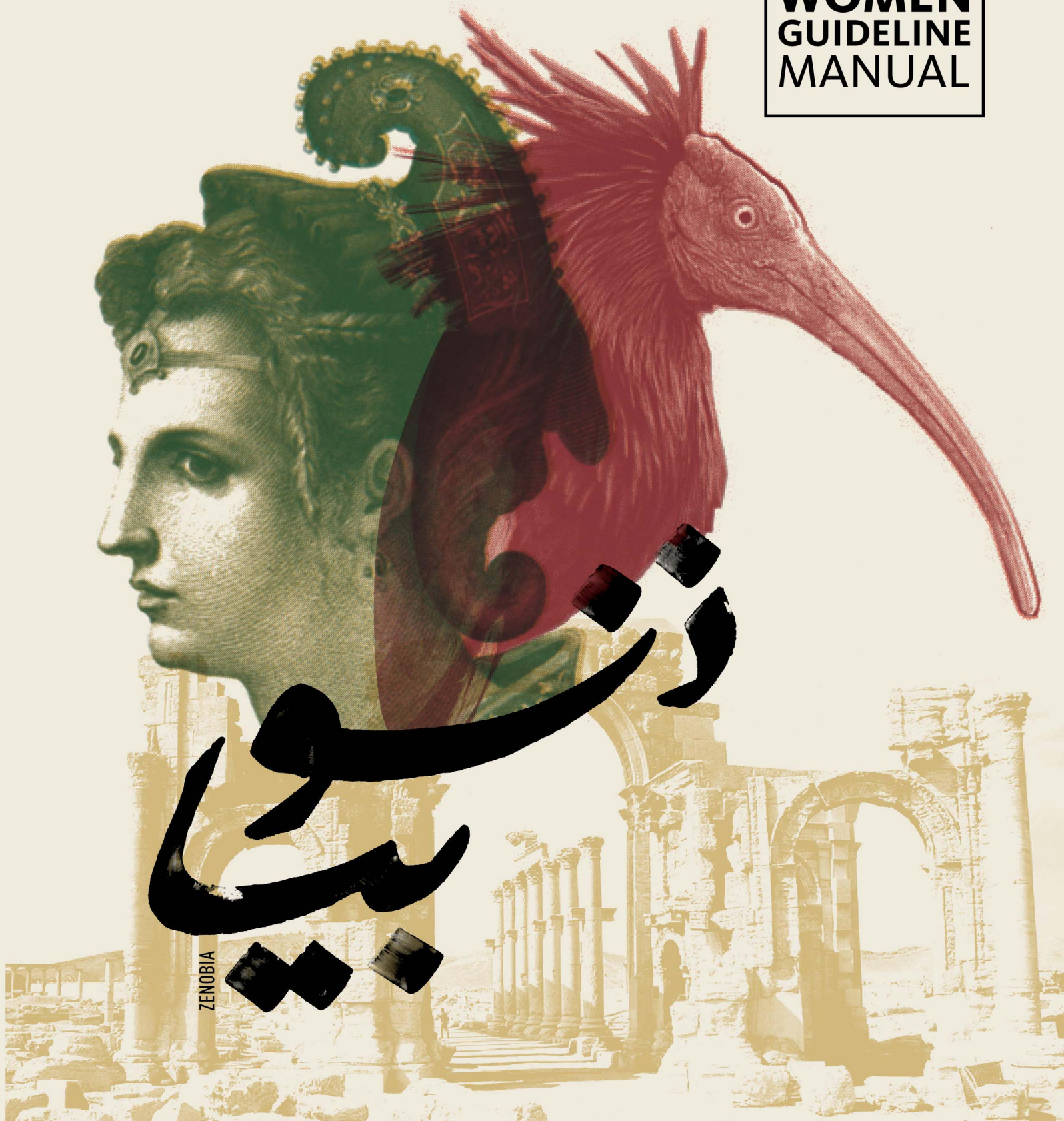


HIMA WOMEN GUIDELINE MANUAL



ZENOBIA

HIMA WOMEN GUIDELINE MANUAL

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) has worked for more than 30 years to save our natural environment and empower women, advance gender equality and fight poverty. SPNL works with partners in the public and private sectors and civil society to conduct empirical research, capacity building and advocate for evidence-based practical ways to change policies and programs.

● PREFACE

The Hima approach is a traditional/cultural community-based approach used for the conservation of sites, species, habitats, and people in order to achieve the sustainable use of natural resources through the community. Hima which means protected area in Arabic, originated more than 1,500 years ago, where it was spread along the Arabian Peninsula as a “tribal” system of sustainable management of natural resources. Since 2004, SPNL has been the leader for Hima revival in the Middle East working in close collaboration with municipalities and merging between the values of the traditional Hima approach and the modern scientific approaches in nature conservation. The Hima approach concentrates on empowering local communities, upgrading their livelihoods, and promoting sustainable use of natural resources, especially women. Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, a brave, intelligent, beautiful, and courageous woman is a model for women resilience in conflict and crisis. Zenobia was ambitious for her country and built the historical site of Palmyra, which is a habitat for the critically endangered Northern Bald Ibis named, ‘Zenobia’. Conserving Zenobia, the rare bird, represents a model for the actions needed to save the world’s most threatened plants and animals, listed on The International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List, especially more than 35 species in our region. A tiny breeding colony of the Northern Bald Ibis was found near Palmyra in 2002. However, with the current situation in Syria,

the historic town of Palmyra has been occupied and threatened to be entirely destroyed, damaging the critical ecosystem for the Northern Bald Ibis, leading to its extinction. Only one female “Zenobia” (named after the queen of Palmyra), returned from the wintering grounds in spring 2013.

Culture and nature, they go hand in hand and even when war stops, nobody can bring back a species from extinction. The loss of this remnant population would result in the loss of the last migratory Bald Ibis, while also losing the genetic diversity that these migratory individuals possess. ‘Conservation’ in this case is crucial, and this highlights the importance of adopting the Hima approach which conserves the natural and cultural heritage of the site.

The ancient identity of nature as a female and as a nurturing mother stresses on the important role that women have historically in relation to nature and Hima. Women are viewed as having an essential role in the conservation of Hima sites since they are the main users of natural resources needed to fulfill basic human needs that in turn impact the surrounding environment.

The term “Women are the Future” is more pronounced nowadays than ever before. Promoting women’s full participation in state-building is a matter of gender equality and human rights. It is also critical for the achievement of sustainable development, as is being shown

by a growing body of evidence and international opinion through Goal number 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which is “Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.”

The UN Women FGE project “Promoting Hima Women Empowerment for Conservation and Livelihood” came as the right opportunity for SPNL to focus on women empowerment and gender equality as an integral part of SPNL’s strategy. The project was implemented in four Hima sites aiming to empower women both socially and economically in order to improve their livelihoods through the Hima approach. In addition, SPNL’s recent partnership with the private sector (BioLand) will further strengthen the economic empowerment component by improving marketing techniques and communication strategies which are key aspects to ensure future sustainability.

This Hima Women Guideline Manual aims to link all aspects of culture, nature, conservation, social and economic empowerment through a holistic approach of management which is the Hima approach with special focus on women involvement as a mean to ensure sustainable development.



Assad Adel Serhal
Director General, SPNL



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INTRODUCTION | ●



● INTRODUCTION

Zenobia A Queen from the East: A model for Resilience and Leadership to Hima Women Empowerment

WHY WOMEN? WHY NOW? WHY ZENOBIA?

Harnessing the power of innovation to transform the lives of women in the developing world is an idea whose time has come. Innovation through new ideas, products and practices increasingly is seen as a force for social change. At the same time, there is growing consensus that empowering the millions of women who live in poverty is essential both for their intrinsic human rights and broad benefits for global development and economic growth.

Innovation and women's empowerment are rarely discussed within the same context but each is essential for human progress. Both require thinking "*outside the box*", and acting beyond existing, predefined parameters and traditional interventions. By using innovative methods to empower women and foster greater gender equality, the private sector, civil society, government institutions, academia and women themselves have the opportunity to create and harness new solutions that offer fresh perspectives to difficult problems.

With the current battles taking place inside the historic town of Palmyra in Syria, the question, inevitably, is whether they will destroy the ancient ruins and damage the critical ecosystem for many birds including The Northern Bald Ibis.

According to experts, a rare bird may become near extinct in Syria because of the capture of Palmyra by the fighters. A tiny breeding colony of the Northern Bald Ibis – a critically endangered species – was found near the city in 2002. Only one female returned from the wintering grounds in spring 2013 (named Zenobia). The heroic people guarding the Ibis birds are still doing their utmost to protect the three captive birds and their new offspring, working under extreme circumstances. SPNL has offered a reward for information on the whereabouts of Zenobia (named after the queen of Palmyra), the only remaining bird who knows the migration routes to the species' wintering grounds in Ethiopia.

Innovation and women's empowerment are rarely discussed within the same context but each is essential for human progress.



Qoleleh women acquiring new skills linked to culture and nature

ZENOBIA THE QUEEN

The tragic war in Syria raised the importance of the historic biography of Queen Zenobia as a symbol of all women fighting for justice.

During her short-lived reign, Zenobia was a truly remarkable ruler, famous for her judicious policies and prudence. She was a very thoughtful mother - she gave her sons Latin education, grooming them for future higher honors. When she wasn't off conquering territory, she was establishing Palmyra as an intellectual center of learning, inviting prominent scholars and men of letters to her court. Zenobia was ambitious for her country and longed to see it take what she considered its rightful place as a major power, and she almost succeeded.

Zenobia became one of the most popular figures of the ancient world in the legends of the Middle Ages, and her legacy as a great warrior-queen and clever ruler, surrounded by the wisest men of her time, influenced painters, artists, writers, and even later monarchs.





The historical site of Palmyra

The critically endangered Northern Bald Ibis species © www.elogiki.gr





ZENOBIA THE BIRD

Zenobia is the only wild female documented at the Kataraha Hima at Palmyra, while there were three birds in captivity (2 males & one female), plus one egg, that hatched recently. Ornithologists say that without her, birds bred in captivity cannot learn the migration routes and the species could go extinct in the wild in Syria. Despite being protected, and breeding, their numbers have dwindled to just four wild birds by 2012. A tagging project in 2006 discovered that the birds from the Syrian colony were wintering in Ethiopia. However, it was unclear what was happening to the fledgling or immature birds.

Bald Ibises were originally widespread across Europe, Africa and the Middle East, but due to hunting, loss of habitat and pesticide poisoning, they underwent a dramatic population decline and are now only found in Morocco, Syria and Turkey.

These two populations are incredibly small, with the Moroccan population spending all year at the same site in the Atlas Mountains. Most historic populations were highly migratory, and the relic Syrian population contains the only remaining individuals who have the knowledge of historic migration routes from Syria to its wintering grounds in Ethiopia. The loss of this remnant population would result in the loss of the last migratory Bald Ibis, while also losing the genetic diversity that these migratory individuals contain.

Dr. Gianluca Serra has been engaged in front line biodiversity conservation as a researcher, civil servant, practitioner and activist during the past two decades internationally, across all five continents. During 2000-2011 he worked in Palmyra, Syria, under various organizations

(UN, EU, NGOs, and volunteer groups). He assisted the Syrian government in prompting biodiversity conservation in the country and in establishing the first protected green areas. He led the discovery of the colony in 2002 under a UN-FAO/Italian Cooperation project, and coordinated the protection and research efforts, while training local and government staff, up to the onset of the war.

In an article published by The Ecologist, Serra wrote: *"The Northern Bald Ibis vanished from the wild as a breeding species due to known threats along the migratory route, including hunting and habitat degradation. Three birds, including Zenobia, had been observed at the wintering site in Ethiopia during winter 2013-2014, but only she came back to Palmyra in spring 2014, alone for the second year in a row. That made 2014 the last year she was seen at the Palmyra breeding site. So this year, for the first time in millennia the Bedouin nomads of the Palmyra desert saw no Northern Bald Ibis in late February, at the beginning of the spring, as I was informed by my contacts in Palmyra."*

According to Serra, *"We are currently experiencing what has been called the sixth wave of mass extinction on the planet. The extinction of the oriental population of Northern Bald Ibis from its native range (Middle East and Eastern Africa) is an irreversible loss for the ecosystems of the Syrian steppe and of the Ethiopian highlands. It is also a permanent loss for the cultural heritage of the Middle East where the bird had been contemplated with awe by successions of civilizations through the millennia. The few surviving birds in question were the last living descendants of those revered by the ancient pharaohs"*.

