydroponics agriculture** instead as it is **less water-consuming**.

With ACTED's financial contribution, Fouza managed to buy some livestock and launch a small **perma-garden** to support her family's food intake.

Fouza is now looking into expanding her business into **experiential tourism**. With ACTED's help, she has successfully enlisted her farm on **Sawwah digital app**, a travel booking platform that promotes local travel experience.



Fouza, perma-garden microbusiness owner, Mafrq

SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES



FOSTERING CLIMATE-SMART TECHNIQUES



Nadia, a 56 year-old Jordanian woman, had never worked before getting involved with ACTED. Supporting her 12 kids, she is now one of the 5 members of a **shared hydroponics microbusiness** in **Mafrq**.

Thanks to ACTED's grant, the business first started with **food processing activities** such as pickles and jams production. Through the **trainings** and **field days**, Nadia was encouraged to adopt **hydroponics technique** after witnessing firsthand the success of the farms that had implemented it and the amount of water it saves. Nadia's business also benefited from the **support of ACTED's engineer** to overcome challenges with the fertilizer production.

“ We learned from each other and did research online to develop the project. Every day, we work and cook together to develop our products. ”

Nadia, hydroponics microbusiness shared-owner, Mafrq

INTRODUCING INNOVATIVE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES



“ Azolla is a new agricultural crop that did not previously exist in the area, it is easy and profitable with low production costs. ”

Afaf, project team leader, Mafrq

Six microbusinesses supported in **Balqa** and **Mafrq** have started to **sell azolla surplus** to local farmers, thus ensuring access to a **new source of income**. Azolla farming has helped farmers raise chickens at lower costs by **reducing the monthly livestock feeding expenses by 80% to 90%**.

After witnessing the financial benefits from azolla production, farmers have already begun to spread their knowledge and teach their friends and neighbours on how to **replicate this approach**.



SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES



FACILITATING ACCESS TO MARKETS



Suha at the US Embassy Bazar, Amman

Suha, a 39 year-old Syrian women is one of the 4 members of a **women-led confectionery microbusiness** from **Irbid**. A housewife before ACTED's intervention, Suha chose the food processing sector as she has always had a talent for baking back in Syria. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic was particularly challenging for her business, thanks to **ACTED's mentoring and coaching**, Suha and her partners kept their activity running.

“

I bettered myself and grew more with ACTED, I'm proud that I worked in this project.

”

Suha, confectionery microbusiness shared-owner, Irbid

Through ACTED's support, Suha's microbusiness gained **access to new markets**. In 2021, she had the opportunity to **participate in 2 Bazars** to showcase and sell her products. One of her fondest memories under this project was when she attended the **Bazar at the American Embassy in Amman**, pictured here.

EXPANDING CUSTOMERS OUTREACH



Kifaya is a **Jordanian** woman who is now a member of a **baked goods** microbusiness in **Irbid**, shared by 7 women and 1 man, and launched under ACTED's intervention. Kifaya has 5 children, and thanks to the income generated from her business, she is now able to **support her 2 eldest children** who are attending university.

Moreover, ACTED's support helped her **expand her market size** by participating in Bazars both in Amman and Irbid. She participated for 3 days in the **Olive oil Festival** in Amman, where she earned approximatively **2,500 JDs (€3,543)** by selling her products. She also took part in the **Irbid Pomegranate Festival** where she made around **1,500 JDs (€2,126)**. Thanks to her participation, Kifaya has now developed a **regular pool of customers in Amman**.



Kifaya baking bread, Irbid

NEXT STEPS IN SUPPORTING VULNERABLE FARMERS IN JORDAN

Moving forward, ACTED is building upon its best practices and expertise to expand its support to vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees from recovery to long-term resilience. ACTED's long-term agricultural programming (2022-2025) revolves around the following approaches:



Leverage **climate-adaptive and regenerative approaches** for efficient land use and water management through **perma-garden models**.



Facilitate farmers' **livelihood diversification** through food processing, artisan activities and eco-tourism to ensure **year-round income**.



Foster **market linkages and integration**, including e-commerce platforms, wholesale markets, trade fairs, seasonal bazars and networking events for agricultural stakeholders.

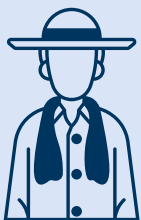


Strengthen **local capacities** among government, private and civic stakeholders and raise awareness on **decent work and labor rights**.

Through its Flagship Programme, THRIVE (Towards Holistic Resilience in Vulnerable Environments), ACTED is committed to regenerate agricultural ecosystems

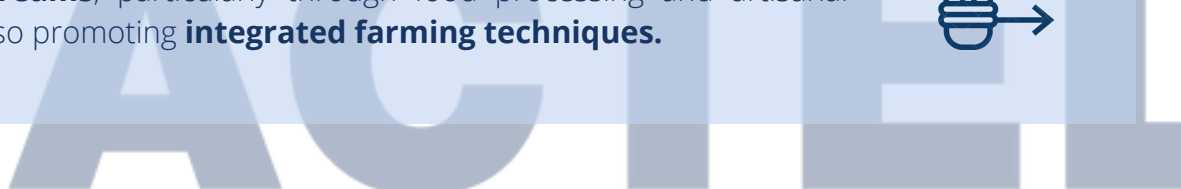


Integrated approach based on **livelihoods, market viability** and **social cohesion** to improve soil health and crop productivity in **(semi)-arid agricultural rangelands**, thereby leading to **increased income generation**. THRIVE is aligned with SDGs, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030).



This programmatic strategy is based on 3 components: soil regeneration, financial empowerment of local farmers and populations as well as support to sustainable agricultural and economic development. This is currently implemented across 7 countries in Africa and the Middle East, including Jordan, where it supports approximately 311,232 beneficiaries.

With continued financial support from **BPRM (2021 to 2023)**, ACTED will build on the previous programme to enable **diversification and sustainability of year-round income streams**, particularly through food processing and artisanal livelihoods, while also promoting **integrated farming techniques**.



NEXT STEPS IN SUPPORTING VULNERABLE FARMERS IN JORDAN



ACTED is building upon its best practices and expertise to expand its support to vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees from recovery to long-term resilience.



With continued financial support from donors, ACTED will build on the previous programme to enable diversification and sustainability of year-round income streams, creating further work opportunities for refugees and vulnerable Jordanians in the agricultural sector.

ACTED will also utilize its global flagship, **THRIVE**, which promotes efficient land management and sustainable water resource management for improved soil health and crop productivity, and therefore enhanced income generation.