The extinction of the Oriental Bald Ibis from the Middle East is really turning into an awful reality. Surely the bird is now extinct in Syria as a breeding species with the disappearance of Zenobia. The only hope for the species – and

a slim one at that – is that a few immature birds may still survive somewhere between western Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia. Reduced to only seven individuals in 2002 (when they were rediscovered) and breeding in a politically highly secretive country like Syria, undoubtedly only a miracle would have enabled to prevent the extinction of this long-range migrant, travelling twice a year across 10 countries among the most difficult to work within.

For more information about RSPB's Project titled "Conservation of the Northern Bald Ibis in Syria and the Middle East", Please visit: <http://www.rspb.org.uk/whatwedo/projects/details/220817-conservation-of-the-northern-bald-ibis-in-syria-and-the-middle-east>



A pair of Northern Bald Ibis engaged in courtship at their nest in the Palmyra desert the year of the rediscovery (2002) © Gianluca Serra

The loss of this remnant population would result in the loss of the last migratory Bald Ibis, while also losing the genetic diversity that these migratory individuals contain.





HIMA WOMEN: MAKING CHANGE A REALITY

The grant from the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) came at the right time to concentrate on gender issues in four Hima sites and empower women from social and economic perspectives. SPNL and the UN Women FGE project “**Promoting Hima Women Empowerment for Conservation and Livelihood**” aims to enhance the livelihood of rural women through the revival of the Hima approach in the sustainable management of the IBAs¹/ KBAs² of Lebanon. Nevertheless, our work on revitalizing the Hima model as a means for women empowerment has evolved into an integral part of SPNL’s approach to promote women access to and management of local resources. This was translated into SPNL’s revised strategy of mainstreaming gender and women empowerment and translated into a fully- fledged programme. It is important to highlight that the seed money granted by the UN Women FGE has contributed to this organizational change for SPNL and its work to strengthen the role of women in local community development through the Hima approach. It has as well helped SPNL raise extra parallel funding for women empowerment and marketing their products as a result of the project. Throughout the project, at least six traditional/ cultural skills have been identified and local women were trained on them in close linkage with natural resources and globally threatened species from each Hima site. Skills include carpet weaving, Armenian needle work (sevas,

¹ Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas

² Key Biodiversity Areas

ZENOBIA AND THE HIMA: AN APPROACH AND MODEL

etamin and atlas), hand-made accessories from recycled paper, fabric making, carpet weaving, etc... It is of importance to highlight the products' linkages to culture and nature as a means for conservation, yet as well establishing linkages with the environment and tapping on natural resources. Marketing of the products remains a key challenge to ensure the proper economic vitality of the Hima women and their economic independence.

The linkages of Zenobia the Queen, Zenobia the rare bird, and the Hima women are due to the revival of an approach and model.

Zenobia the Queen is a model for the resilience of women in conflict and crisis, and Zenobia the rare bird is a model for the actions needed to save the world's most threatened plants and animals, listed on the International Union for Conservation of Nature Red List, including more than 35 species in our region.

The threats many of these endangered species face are caused directly or indirectly by humans: climate change, destruction of natural habitats, illegal hunting, etc...

There has been a long-held perception that women are closer to nature than men, and by virtue of this alleged special relationship, women do have privileged insights into environmental morass or at least sensibilities that are more respectful of non-human life. The ancient identity of nature as a female and as a nurturing mother links women's history with the environment and ecological change, which has also been abused as men's possession and object of oppression.

In most cultures and societies, women and men have been assigned to different social, economic and cultural roles defined according to their biological differences. Ever since Plato and Aristotle, men were attributed the ability to think and the power to rule; while women were attributed features like irrationality. Thus, the woman-nature suppressions and intercon-



Skills training sessions for women in Hima Qaleleh

nections have captured the attention through the Hima approach.

History has shown that, when culturally important sites are under threat, people will find a way to rally round and save what they can. Similar efforts should be taken in Palmyra to save the Northern Bald Ibis and more than 30 species affected by the continuous war in the Middle East.

But how straightforward is it to save what others are determined to destroy? And what are the crucial factors that can help in saving? It is only through the Hima approach that threatened areas can be protected.

Recent years have witnessed several trends and campaigns in order to conserve nature and its resources within local communities. The most successful attempts in the Middle East to date have taken place in Lebanon by SPNL, leader in nature conservation, through the revival of the Hima approach since 2004, where the values of the traditional Hima approach and the modern

scientific approaches in nature conservation are merged. Accordingly, SPNL aims to promote and spread the sustainability concept among local communities using the Hima approach as a means to achieve sustainable hunting, sustainable fishing, sustainable grazing, and sustainable use of water resources. In a nut shell, the Hima approach concentrates on empowering local communities, upgrading their livelihoods, and promoting sustainable use of natural resources.

The values of the traditional Hima approach and the modern scientific approaches in nature conservation are merged.



BACKGROUND ABOUT SPNL ||●



● BACKGROUND ABOUT SPNL

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) was established in 1984 under the Lebanese law, and licensed by the Ministry of Interior under Decree No. 6/AD dated 8/1/1986. As a national environmental NGO in Lebanon, SPNL has widely contributed to both raising awareness on environmental issues and concretely protecting natural areas in Lebanon. Being Lebanon's BirdLife International partner³, it considers birds as entry point for the conservation of wider biodiversity. In addition, SPNL is a member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN); hence, it has helped develop the first biodiversity project in Lebanon, known as the Protected Areas Project.

Mission

SPNL aims at protecting nature, birds and biodiversity in Lebanon and to promote sustainable use of resources with people through reviving the Hima concept. SPNL bases its work on sound science and passionate commitment, which through transparent and democratic processes, leads to a well-informed public. SPNL strives to advocate a better quality of life for people and nature, through conserving sites and habitats, protecting species, and assuring sustainability.

Vision

SPNL works in a cooperative manner to fulfill its mission statement i.e., in cooperation with its partners, government institutions, municipalities, local communities, other NGOs, associates and the private sector. SPNL strives to trigger advances in strengthening capacities and influence. Its strategy revolves around four fundamental building blocks for promoting sustainable development: site & habitats, species, people and sustainability.

³ It is a global partnership of non-governmental organizations concerned with the preservation of birds and biodiversity for the benefit of humans. These organizations are distributed in more than 117 countries around the world.



The skill of using old fabrics to come up with innovative and creative designs was revitalized in Hima Qoteileh by 'Em Fadlallah'



WHAT IS THE HIMA CONCEPT?



● WHAT IS THE HIMA CONCEPT?

1. History

The word ‘Hima’ means “a protected area” in Arabic. The concept originated more than 1,500 years ago in the Arabian Peninsula, even before Islam where tribes used to conserve certain areas for a particular time in order to retain their livelihood in harsh environments. Islam helped develop this concept through adding values such as equity and benefits to the poor. Today, Hima is seen as a community-based approach used for the conservation of sites, species, habitats, and people in order to achieve the sustainable use of natural resources through the community. As it is an important cultural precedent for sustainably managing public natural resources, all individuals enjoy the rights of responsibly using these resources. In countries where the general population exploits the communal lands; the “*tragedy of the commons*” is widely spread. Thus, the Hima approach marks as a reliable and efficient approach that can produce significant positive results in terms of preserving natural resources, conserving ecosystems and supporting local communities. The Hima management and decision-making processes are locally based and agreed upon by the communities themselves, whereby resources could be fairly allocated amongst them.

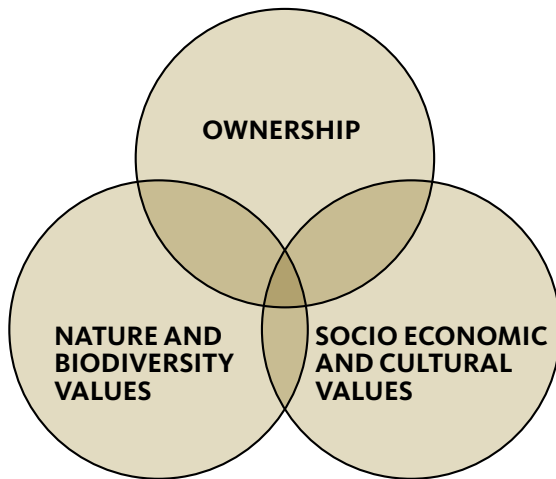
2. Identification of Hima sites & criteria for their selection

In order to declare a Hima through municipal decision, the site should firstly be declared as an IBBA or KBA in accordance to international regulations, having an ecological importance. These IBBAs and KBAs are identified nationally through scientific field research, and have one or more of three characteristics:

- 1) Hold significant numbers of one or more globally threatened species
- 2) Are one of a set of sites that together hold a suite of restricted-range species or biome-restricted species
- 3) Have exceptionally large numbers of migratory or congregatory species

The 3 main criteria for Hima identification and declaration are:

- **Ownership** which is divided into Governmental Lands, Municipal Lands, Religious holds and private land; however, the Hima site is best to be publically owned in order to serve the good of all members of the society, especially underprivileged groups.
- **Nature and Biodiversity Values** which include Important Bird Areas (IBAs), Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), Important Forest Areas, and Important Water Bodies which possess globally endangered/ endemic species of flora and fauna and/or constitutes important natural resources. Through the Medscape project, the landscape value has been added.



3. Himas in Lebanon

Since 2004, SPNL has succeeded in establishing 16 Himas in collaboration with municipalities, in key biodiversity areas. These sites include: Ebel es-Saqi in South of Lebanon, Anjar and Kfar Zabad wetlands in the Bekaa region, Qoleileh and Mansouri in the southern coast, Maabour Abiad, Andket, Menjez and Charbein in Upper Akker-North Lebanon, Jdeidet El-Fekha in Bekaa, Roum and Qaytouli in Jezzine, Ain Zebdeh, Kharebet Anafar, and Qaroun in West Bekaa, and Tarchich in Mount Lebanon.

- **Socio Economic and Cultural Values** which poses historical and cultural heritage, and sustain livelihoods of fishing, agriculture, and grazing communities. Its sustainability and management contributes to the livelihoods of the local community (i.e. economic benefit), it supports the empowerment of minority groups, allows social cohesion, and empowers traditional and cultural norms.



Hima Anjar-Kfarzabad wetland

Official opening ceremony of Women Atelier in Hima Anjar, in the presence of UN Women Regional Representative, Municipal members and members of the local community.



BACKGROUND ON UNW PROJECT **IV.**

ROLE OF WOMEN IN HIMA SITES MANAGEMENT **V.**



IV ● BACKGROUND ON UN Women PROJECT

The UN Women Fund for Gender Equality (UNW FGE) is one of the world's leading funds for promoting women's equality established in 2009. It is dedicated to advancing economic and political empowerment for women around the world. Current grants stand to benefit nearly 18 million women, by equipping them with leadership and financial skills, and by helping them secure decent jobs and social protection benefits.

UNW FGE picked up the SPNL project “**Promoting Hima Women Empowerment for the Conservation and Livelihood**” in 2012. The

three-year UN Women project addresses the involvement of women in the sustainable management of natural resources, conservation of globally threatened species at IBBA/Himas, and aims to empower women politically and economically thus enhancing their livelihood. The project includes four Hima Sites: Anjar and Kfar Zabad wetlands in the Bekaa region, Qoleileh/Mansouri in the southern coast, and Jdeidet El-Fekha in Bekaa.

Farmer woman © UNW FGE





● ROLE OF WOMEN IN HIMA SITES MANAGEMENT

Women are viewed as having an essential role in the conservation of the Hima site for two main reasons. First, they are the main users of natural resources in the household, such as water, plants, fire, and medicine. These entities have a direct effect on the conservation and sustainable use of the environment. Second, women have a basic, influential, and guiding role in raising new generations, thus, through increasing their knowledge and awareness, the women educate the younger generation who will serve as the future of the community. Embedding conservation and empowerment concepts at a young age will in turn create a sustainable community for future years.

WOMEN SELECTION PROCESS:

Selection meetings are held with the women in each village surrounding the Hima sites, which entails explaining the program in details. After that, a core group of women leaders are selected through their interest and motivation to learn new skills and contribute to the management of the natural resources at the Hima sites. This in turn initiates a snowball effect, in which the core women inform and encourage other women to join the project and so forth. The criteria for selection yielded the recruitment of over 90 women in the four Hima sites. The women gained social skills and were empowered economically through identifying new job opportunities. Moreover, legalized woman cooperative entities were formed in both Anjar and El-Fekha sites based on the needs and the commitment of the women.

Traditional 'zareb' making revived in Hima Kfarzabad



HIMA & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES VI.



● HIMA & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

To empower the women socially and economically, a series of trainings were conducted that include women rights, CEDAW, leadership, decision making and group collective work, trainings on skills followed by business trainings. These comprehensive capacity building initiatives would further empower the women to be leaders in their own communities and in turn empower other women and youth. A series of tools and methodologies for women empowerment will be discussed in details in the coming sections.

appoints a focal point who will be the contact person between SPNL and the municipality and will help to facilitate the work. This further strengthens the cooperation between both entities. The municipality then identifies the women groups that will be part of the Hima committee and help in conservation. All these stakeholders are important for the Hima and are trained on the approach needed for management of the site and conservation of the natural resources.

1. Initial trainings/meetings with municipalities & women to introduce Hima concept and protection of natural resources

SPNL approaches any site through the municipality, which is the local authority in the site in order to explain its ecological value and its importance for conservation. In partnership with the municipality, work will be done in a proper way and communication will be enhanced. Once the site is declared a Hima, initial meetings are held with the municipality to explain more about the Hima approach and conservation of the natural resources. This is done through a participatory approach using the different tools such as stakeholder analysis, SWOT analysis, problem tree, objective tree, visioning etc... After this, the municipality



Trainings on group collective work

2. Development of a Local Action Plan

2.1. Definition of a Local Action Plan:

A participatory local action plan is a strategic plan that outlines how a group of local stakeholders are going to work together in order to achieve a common vision through concrete actions highlighted through setting clear objectives and tangible strategies.

A Hima local action plan aims to resolve major problems highlighted by local stakeholders contributing to Hima management (including environmental, social, economic and cultural issues). Through adoption of a Hima local action plan, women are encouraged to work together in order to develop objectives and actions aiming to overcome identified priority problems. Through their participation, women demonstrate leadership skills, in which they are able to contribute to the holistic planning of their Hima sites. As such, their voices become much more recognized within their community.

2.2. An Overview of Methodology and Tools Used

A participatory local action plan focuses on local community engagement especially women. Accordingly, several participatory social tools are used by SPNL to empower women's participation. These tools include:

1- Testing women's knowledge through engaging them in group discussions about environmental topics (for example women are asked to work as a group in order to identify the difference between a Hima and a nature reserve). After presenting their definitions, the facilitator opens a discussion with the women about the selected definitions, and then amends the

final definition of each of the concepts through participatory discussions. A facilitator provides further explanation for each definition based on scientific references.

2- Women are provided with background information about the Hima approach and the participatory local action planning approach and tools through a background presentation (power point, note cards or flip chart papers can be used in order to elaborate information).

3- Participatory social planning & management planning tools are used to develop a vision, identify problems, identify stakeholders, highlight objectives, strategize and come up with an action plan.

a- Participatory tools used to develop a vision:

a.1 Visioning: The process of identifying and analyzing what changes the project, program, and how the organization would like to bring about change in the future. A vision is about defining a common view for the future.

a.2 Rich Picture Tool: A rich picture is a drawing of a situation that highlights its main features and the connections that shall be considered in this situation. Through a rich picture all the interactions and relations between several stakeholders in relation to different issues are highlighted. A rich picture is called so because it details the richness or complexity of a situation and its different interactions. Drawings, pictures, text, or symbols can be used to illustrate a situation. A rich picture is considered to be a good participatory method where everybody can add to it and use it to explain their particular interests or perspectives.

a.3 Rich Picture Methodology:

In order to develop a rich picture, a group of 4 to 7 people are invited to work together to draw the situation using a flip chart paper and different colored markers or crayons. Each person must sit or stand in such a way that he or she can easily draw on the paper. Through developing a rich picture vision, a group is invited to

question, how he would like to see the “*typical or the best management practice of the situation*” through the participation of different players, in a period of 20 years minimum. The Rich picture is a tool that can be used to highlight the “current” or “future” situation of an area.

b- Participatory Tools used for Stakeholder Analysis

b.1 Stakeholder definition: A stakeholder is defined as an entity which represents an individual, an organization or a group who has a direct or indirect interest in the project, program, site, and can affect or is affected positively or negatively by the implementations or outcomes of the project or program.

b.2 Stakeholder Analysis: A method of analyzing a system by highlighting its key players according to their respective interest and power. Stakeholder analysis is important in order to come up with a better idea about “*who are stakeholders, who might affect an intervention and its outcomes or be affected in relation to the planning process.*” In a stakeholder analysis we usually answer the following question “*Who are all the stakeholders and how are they involved?*”

b.3 Stakeholder Analysis Tools (RAAKS): RAAKS is a participatory stakeholders tool, used to help stakeholders gain a better understanding about their performance & the performance of different players in their surroundings. RAAKS identifies stakeholder’s power and impact. At the core of RAAKS lies identifying the role of major stakeholders in decision making.

b.4 Stakeholders Methodology (RAAKS)-

Table 1: The RAAKS tool is best applied in an interactive way between the facilitator and participants, where the RAAKS table is drawn on a big flip chart and a colored pen is provided to participants. Participants are encouraged to feed data into column 1 identifying stakeholders, and then later the ranking is done collectively through a group discussion about power and impact.

Column 1: participants are invited to highlight the name of stakeholders involved

Column 2: participants are encouraged to highlight the position of stakeholders in the decision making process. Participants shall answer the following question: To what level do the different stakeholders have a mandate, policies, knowledge or other ‘power’ in relation to other stakeholders in the project? Accordingly, stakeholders are ranked in the order of influence they have in the decision-making process. (1=high power; 5=lowest power).

Column 3: participants are invited to highlight the impact of a stakeholder on the sustainability of the ecosystem. Participants are invited to answer the following question: If you do not involve the stakeholder in the management of the ecosystem what implications will this have? Accordingly, stakeholders are ranked in order of impact they have on the management of the ecosystem. (1=high impact on the successful outcome; 5= lowest impact on the successful outcome).

Table 1: RAAKS box

Stakeholder	Position (rank the power in decision making)	Impact (rank the impact they have on the sustainable management)
Municipality		
Farmers		
Women		

c. Participatory Tools Used to Develop a Problem Analysis:

c.1 Definition of problem analysis: The process of identifying and analyzing the problems that affect people, organizations, or institutions and ecosystems (or even the whole protected area), in a given geographic context at different levels, including local, national, regional, international.

c.2 Problem Tree Analysis Methodology: Is a mapping approach used to illustrate problems through a hierarchical relationship between the cause and effect of that problem. Problem tree analysis elaborates the relationships between several complex issues or situations by placing them into a hierarchy of related factors.

A problem tree analysis is used to correlate between several factors which contribute to a problem. It also helps to specify the root causes of the identified problem.

Problem Tree Analysis Tool (Figure 1):

A problem tree analysis is practiced through

selecting a core problem for analysis. Accordingly, a group is invited to select one core problem for the analysis e.g. *mismanagement of natural resources in specific water and forest*. Then, later substantial and direct causes of the core problem are identified e.g. *water shortage, unsustainable hunting, overgrazing etc.*

Problem Tree Analysis step by step (Figure 1):

- 1- Select a group ranging between 4 to 7 people
- 2- Brainstorm with the group about their priority problems or concerns and let them write it on colored note cards
- 3- Using a big flip chart let the group select the core problem and place it at the middle of the model
- 4- Let the group identify the direct causes of the core problem, and place these below the core problem. (What causes the problem? Why is the problem there?)
- 5- Let the group check whether two or more causes are leading to the same core problem.

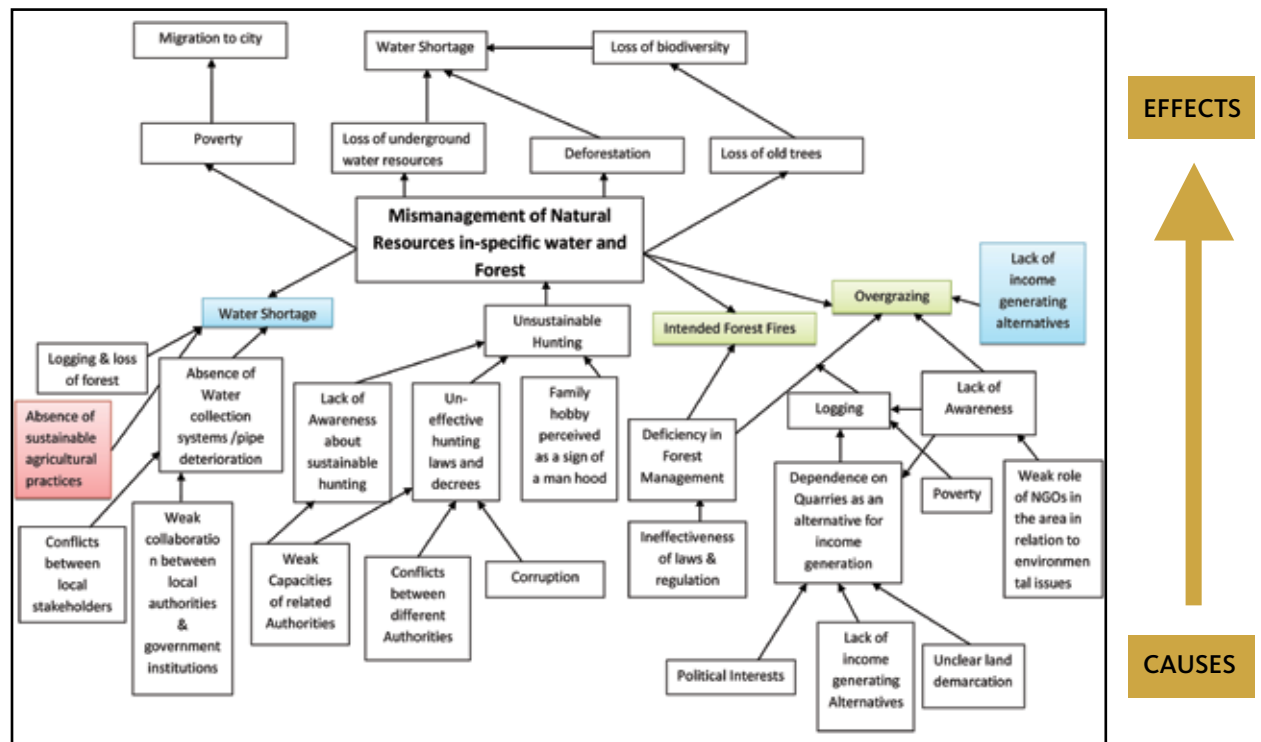


Figure 1: Illustration of a problem tree analysis

Let them place it at the same level

6- Let the group identify underlying causes of the 'direct causes', starting from the left

7- Let the group identify the direct effects of the core problem. Let them place it above the core problem

8- Ask them to check whether the direct effects are independently resulting from the core problem

9- When they finish identifying problems and their hierarchy, let them glue the cards on the white paper and connect the problems with cause-effect arrows

d. Participatory Tools Used to Develop Objective Tree:

d.1 Objective Tree Definition & Methodology:

An objective tree is a visual presentation of objectives through developing positive statements. An objective tree aiming to overcome the identified problems in a problem tree, through turning identified negative statements into positive ones. An objective tree is a mapping

approach used to illustrate objectives through a hierarchical relationship highlighted between them through identifying means to an end.

d.2 Objective Tree Tool, Step by Step (Figure 2):

1- Let the same group who worked on the problem tree to turn all the problems (negative situations) into objectives (positive, realized future states) and write them on colored note cards.

2- Ask the group to add any new relevant objectives necessary to achieve objectives at next higher level.

3- Ask the group to delete unnecessary & unsuitable objectives.

4- After validating the identified objectives and their hierarchy starting from the top, ask the group to glue the note cards on a big flip chart in a way to reflect a mean-end relationship.

5- Let the group draw connecting lines to highlight relationships.

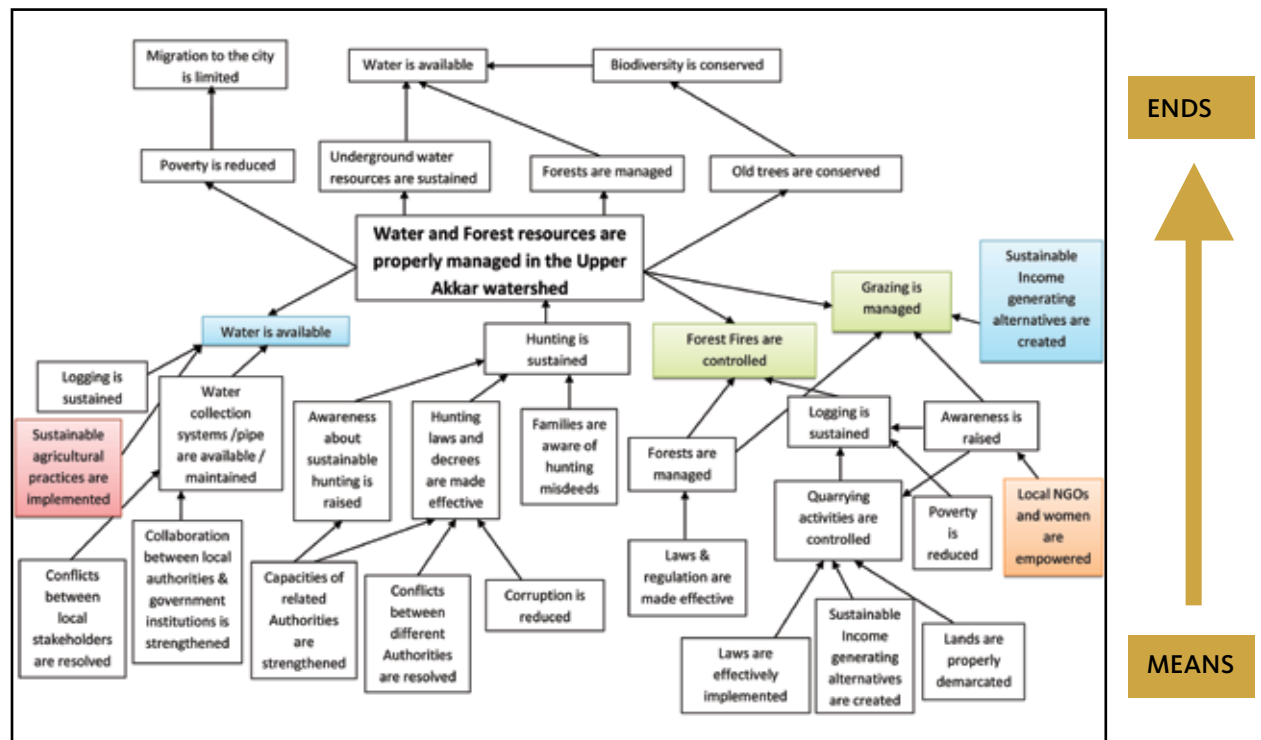


Figure 2: Illustration of an objective tree analysis

e. Strategizing: Is the process of selecting the core strategies of an action plan, through clustering, scoping and scoring methods.

e.1 Strategizing Methodology

Clustering: Create a simple overview of objectives in terms of similarity, activity or expertise through highlighting them under different clusters.

Scoping: Focus down the choice of a goal for the project by making explicit priorities for project implementation from the clusters based on the scoring.

Scoring: Make a decision on the choice of the actions and strategies based on a score.

e.2 Strategizing Tools:

Clustering Step by Step:

- 1- Ask the group to start at the bottom of the objective tree to create clusters.
- 2- Ask the group to group objectives in terms of same sector, activity, or expertise through creating a dotted circle around it.
- 3- Ask the group to work side-wards (same level) then upwards (next level)
- 4- Ask the group to name the cluster (example: awareness, policy making, tourism development), the name of the clusters will reflect the needed strategy
- 5- Ask the group to repeat step 1 to 3 for the rest of objectives.

Scoping Step by Step:

- 1- Discuss with the group the content of the clusters and strategies
- 2- Ask the group to identify clusters outside the scope of the project
- 3- Ask the group to eliminate clusters that are outside the scope of the project and cannot be achieved by the implementing body and mark with asterisk (*).

Scoring Step by Step (Table 2):

- 1- Using a flip chart paper and colored markers, ask the group to draw a decision matrix table
- 2- From the selected clusters, ask the group to make a priority choice of the applicable strategies
- 3- Ask the group to place the selected strategies into the first row of decision matrix table
- 4- Ask the group to develop strategy selection criteria, and place it into column 1 of the decision matrix table. Criteria can include: cost, relevance, and sustainability,....
- 5- Ask the group to evaluate priority strategies by identifying the correlation between the highlighted strategies in the first row and selected criteria in the column, by selecting a value from (1 to 5) for each. The more positive the correlation the higher the value.
Accordingly, allow the group to ask questions such as: How costly is strategy 1 in comparison to strategy 2?
- 6- At the end, ask the group to create a sum of the identified value and insert it in the total at the end

Table 2: Illustration of a Decision Matrix

Selection criteria	Strategy 1 Awareness	Strategy 2 Tourism	Strategy 3 Agriculture	Strategy 4 Policy dev.
Relevance	4	1	2	3
Cost	1	3	2	4
Sustainability	2	4	1	3
Subtotal	7	8	5	10
Feasible in terms of time	3	2	4	1
Participation by stakeholders	1	4	2	3
Technical capacity available	1	4	3	2
TOTAL	12	18	14	16

- 7- The highest total reflects the selected strategy to be considered for an action planning.

Action Plan table:

As a result of the process of strategizing, a group will be able to develop a detailed action plan table based on the highest scoring strategies. An action plan elaborates on the detailed actions that are needed to take place within a period between (1 to 3 years) in order to implement selected priority strategies, in cooperation with the identified stakeholders. It will answer the following question: “What are the needed actions under each strategy and who will implement it?”

2.3. Outcomes of the local action plan development in Anjar Kfar Zabad by the women (as an example)

- Identification of all relevant stakeholders in the site is key to proper management of the Hima, where women comprise one of the major stakeholders. Based on the stakeholder’s analysis matrix conducted, women in Anjar Kfar Zabad believe that they have a significant role in decision-making however, their actual influence on the management of the site is very weak. This means that the factors affecting women’s roles and their influence on managing the Hima site should be studied and discussed in order to include the women in the management of the various natural resources.
- The municipality plays a significant role in taking decisions and managing the site. Hence, if any progress needs to be noted, it should start first at the municipality level.
- It is important to develop a common vision for the Hima site based on a participatory process. The vision identified for Hima Anjar Kfar Zabad is: **“Hima Anjar/Kfar Zabad completely clean and environmentally protected**

through the efforts of the citizens of the village and the cooperation of all stakeholders.”

- Problems affecting the Hima were identified by the different stakeholders and presented in a problem tree. The core problem identified was the **“depletion of natural resources and the degradation of the environment.”** In the same spirit, now the stakeholders converted each problem into an objective to come up with an objective tree for managing the problems affecting the management of natural resources in their Hima sites. The core objective identified was the **“protection of natural resources and the environment”**.
- Based on the results of clustering related to the objectives, priority strategies were identified. According to the women, the main focus in action planning and management of the site should be on the awareness issue, since it is the most cost effective, sustainable, relevant, and feasible strategy. In addition to the fact that the capabilities in promoting and spreading awareness are present and most of the stakeholders can participate in it.
- The training workshop was of high importance since it united two villages that are different in terms of culture, language, and traditions.
- Participatory planning is an important tool to be used in developing a common vision and local action plan for the Hima site where involvement of all stakeholders is necessary to have a holistic approach. This will ensure involvement of all to reach a common goal which is the sustainable management of the site.

3. Trainings on women rights (CEDAW, leadership, decision making and communication)

3.1. Training content

This component falls under women social empowerment. To do so, a series of trainings were conducted by a trainer to increase women understanding of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and women rights, leadership, decision making and group collective work. As a result, more than 90 women deepened their theoretical knowledge and practical abilities related to women's rights and combating gender discrimination and violence. Moreover, this will enable them to participate in decision-making in their local communities and surroundings.

Special Objectives of the Training:

- Identify concepts and gender roles
- Learn the evolution of women's rights within human rights
- Identify the rights contained in CEDAW
- Learn the reality of women in Lebanon: give live and true examples on discrimination and violence against women
- Define leadership based on gender
- Define feminist leadership
- Identify the qualities and functions of feminist leadership
- Identify problems facing female leadership
- Understand and acquire communication skills to build and strengthen women's leadership
- Define the concepts and skills of participation: political and community participation in decision-making

The trainings were divided into three sessions each for a duration of three hours in the four Hima sites. The trainings were categorized as the following:

Day 1: **Women Rights Concepts**

Day 2: **Leadership and Gender**

Day 3: **Decision Making and Communication**

More details about each training session are further elaborated:

Day 1: **Women Rights Concepts**

• Session 1: *Defining gender concepts and roles*

At the beginning of the session, the trainer along with the participants carried out exercises about the roles and behavior of men and women in both Lebanon and Sweden. It was found after analyzing the results that the situation of women and men varies due to the change in many cultural aspects of life except the biological roles of each of them. The trainer explained what gender is and determined the difference between gender and biological sex. Then she defined the role/roles, particularly gender roles, as well as the four roles: reproductive role – societal role – productive role - political role. She also analyzed how to divide these roles between men and women. Later on, the participants carried out individual exercises and group exercises to distinguish the roles based on gender or biological sex.

• Session 2: *Evolution of Women's Rights within Human Rights - equality, elimination of discrimination and violence against women*

Reference was made to the main principles and values of human rights, in terms of human dignity, the right to equality, non-discrimination, self-determination, and how women have not been able to enjoy their human rights. Then a presentation was given highlighting the path of historical development of the rights of women

within the context of human rights, starting with the concept of equality and discrimination all the way to the concept of violence against women. The trainer also explained the concept of gender equality and the difference between equal opportunities (as set out in the International Charter of Human Rights) and equality of result (as set out in CEDAW). The trainer also explained the concept of discrimination and violence against women. Reference was made to CEDAW and an explanation was offered on the rights contained therein, with the Lebanese reservations thereon.

Participants were then divided into working groups preparing dramatic situations for problems of discrimination and violence against women. After showing the different scenarios, the trainer analyzed them and identified violence and gender-based discrimination against women in the fields of education, labor, political participation and the right to choose a partner (early marriage). These situations show the difference of power and submission between men and women. The trainer also identified the separation of roles between the sexes, and the forms of discrimination and violence against women based on gender. All participants interacted with the presentations that displayed the problems of women in Lebanon in a practical and concrete way.

Day 2: Leadership and Gender

• Session 1: *Importance and specificity of leadership for women*

The first part of the session was a discussion that began by determining the importance and specificity of leadership for women knowing that leadership is an essential role for men. Moreover, the discussion mentioned that women have limited access to positions of authority because of violence and discrimina-

tion against them, which weakens their leadership roles. It was noted that women succeeded in social leadership; however, they have not been able to reach leadership in the political field. In this context, the participants mentioned many names of women leaders in their own families or activists in the public domain in Lebanon. They also confirmed that there are a lot of unknown and anonymous women leaders who continue to be ignored because of sexism. Subsequently, participants conducted a dual exercise to describe leaders who influenced their lives. They also identified three leading characteristics for each group and inferred some features in women. After viewing and discussing the results, the participants identified the different barriers that impede women from reaching positions of authority. After having a brainstorming session over the meaning of 'leadership' and giving a synonym for the word 'leadership', the group was divided into three groups to generate a definition of the concept of 'leadership' based on the words set forth.

• Session 2: *Defining leadership and leadership skills*

After reviewing and discussing the results of the working groups, leadership was defined as: *"A process of influencing and motivating the community to reach common goals by collaborating together and organizing their work."* The concept of leadership includes participation, transparency and accountability. Amongst the definitions provided by the groups:

- Leadership is the culture of dialogue and understanding among members of society. It also influences society, for example: a woman could be a leader by being the principal of the school.
- Educated – open – self-confident – patient – enduring – understanding – able to express an opinion – strong and charismatic.
- Leadership is the ability to assume responsi-

bility and good governance by taking the right decisions and influencing others.

- Leadership is the ability to plan and manage in a good manner and influence the surrounding environment.
- Leadership is love and sacrifice and bearing the burden of unfair society to do justice for women. Women leaders have the ability to influence society and are capable of expressing their opinion.

Then, key leadership skills were identified that include: communication, presentation, oral expression, sympathizing with others, positive impact on others, delegating and distributing responsibilities, problem analysis, planning, organization, interaction with others, creative and critical thinking, assessment ability, and last but not least developing and building women's leadership. To be able to implement her plans as required, the leader must have the ability to influence others, and this is done through a network of knowledge and the ability to cooperate and help others. Then the participants tackled the concept and meaning of leadership by participation (participatory leadership) and discussed the most important advantages after comparing conventional and participatory leadership.

Finally, when asking the participants "How can you be a leader in your own life?" many replied that they were already leaders but, they did not know this. Thus, they must develop their leadership skills to demonstrate the leadership role of women.

Day 3: **Communication**

• Session 1: *Defining the concept of communication*

At the beginning of the session, the concept of communication was introduced as being the basis for interaction between people, and

conveying a message from sender to receiver, either verbally or through non-verbal means, such as body language, facial expressions and tone of voice. It is important to be alert to the way we communicate making sure to understand and be understood by others in order to succeed and be effective in various spheres of life. The meeting also highlighted the power of language, verbal communication and non-verbal communication between genders and the importance of developing the capacity to communicate.

The meeting also noted that the official language in the public domain is characterized by logical and formal proof and uses difficult and specialized terms. This kind of language is often used in the political sphere and is devoid of expressions that indicate passion, values and standards. Emotional language is linked to the private domain and is influenced by the sex of the individual. The background, social and political differences and gender determine the type of language used and the choice of words and expressions. Women tend to use emotional language while men tend to use an official language, the language of the public domain. The difference of language between the two sexes is clear in society and determines the language that we use in work, society, education, and social upbringing. Education and social upbringing encourage boys to be active and to take initiatives and girls to take an interest in others and take care of themselves.

The elements of communication were defined as:

1. Both parties of communication are the sender and the receiver;
 2. The message;
 3. Feedback or evaluation of the communication process through effective listening.
- Also, the elements for effective communication were identified.

Next, an individual exercise was conducted asking each participant to speak for two minutes sending a message or idea to other participants based on convincing arguments and evidence. Then the power and the language of the message was evaluated as well as its ability to reach others in a clear and convincing manner.

- Session 2: *Types of communication*

This session addressed the types of communication: verbal and non-verbal communication (audio – visual – movements and gestures). It also identified verbal communication rules, notably: accuracy and clarity –tone – pace – while highlighting the most important issues which are enthusiasm and credibility.

An exercise was conducted where participants were divided into three groups. Each group discussed a subject to promote women's products and industries, using one of the communication types/means. Each group then delivered a five-minute presentation, and the language used was evaluated, as well as the effective communication and their ability to persuade others and communicate information.

After the presentation and discussion of the results of the working groups, a communication technique card was put to monitor initial emotions and confusion. In addition to that, the communication techniques on how to deal with the initial emotions and sense of confusion were also identified. In addition, control over women was identified through ignorance, cynicism, ridicule, withholding information, considering all the work carried out by women as wrong, and the sense of blame and shame. Then the meeting discussed how to deal with these aspects.



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3.2. Analysis

In order to assess the extent to which the women have increased understanding on CEDAW and women's rights, leadership, decision-making and communication, a set of pre and post questionnaires were conducted. A set questionnaire was prepared and distributed to the women before beginning with the trainings to assess their prior knowledge on such issues. Then, after the trainings were finalized, the same questionnaire was re-administered to the women to assess the impact of change and whether or not the women benefited from the trainings.

Below are some results of the pre & post questionnaires for the first sessions in the different sites:

First day: Results of the Pre and Post Questionnaires

El-Fekha Group

Participants	Pre- % percentage	Post- % percentage	Achieved increase or progress % percentage
1	29	70	41
2	29	56	27
3	42	70	28
4	42	70	28
5	42	70	28
6	70	100	30
7	42	56	14
8	29	56	27
9	29	56	27
10	56	100	44
11	29	56	27
12	56	56	0
13	56	70	14
14	56	70	14
15	42	70	28
16	56	100	44
17	56	100	44
18	42	70	28
19	42	56	14
20	42	70	28
21	56	100	44
22	70	100	30
23	0	56	56
24	56	70	14
25	0	42	42
Average progress for each group			29 %

The overall rate of progress and increase of knowledge of El-Fekha group regarding the rights of women is **29%**. This is a good percentage, especially since the group includes housewives that have never participated in trainings and international conventions on women's rights. They initially considered that women already have all their rights. They gave examples such as women being able to go out of their houses and attending meetings in the Church or in family gatherings as an expression of the exercise of their rights. One of the women considered that she exercises her rights freely because she has a maid and her husband meets all her requests. During the training, and through the drama plays, they felt the violence and discrimination against them and worried about the vulnerability of women in the face of customs and traditions that are the first cause for the persistent violation of their rights. The group was characterized by active participation during the discussion taking into consideration that half of the group was comprised of young women. At the end of the training, partici-

pants stressed the importance of eliminating discrimination against women and the need to educate women to enable them to participate effectively at the level of the family, particularly their participation in decision-making, and confirmed the importance of women's participation for the advancement of their family. It is important to add that during the training, the surroundings of the town were bombed by the Syrian army, which led the training to stop for some time. The post questionnaire was done before ending the training and thus, not all information was provided to the group before conducting the questionnaire since some of the women had to leave urgently.

Participants	Pre- % percentage	Post- % percentage	Achieved increase or progress % percentage
1	42	85	43
2	56	85	29
3	70	70	0
4	56	85	29
5	70	85	15
6	42	85	43
7	56	85	29
8	29	85	56
9	42	85	43
10	42	100	58
11	0	100	100
12	14	100	86
13	42	100	58
14	42	100	58
15	56	100	44
16	42	70	28
17	14	100	86
18	29	100	71
19	29	85	56
Average progress of each group			49%

The overall rate of progress and increase of knowledge of Anjar group regarding the rights of women is **49%**. This is a very good percentage especially since most of the group speaks Armenian and there was a communication problem between the participants from Anjar and those from Kfar Zabad. During the training, the group showed progress in terms of knowledge of women's issues and women's rights as the majority of participants are working women and productive at the household level. They also had great inclination to reject violence against women and refuse to be victims through role-playing which became a method to express their refusal. Participants were able to link discrimination against women to the prevailing culture of violence against them. They also felt that women must work to change their image in society and to increase their participation in the public domain and not only within their family. This is an indicator to the increase of awareness in the group by linking equality to gender roles. The group included three women refugees from Syria; this formed an opportunity to address the situation of Syrian women as well.

Qoleileh Group

Participants	Pre- % percentage	Post- % percentage	Achieved increase or progress % percentage
1	20	100	80
2	60	80	20
3	40	40	0
4	40	80	40
5	20	80	60
6	0	60	60
7	0	60	60
8	0	60	60
9	20	60	40
10	20	80	60
11	40	80	40
12	20	80	60
13	20	60	40
Average progress of each group			48 %

The overall rate of progress and increase of knowledge of the Qoleileh group regarding the rights of women is **48%**. This is a very good percentage however, it does not reflect the actual progress since there were a number of illiterate participants who were assisted by their colleagues and were answering randomly the questions. In this case, an oral examination replaced the written assessment.

At the beginning of the training, some participants were shy to speak in front of others and express their opinions and ideas, but role-playing encouraged them to speak, especially that some participants demonstrated exemplary leadership skills, which encouraged and motivated the others. Explaining the concept, the causes and consequences of discrimination and violence against women helped them to better understand the realities. Some talked about the discrimination they had faced and the preference for male education - not because of the weakness of their abilities- but because of gender differences. This shift in awareness spurred the participants to focus on the importance of empowerment and the productive role of women contributing to increasing their participation in decision making, especially decisions concerning their lives and destinies. They expressed their right to empowerment, particularly economic empowerment while denying their right to education because of discrimination against women. This progress in raising their awareness of the problems of discrimination against women and their full participation in decision-making is very important to improve their own life and help them overcome barriers and marginalization.

3.3. Overall assessment

Strengths

- The trainings met the real needs of the participants and benefited them as shown in the results of the pre and post questionnaires and the daily evaluation.
- The participants interacted significantly in raising the issues of violence and discrimination against them and were able to get out of their shyness and overcome the barriers of their own problems. It was also realized that the women increased their self-confidence in themselves and in one another, which was shown during the course of the training. Also, the women spoke without fear when they were faced with forms of violence and discrimination. There were a number of participants who were initially ashamed to participate, but at the end of the training they were participating enthusiastically, especially the women from Qoleileh.
- The trainings had a positive influence on the women including building their self-confidence and exchanging experiences with each other. This was particularly shown in the group from El-Fekha, which included young and elder women in the same group.
- The exercises carried out during the trainings focused on their work and the experience they got out of the skills training, thereby creating a positive interaction and satisfaction of the results achieved.
- The existence of a large number of young women in groups, particularly in Qoleileh group was beneficial to share their experiences and learn from each other.
- Choosing a participant to be a focal point for communication and interaction within the group was a good idea and developed a sense of responsibility for the women.

Weaknesses

- It would have been more preferable if the trainings in Anjar and El-Fekha were parallel to the vocational trainings as was the case with Qoleileh. Working initially with the group through vocational trainings promotes unity and builds confidence among the trainees. Moreover, it makes the preparations for the training of human rights and awareness building more successful.
- The women participants were more interested in starting the practical trainings to produce products and participate in different festivals and events.
- The security issues were always a challenge that delayed most of the trainings and in some cases reduced the number of women who participated.

Recommendations

- Conduct a number of focus groups to meet the women in order to select the ones who are willing to participate. Also, it is preferable if the group is larger than the projected number because the economic empowerment and vocational trainings witness dropouts.
- Continuous awareness raising on women's rights is needed.
- Capacity building of women in advocacy and work in the environmental area is important, which strengthens their capacity to communicate in public and local domain.
- Capacity-building in the management of small businesses after the completion of vocational trainings is needed, in order to start production of the goods.
- Encourage the women to continue working as part of a cooperative or local group which will

further strengthen participation and collaborative work among the women and increase production of products that are marketable, despite varying capacities between each other.

4. Trainings on skills linked to culture and nature

To empower the women economically and help them enhance their livelihoods through income generating activities, a total of six skills were identified in the four Hima sites. These skills are linked to the site and serve as a cultural or traditional value to the local community. Thus, focusing on such skills will directly empower the women not only by acquiring new vocational skills, but also by empowering them economically through producing and selling hand-made products. It is important that the women feel they are important and can actively participate in society. Through acquiring vocational skills, they are learning to become independent and provide for their families in close connection with their Himas and globally threatened species.

A more detailed description of each skill per site will be elaborated in the following:

4.1. Criteria for selection of skills/products:

When deciding on the skills to be chosen for the Hima sites, three criteria were taken into consideration:

1. Linking the final product to the geographical location of the Hima site while emphasizing on the biodiversity values existing in the site.
2. Reviving a skill that existed in the past in these villages.
3. Creating a marketable product.

Accordingly, several evaluation visits were conducted in the villages during which meetings with stakeholders were organized. In those meetings, SPNL team met the potential women, members from the municipalities, active members in the social field, scout members, and women who participated in previous trainings with other local and international organizations. With the help of SPNL focal people in each municipality we were introduced to women who are still trying to preserve a skill that was known in the past. Thus, from this project our aim is to revive such traditional skills practiced previously in the village to be as a source of income for the women and improve their livelihoods as linked to nature and globally threatened species.

4.2. Skills Identification:

A total of six skills were identified throughout the project in the four Hima sites of Anjar, Kfar Zabad, Qoleileh Mansouri and El-Fekha. These skills were divided per Hima site and include the following:

Hima Anjar Kfar Zabad:

Three skills were identified in Hima Anjar Kfar Zabad which include different forms of Armenian needlework. Armenian needlework is a traditional skill that is practiced in Anjar and is still being practiced from generation to generation. There are several types of Armenian needlework each with a different end product. These practices can be a major source of income generation for women if developed into a business, which is managed and marketed properly, allowing the women to benefit economically. Accordingly, in Hima Anjar, SPNL collaborated with the municipality of Anjar and the Anjar Armenian Red Cross in order to enhance the traditional Armenian needlework practices of the local women

groups in the village and link them with messages promoting nature conservation.

- **Sevaz Needlework:**

The needle embroidery dates back to 200 years ago in an area called Van in Turkey. Decorative items and clothes are made with traditional Armenian patterns and natural features linked to the area.

- **Atlas Needlework:**

Atlas is a type of needlework that dates back to 100 years ago from Eastern Armenia/ Turkey. Atlas needlework is originally made from natural real silk to make pieces used for table cloth, cushions, posters and bed covers.

Hima Qoleileh Mansouri:

Two skills were identified in Hima Qoleileh Mansouri: fabric making and hand-made accessories from recycled material. The first skill is mainly based on collecting old clothes or remaining pieces from sewing and then putting them together in a way to make decorative and useful items. As simple as it sounds, this skill, aiming to reduce and reuse waste, would be classified as being environmentally conscious. Moreover, solid waste being one of the biggest problems in the Hima site and plastic bags from garbage being the main reason behind the deaths of sea turtles preserved in the Hima, the second skill was selected which is up-cycling. Prior to starting with the trainings, the women had some introductory sessions about the natural materials and how to work with them, the wrong behavior we have towards waste and how we can transform a considerable part of it into beautiful and useful products. Moreover, how to work with recycled material, cleaning, beading and jewelry-making techniques, planning a design and putting the pieces together. The main idea focused on throughout the trainings was to minimize the cost of the final

product. Thus, the number and type of material used was unlimited as women continuously came up with new ideas; using any possible item they could find in the household and transforming them into a piece of art.

Hima El-Fekha:

One skill was identified in Hima El-Fekha which is carpet weaving. This traditional skill was almost completely lost until it was revived by SPNL through the UN Women project. One old woman in the village still knew this traditional skill that she learnt from her sister in law. It started as an interest and along the years it became as a source of income for her and her family. Through the project, she in turn taught this skill to 30 other women in the village through training workshops.

This handmade product is closely linked to the local cultural heritage and identity of Hima El-Fekha. The region's traditional carpets are unique products in all Lebanon. There are no other producers in the country today; in the Northern village of Aaidamoun (in Aakkar), from where this craft was originally brought to El-Fekha, it has been extinct since the 1950s. North Bekaa is the only Lebanese region characterized by a semi-desert climate, with harsh winter seasons, which justifies the production of such carpets. The looms themselves have been produced from local wood (either from the juniper tree, today almost extinct in the Anti-Lebanon but still existing in the neighboring Wady Faara, in the eastern side of Mount Lebanon, or from apricot and poplar trees).

4.3. Training Process

The training process was specific to each Hima site as detailed below:

Hima Anjar Kfar Zabad:

The training process in Anjar was different than the other sites. Based on several meetings held with the municipality and Anjar Armenian Red Cross, they expressed that women are knowledgeable about different types of Armenian traditional needlework including sevas, atlas and etamin styles. As such, trainings were not needed on these skills that the women already acquire, instead a group of 24 skilled women were chosen based on their interest in the project. This group was divided into different clusters to work on different types of needlework and produce items and products that hold the authenticity of their work and promote nature conservation. Under the Armenian Red Cross, a special administrative committee represented by seven women was established, aiming to manage the women group, and communicate with them and other stakeholders (SPNL and the municipality), on the production of different products, provide the needed support and assist in the management of production and sales.

SPNL provided the women group with the necessary raw material for the production of different products (including fabric, needles, strings, and other material). Furthermore, and through the mentoring of SPNL's designer, women were guided on the production of different marketable products that showcase different environmental messages as well as different designs that carry the cultural messages of the Armenian community, interlinked with the conservation of the globally endangered species of Anjar such as the River Otter and Syrian Serin bird species. As a result of this process, women were guided to produce some marketable unique items that they were not aware of. The women's authentic products started to hold not only the richness of their culture but newly consecrated messages of conserving wildlife. Accordingly, a "Souk El-

Hima Atelier" was established in the village through the support of SPNL and its partners, including the municipality of Anjar, UN Women FGE, EU and MAVFA Foundation. The atelier will act as a major workshop location where women can meet together to produce their different authentic designs and crafts. Furthermore, a kiosk known as "Hima Shop" was established at the entrance of the Anjar World Heritage Site in order to market Souk El-Hima products made by the women.

Hima Qoleileh Mansouri:

A total of 32 women were trained in Qoleileh Mansouri on different skills. Trainings were conducted by a designer in product making and design elaboration.

A series of 15 sessions of two-hours each were conducted. The women benefited from the following trainings:

1. Bracelet making with threads: learning different techniques using a number of threads varying between 4 and 16.
2. Paper beads accessories: learning how to make paper beads of different sizes and shapes then make various types of accessories.
3. Glass painting technique: using stippling technique on used glass containers (glasses, small jars, trays, plates...).
4. Stenciling on both paper and clothes: this technique was applied on tote bags and the designs were numerous and suitable for all ages.
5. Seashell items (including sessions about using the drill): products included accessories, decorated trays, glass jars and tote bags.
6. Dough making accessories.
7. Coloring techniques: including color theory, painting techniques, display and finalization of products.

8. Carving skills on wood and rock: using the drill.
9. Up-cycling using plastic: coffee and potato chips bags were used to make purses and wallets.
10. Wiring, cutting and bending skills with the metal thread, gluing techniques, working with feathers, painting on rocks with paint and ink, spraying, differentiation of production, finalizing the art piece.
11. Cloth decoration session: using pieces of old clothes to make numerous items like bags, coasters, hot pot holder, trays...

It is worth mentioning that both paper beads accessories and clothing accessories were among the most successful products as the customers appreciated the precision used in the technique and the fact that the raw material is very cheap.

Hima El-Fekha:

Through this project, traditional vocation has been revived, where 30 women have been trained on the skills of manual weaving of carpets on looms with different sizes & colors. They learned the different steps needed for carpet weaving from wool washing, dying, combing, and weaving. Furthermore, each woman was provided with a metal loom and a wooden loom in addition to the needed accessories. Now, they are fully equipped to work on producing manually woven carpets where SPNL is committed to support them in marketing their products.

A big enhancement for better adaptation of the carpets to market needs was done by SPNL's designer who worked in close collaboration with the women. Changes such as reductions in size, thickness, weight, production time and ultimately cost were done. Also, quality and design were improved by linking them to nature and endangered species by introduc-

ing bird species designs to the newly made carpets. These adaptations could allow the region's carpets to better compete against foreign products and perhaps gain a better reach into mainstream sales outlets.

4.4. Outcomes achieved:

1. Even though each of the women had learned all the various techniques, each one of them has shown an interest or preference to a specific skill. Thus, these trainings have created a group of skilled women who can work together and complement each other.
2. At least half of the trained group is now financially dependent on the income from selling their products.
3. Two women from Qoleileh found jobs based on the skills they learned during the project (one as a handcraft trainer in a summer camp and one had an agreement with a local resort to provide them with seashells ornamental products)
4. Three of the trained women from Qoleileh are planning to start their own collective business with a possible opening of a shop of their own. In order to achieve this objective, they might take a small grant from Al-Majmoua.* It is important to note that Al-Majmoua is a Lebanese non-profit microfinance institution that focuses on supporting micro-entrepreneurs, particularly women, in developing sustainable businesses all over Lebanon. SPNL collaborated with Al-Majmoua during the project to train the women on the skills needed to open a small business, manage it, manage financials, identify marketable products and enter the market.
5. The linkage of carpet making with the Hima is very strong, since under the adopted land use and natural resources management, special attention is given to the protection of

natural resources through sustainable use by the local community in different levels of the value chain (for instance, sustainable grazing, sustainable use of water etc.).

5. Business trainings

Women represent half the world's population and gender inequality exists in every nation on the planet, but in the 21st century women enjoy more freedom and power than ever before. Women play a very important role in the economic development of Lebanon. They are involved in business activities at all levels, making important contributions to economic growth. Nowadays, Lebanese women are increasingly active in parts of the economy that were previously considered male domain. Women entrepreneurs also create jobs. While many women are succeeding in business, they are still constrained by the gender values, norms and stereotypes in the environment in which they operate. Because of their reproductive roles they tend to be responsible for business as well as for most of the unpaid work in the household (domestic responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning and caring for children and other household members). Women also face social and cultural barriers, because the overall perception in society is that a woman's main duty is to be a good housewife and mother. The main objective of the SPNL – Al Majmoua project is providing women with new skills that fit their free part-time in order to make them micro-entrepreneurs.

5.1. Training content

A. Business management training (BMT):

Before a micro-entrepreneur begins with her project, it's crucial that she gets the right kind of training and this usually means going on several business management training sessions. These training sessions discuss the

management skills that a micro-entrepreneur should use in her daily responsibilities such as maintaining and understanding accounting and bookkeeping methods, getting the selling, negotiation and communication skills, planning the market strategy and putting their business plan into action.

The process of BMT is a collection of related, structured activities which produce a service that meets the needs of the participants. The training sessions were held over five days and included trainings in entrepreneurship, successful business traits, selling skills, financial negotiation, bookkeeping, marketing, business budgeting and business planning. The agenda of the training was designed and adapted to meet the objectives and the outputs of the project and to be relevant to the participants and their communities. The training process was designed to be flexible taking into consideration participants' expectations and their capacity.

B. Micro-credits:

Micro-credit is a part of micro-finance, which is the provision of a wider range of financial services to the very poor. It is a socioeconomic development method that emphasizes capacity building for micro-entrepreneurs. Making a small loan is helping a real person to make great strides toward economic independence and improve life for themselves, their family and their community.

Loans are made to individuals especially those who lack collateral and steady employment so they cannot meet the minimum qualifications to gain access to bank services. Collateral requirements play a part in achieving the high repayment rates. All participants in the training were offered micro finance services and have made enquiries about the possibility of using micro credit to pursue the endeavor of becoming an entrepreneur.

The trainings that were given as part of this project were tailored to the needs of the women taking into consideration that the women are amateurs and lack the basics for business management. Thus, a total of 7 sessions were conducted in the 3 Hima sites (3 different groups) for a total of $7 \times 3 = 21$ sessions. Each session is 3 hours, thus totaling $21 \times 3 = 63$ hours of training. This was given over a period of 4 months extending from March to June 2015.

The 7 topics can be summarized in the following:

Table 3: Business training topics

Subject	No. of hours	Objective	Content
Entrepreneurship (smart ideas, products and services ...)	3	Improve the entrepreneurial skills of the participants, increase their knowledge on legal issues and enable them to identify the idea behind the work, identify job opportunities, and challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Self identification * Identifying ideas for local businesses * SWOT ANALYSIS * Legal Issues
Operational Plan (including production, location, personnel, legal issues, and operational cost)	6	Improve the participants' knowledge and skills in the writing of the action plan for work by selecting the estimated cost, time, and human resources necessary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Type of risk * Cost of establishment and resources * Business Plan
Marketing and promotion	3	Enable and enhance the participants understanding of the concept of marketing and promotion tools that will help to develop their business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * market study * Marketing mix * Marketing Plan
Bookkeeping + costing and pricing	6	Increase the participants' knowledge and skills on the importance of bookkeeping and why and how to estimate cost and price	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * The importance of bookkeeping * What are the different types of costs * How to estimate costing and pricing
Financial negotiation and selling skills	3	Improve the participants' ability to conduct effective negotiations and financial procedures for sale in order to reach agreements on financial affairs as well as other issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Prepare financial negotiations * Negotiation Techniques * Exercise negotiations * Review negotiations * Sales techniques * Successful ways to sell products and services

5.2. Evaluation of BMT

1. BMT in El-Fekha

Location: El-Fekha

Date: March – May 2015

The women in El-Fekha had the option of attending the sessions according to their personal schedule. These sessions were presented throughout the days in which the women had already divided themselves into groups according to their personalities, geographical area and business interest. The sessions were all incorporated to include realistic examples of the businesses these women had chosen.

• **General satisfaction:**

The general satisfaction from all trainees about all the training sessions gives the following overall classification results:

- 60% were very satisfied from the training in general
- 40% had very good satisfaction on training

• **Training content:**

In order to calculate the training's difficulty and its relevance to the work the trainees were contemplating, the trainees were asked about their opinion concerning the overall content of the workshop.

- 45% considered the training content simple, easy to understand and relevant to their endeavours
- 55% considered the content was acceptable and adequate

• **Trainers:**

In order to measure the performance of the trainer, the trainees gave the following satisfaction:

- 60% of women found the trainer's presentation to be dynamic, organized and active
- 40% considered the trainer to have a good presentation

• **Training Location:**

With the aim of improvement, the location had an effect on the trainees' perception.

- 42% considered the room very suitable
- 58% considered it suitable

Quote: **"The training has really helped me see our business idea in a new way"**

2. BMT in Anjar

Location: Anjar

Date: April – June 2015

The women were also divided into two groups but over several weeks to suit their time preferences. The women had previously divided themselves into groups and were trained on the BMT program according to their business selection.

• **General satisfaction:**

The general satisfaction from all trainees about all the training sessions gives the following overall classification results:

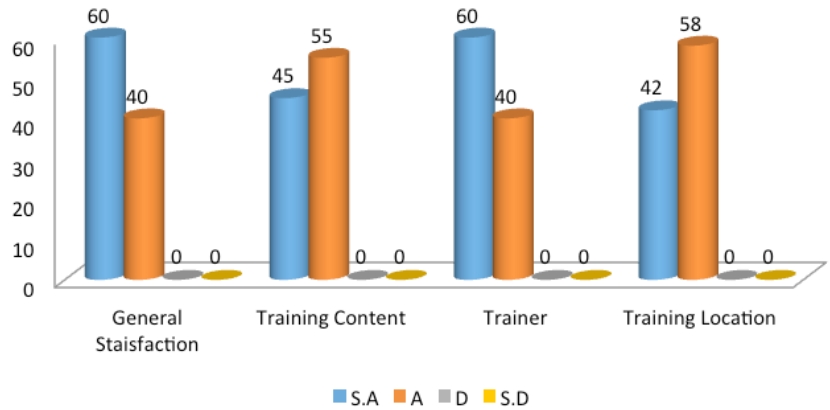
- 71% were very satisfied from the training in general
- 9% were satisfied from the training

• **Training content:**

In order to calculate the training's difficulty and its relevance to the work the trainees were contemplating, the trainees were asked about their opinion concerning the overall content of the workshop.

- 72% considered the training content simple, easy to understand and relevant to their endeavours
- 8% considered that the content was acceptable and adequate

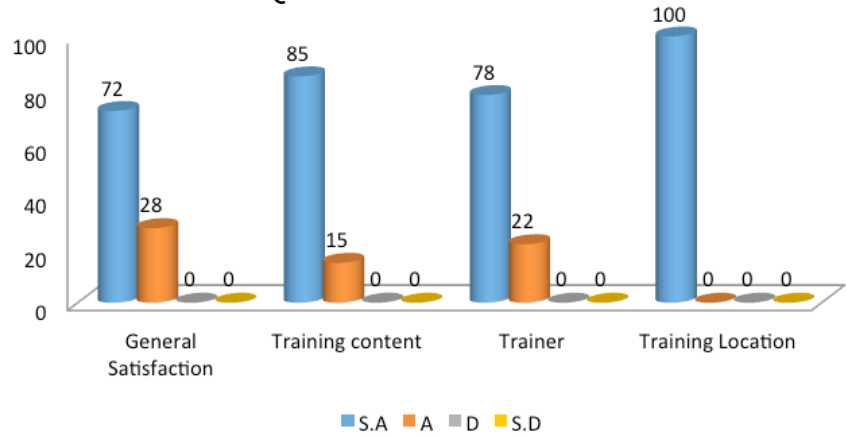
Evaluation of BMT in El-Fekha:



Evaluation of BMT in Anjar:



Evaluation of BMT in Qoleileh:



S.A: Strongly Agree A: Agree D: Disagree S.D: Strongly Disagree

- **Trainers:**

In order to measure the performance of the trainer, the trainees gave the following satisfaction:

- 74% considered the trainer's presentation to be dynamic, organized and active
- 6% considered the trainer to have a good presentation

- **Training Location:**

With the aim of improvement, the location had an effect on the trainees' perception.

- 74% considered the room suitable
- 6% considered the room not suitable

Quote: **"I really liked the training sessions because I learnt a lot of new things."**

3. BMT in Qoleileh

Location: Qoleileh

Date: May – July 2015

The participants' commitment was very good during the overall sessions. They showed a high motivation in participating, asking questions, sharing experience and challenges. Most of them were characterized with fast learning and good communication skills while others needed back support and had limited capacity.

- **General satisfaction:**

The general satisfaction from all trainees about all the training sessions gives the following overall classification results:

- 72% were satisfied with the training in general
- 28% were very satisfied with the training in general

- **Training content:**

In order to calculate the training's difficulty and its relevance to the work the trainees were contemplating, the trainees were asked about their opinion concerning the overall content of the workshop.

- 85% considered the training content simple, easy to understand and relevant to their endeavours

- 15% considered that the content was acceptable and adequate

- **Trainers:**

In order to measure the performance of the trainer, the trainees gave the following satisfaction:

- 78% considered the trainer's presentation to be dynamic, organized and active
- 22% considered the trainer to have a good presentation

- **Training Location:**

With the aim of improvement, the location had an effect on the trainees' perception.

- 100% considered the room suitable



Hand made sea shell accessories in Hima Qoleileh

Women Atelier in Hima Anjar.



CASE STUDIES/SUCCESS STORIES VII.



VII

● CASE STUDIES FROM EACH OF THE SITES/ SUCCESS STORIES

Throughout the project duration, a few women stood out among the rest and were selected as Hima women role models. Their success stories are shared with you as a token of their appreciation.

1. Anjar

“Mrs. Leina Istanbulian, is an example to all that women can be active members in society equally important as men.

This story is a an example of how social and political empowerment can be achieved step by step and how decision makers are starting to have a positive perception about gender equality and are starting to understand the important role that women play in conservation issues and decision making positions. From the beginning of the project, Anjar municipality showed great interest and support by which they started to include the issue of women empowerment and the key role that women play in the society in their agenda. Immediate changes started to take place, whereby the municipality took a step further and appointed Mrs. Leina Istanbulian as the vice president of the Environmental Committee that had previously been formed in Anjar, along with two other women from a total of nine members.

Mrs. Lena added, *“From this, we will be able to raise our own as well as other women’s voices, thoughts, opinions, and needs; which will guarantee women participation in the planning, implementation, and management of the different environmental activities.”* Through this environmental committee, women in Anjar will gain back their rights of access and control over these natural resources. They will also encour-

age other women to do the same. This shows how interconnected the social, political and environmental aspects are and how women can play a major role in the whole process.

“On a personal level, this opportunity gave me a huge push and motivation to feel stronger, active, and independent. It made me believe that all people are born equal and women have the same capacities as men, and can hold tough and serious duties. In addition, this job created an income for me that helped me in turn feel free and active without anyone to depend on, as well by this income I can help my family with the household and school expenses.” Furthermore, she continued by saying that *“This job had a positive impact not only on me as a person, but on the community as a whole, by which it is a lesson learned for all people; whereby now people know that the different social norms and the patriarchal conservatism that allow to keep women away from the public sphere and from involvement in decisions for sustainable development are wrong. Thus, women have equal rights to men and can do the same work men do.”*

This was the response of a 40-year-old woman from Anjar, Tereise Sarkisian, who was chosen alongside another woman, Arax Sarkisian, by the municipality of Anjar to start gathering the electricity bills instead of men. The municipality adopted this new method in order to empower the women socially and economically. This story was chosen since it shows that this old biased mentality that prefers men over women and limits the options of women can be changed with continuous efforts over time. Moreover, those selected women are considered now as role models that exemplify how women can be strong, equal to men, active, and empowered.

2. Qoleileh/Mansouri

Zahira Saleh, also known as “Em Fadlallah”, is the only remaining woman in the village of Qoleileh who still uses old clothes and fabrics to transform them into decorative items.

This traditional skill existed previously in many villages in the area, however, with time, people lost interest in preserving it until it was totally lost. Thus, Zahira was chosen to train the women on this skill that she still masters.

After the training sessions were completed, Zahira asked if she could join the group of women who were already undergoing trainings as part of the UN Women project and continue the rest of the trainings with them. Even though the trainings on skills had already been done and the women had learned 10 different skills (paper beads, bottle caps, bracelets, drawing on glass, stencil...), Zahira was still able to learn on her own all those skills with the help of some women in the group. She showed passion and interest to acquire new skills that would add to her already existing ones. She felt that this would further help her in designing new products. She was never satisfied with what she already knew, but expressed her high abilities for learning:

“I used to do lots of items from the clothes just to pass the time, but when I joined the project with SPNL, I realized that these items can be marketable and would be a source of income for me and my family. Moreover, the trainings that are being given throughout the project not only benefit us financially, but also help us raise our voices through empowering us women to be active members in the society.”

In addition, during the business trainings with Al-Majmoua, and after seeing Zahira’s work and enthusiasm, the trainer asked her if she

could train women in other surrounding villages in cooperation with Al Majmouaa. This is an important indicator that the UN Women project gave the participants the opportunity to benefit from their skills and find jobs to support them financially.

Moreover, her passion to learn and create didn’t stop here. Today, Zahira spends lots of time learning new skills on her own from videos she watches online and applies what she has learned by coming up with new innovative items. Furthermore, she expressed her willingness to continue in what she does by saying, *“I am willing to teach young women in the village everything I know because it’s important to preserve this skill. I would also like to thank SPNL and the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality for giving me this golden opportunity to revive old traditional skills, acquire new skills, and market my products.”*

3. Kfar Zabad

“Tiffeha Abu Rjeily” is a role model for all women who think that change is not possible.

She, like many other rural women, faces the same problems where women are not given their rights in society and do not take part in decision-making. They have no presence in society and their roles are limited to the household and raising the children. However, through her active participation in the project and in the trainings on CEDAW, women rights and decision-making, Tiffeha has shown great leadership skills. She has increased her understanding about her rights and how she can make change and in turns influences other women in the village to join.

She added by saying, *“I will help other women in the village by empowering them socially and economically and help them promote their local products from Kfar Zabad. These products are made from local material linked to the landscape and traditions of the village. Thus, women making these products will eventually be able to market them and make an income to support their families.”*

Tiffeha is now able to share her messages and experiences with other women who feel inferior in society. She has the courage to stand up for what she believes in. She no longer accepts to be dominated and her voice not heard. This strength that she acquired was a result of the CEDAW and women's rights trainings that were done as part of the UN Women project.

This exceptional story of change is what the UN Women project strives for, the belief that women can change and have an active role in society. They can be their own decision makers and leaders.

4. El-Fekha

“Nahla Succarieh” is the only remaining woman in Hima El-Fekha that still weaves carpets, a traditional skill she acquired from her sister in law. However, with the advancement of the mechanized industry, the handicraft of carpets is nearly extinct due to its long and demanding process with limited financial benefit.

For Nahla, the story was different. She explained, *“It started as an interest and along the years it became my source of income and the reason behind educating my children. It is such a unique and rare tradition, despite the long hours and hard work, maintaining this craft has been rewarding for me and my family.”*

Thus, in order not to lose this skill, Nahla was chosen by the project to train local women

on the skill of carpet weaving for which, the required equipment and tools were provided. She expressed her gratitude by saying, *“I am very pleased that this project is giving me the opportunity to pass this craft to others, thus helping in the revival of this cultural practice that is becoming endangered with time. It will also help empower the women economically by marketing their products and improving their livelihoods.”*

The added value of this project was the integration of the environment and endangered species from El-Fekha to the newly produced carpets as a way of linking culture and nature. This was done with the help of a designer in order to market the products and introduce new modern designs with smaller sizes than the original ones, which could be sold easier. Finally, Nahla added, *“The business trainings that followed the skills trainings were a great support to help me better understand the needs of the current market and design new products that are more marketable. We are used to our old traditions, thus acquiring new skills will help me improve my knowledge to market my products. This will provide me with more income to support my family economically. I strongly encourage other women to do the same.”*



Traditional carpet weaving revived in Hima El-Fekha

Women showcasing their hand made products linked to the Armenian culture in the Women Atelier of Hima Anjar.



SOUK EL-HIMA **VIII.**



1. Souk El Hima from idea to program

The idea of Souk El Hima originated from SPNL's efforts to revive the Hima concept. The program was established to answer the local communities' need to have their products marketed and to raise awareness about the importance of products that are related both to nature and to Lebanese heritage. Each Hima site produces different products. Together, they form "Souk El-Hima" and are marketed through this initiative.

Vision

Diversified cultural and traditional skills at IBAs/Himas in Lebanon are revived and promoted as an outlet to upgrade the livelihood status of local communities entwined with conservation awareness.

Goal

A new programme initiated by SPNL during the fall of 2014, aiming to conserve cultural and traditional skills at local communities and to upgrade the livelihood of rural communities within IBAs/Himas in Lebanon interlinked with natural resources.

Aims and Objectives

- 1- To empower local community members especially women and underprivileged groups.
- 2- To revive cultural traditional skills from the Lebanese culture.
- 3- To create job opportunities for local people around IBAs/Himas in Lebanon.
- 4- To promote and market local community products.
- 5- To support in alleviating poverty at rural level.
- 6- To support local community development.
- 7- To link local producers with market and decrease migration to cities.
- 8- To link artisanal skills with globally threatened species conservation messages (awareness).

2. Items & description of each Products from the Himas:

Products from the Himas associated with the UN Women project include:

Anjar Products:

The Atlas, Sevaz and Armenian etamin are traditional Armenian needle work. The women of Anjar are persistent to keep their traditions alive making these authentic pieces that not only represent the Armenian culture but also symbolize women empowerment and the endangered species in the area.



Display of women products from Anjar at the Kiosk near the entrance of the historical ruins of Anjar

Etamin needlework



Atlas needlework



Sevaz needlework



Qoleileh products:

These products are made by the women of Qoleileh who make use of natural and eco-friendly material like sea shells, bottle caps, paper and many more to make accessories, fabrics and home decorative items.

Sea shell accessories



Reused old cloth, jars and Sea shell home items



Necklaces made from recycled material



El-Fekha products:

Only in El-Fekha region handmade carpets are still weaved from natural wool and dyed with natural colors extracted from plants, trees, leaves and fruits such as walnut, onion and pomegranate.



Skills training sessions in Hima Qaleleh



LESSONS LEARNED IX.

CHALLENGES/RECOMMENDATIONS X.



IX • LESSONS LEARNED

- Participatory planning is the best approach used to involve women in decision-making. However, it is a long-term process that requires regular engagement of women. The recognition of the leadership role of women in the Hima management was realized as a core element to enable catalyzed positive change in a Hima site, due to the strong influence of women groups on their communities.
- The support and participation of the major stakeholders/interested parties was key to ensure the development and advancement of the project.
- The financial incentives played a major role in encouraging the beneficiaries to commit to the project.
- The motivation of the group of women formed and their collaboration and awareness of each other's responsibilities will ensure the sustainability of the project.
- Women leaders "emerged" during the trainings on CEDAW and women's rights. Those women would form the base of any future projects in the area.
- It is important to mix between theoretical and practical trainings during the same period since most of the women prefer practical trainings and lose interest fast during theoretical trainings.
- It is important to engage the women in every detail and activity that is done throughout the project as not to lose their trust and interest and maintain a strong bond between the project manager and the women stakeholders.



- Involvement and participation of the women in different events and festivals in Beirut and outside Beirut was very beneficial for the women to better understand the needs of the market and to improve their communication and negotiation skills with clients.
- Continuous follow up with the women groups and municipality is a must throughout the whole process.

X ● CHALLENGES/RECOMMENDATIONS



Advanced skills training sessions for local women in Hima Anjar

- During the process of women engagement, women were hesitant to accept new ideas in relation to product development and design. This was one of the major factors, which slowed the process of product development.
- Development of communication and management skills was realized as a core need in order to empower the leadership role of women.
- The women of Anjar were recognized for their distinguished multiple skills, which was hindered by the lack of financial resources to empower their skills, in addition to the lack of an entrepreneur personality which is an opportunity for leadership and power within their community.
- The security situation was always a challenge that delayed the activities and work done in the sites.
- Two additional outlets were done in both Qoleileh and El-Fekha to increase exposure and expand the market for the women. Thus, developing additional outlets in different hima sites would build on this initiative and allow the women to further sell their hand-made products.
- Continuous involvement and participation of the women in local, national and international events and festivals will help ensure further sustainability even after the project ends.



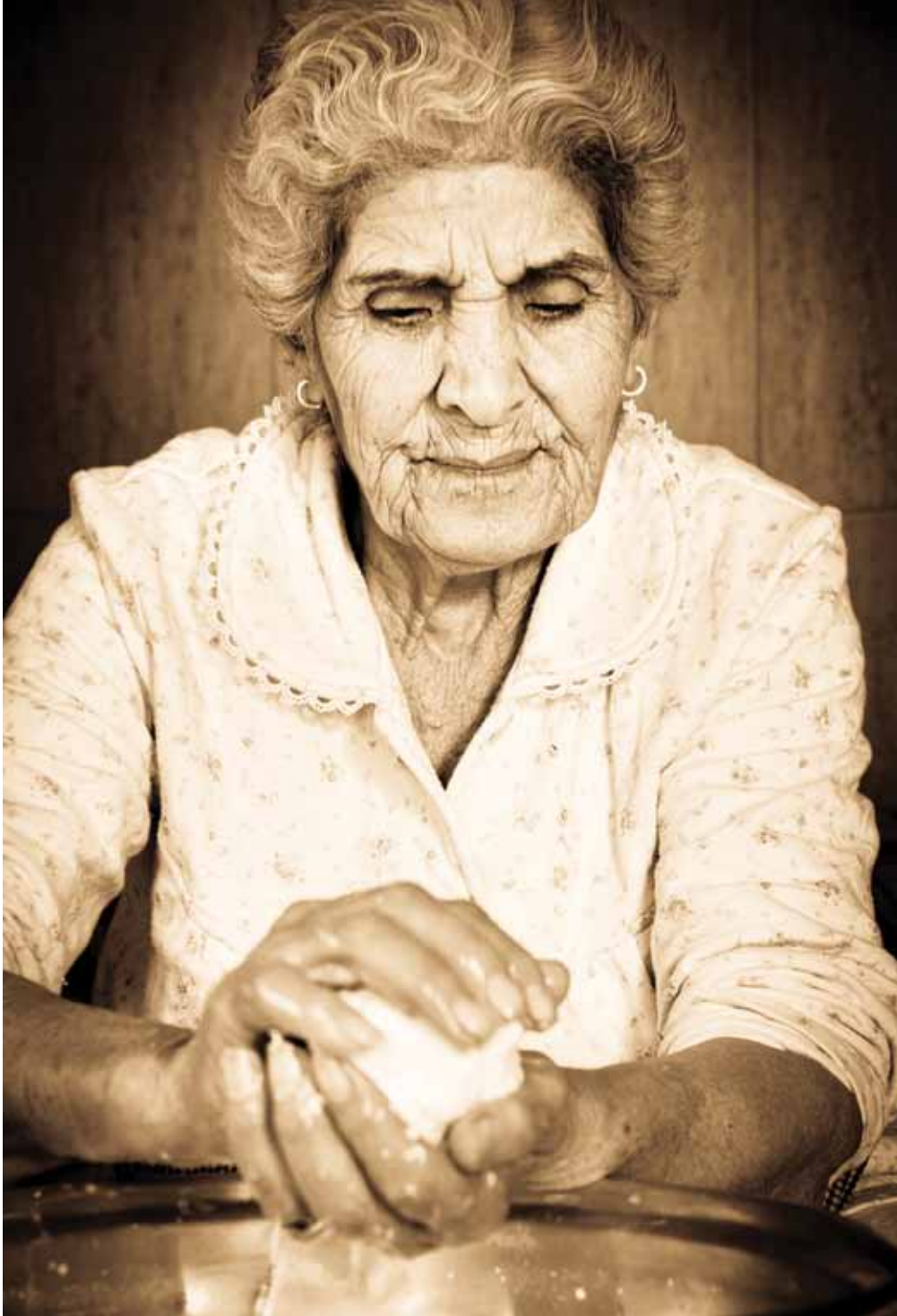
CONCLUSIONS XI.



- The UN Women project had a great impact on the women both socially and economically where direct changes were perceived. Socially, women were more involved in management of the Hima site as members of the local committee and their voices were heard as the important role of women in society was highlighted throughout the project to the municipality, local community and the women. Economically, the women are making a basic income through producing and selling items in different markets and events. Fixed ateliers/outlets have been established in the three hima sites Anjar, Qoleileh and El-Fekha where the women will be able to display their hand-made products. Half of the women now have an increased income due to the project. Some also received job offers to teach the skills they have acquired.
- Through the different trainings, women now understand their rights, responsibilities and can stand up for themselves and be independent members in society.
- The project helped bring the women closer together by forming women groups who were trained, worked together and complemented each other's work. This enhanced communication, collaboration and teamwork among the women who were usually housewives.
- The project gave the women hope for the future and a belief in themselves that change is possible. One woman quoted, *"I never used to believe in myself and thought that my place is limited to the household, but after my participation in the project and the different trainings, I now feel more empowered and that my role is very important in society and I can make a change."*
- Targeting women and empowering them is a great tool for future sustainability since they are the main caregivers and can transfer the knowledge to their children.
- A great achievement of the UN Women project has been the recent partnership between SPNL and Bioland, a private organic oriented company. Bioland has common values with SPNL including the most important gender mainstreaming where 42% of their employees are women who produce dairy products, honey, and edible plants. In addition, for the making of jam, it is 100% produced by women. Similarly, 55% of SPNL employees are women working on different fields. Bioland will support SPNL with marketing Souk El Hima products whether food or artisanal hand-made products and accessories. Based on that, we are developing branding for common products between SPNL and Bioland as a model for future list of common products.



Opening of the women atelier in Hima Qoleileh as a working place for the women to develop new and innovative items linked to the site and readily made for the market.



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Credits

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— **SPNL THE WORLD LEADER IN HIMA REVIVAL** —



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