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Independent Final Evaluation of the BOUZOUR Project Building Inclusive Markets and Decent Work for Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Host Communities

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1.2. Acronyms and abbreviations

Acronym	Full form
AAER	Adopt–Adapt–Expand–Respond (market systems change framework)
AIMS	ILO's Approach to Inclusive Market Systems
BOUZOUR	Building Inclusive Markets and Decent Work for Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Host Communities (the project)
BDS	Business Development Services
CCIAZ	Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Zahle and Bekaa
CCIA-BML	Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon
CGTL	General Confederation of Lebanese Workers
CPO	Country Programme Outcome
DC	Development Cooperation
DCED	Donor Committee for Enterprise Development
DWT	Decent Work Team (ILO)
DWCP	Decent Work Country Programme
EQM	Evaluation Question Matrix

EU	European Union
EVAL	ILO Evaluation Office
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FENASOL	National Federation of Workers' and Employees' Trade Unions in Lebanon
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GLOBALG.A.P.	Global Good Agricultural Practice
HDP	Humanitarian-Development-Peace (nexus)
HQ	Headquarters
ILO	International Labour Organization
IYAB	Improve Your Agribusiness
KII	Key Informant Interview
LSES	Lebanese Solar Energy Society
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoET	Ministry of Economy and Trade
MRM	Monitoring and Results Measurement
MSD	Market Systems Development
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
OSH	Occupational Safety and Health
P&B	Programme and Budget (ILO)
RFP	Request for Proposal
ROAS	ILO Regional Office for Arab States
ROI	Return on Investment
RC	Results chain
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SIYB	Start and Improve Your Business (ILO)
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
SQ	Sub-Question
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USD	United States Dollar

2. Executive Summary

2.1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

BOUZOUR was funded by Sida and implemented by ILO in Lebanon from July 2023 to March 2026. It aimed to make agricultural and agri-food markets work better for Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees, while also promoting decent work. In simple terms, the project tried to improve the system around farmers and workers, not only to provide one-off support to individual people.

The project used ILO's Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS). This means that BOUZOUR tried to work through the actors who already shape the market: farmers, cooperatives, exporters, service providers, local manufacturers, training institutions, ministries, employers' and workers' organisations, and implementing partners. The logic was that change is more likely to continue when these actors have a reason to continue it after project funding ends.

The project focused on four main outcome areas. First, it supported greenhouse upgrading, climate-smart agriculture and selected contract-farming or structured-sourcing models. Second, it supported the cherry value chain through export readiness, certification, post-harvest improvements, farmer-exporter coordination and decent work entry points. Third, it supported access to solar energy for agriculture through technical assessments and shared or rental productive infrastructure. Fourth, it supported Improve Your Agribusiness (IYAB) and SIYB institutional anchoring so that agribusiness skills could continue through local trainers and institutions.

The project's Theory of Change evolved during implementation. It was designed around a market-systems logic, but Lebanon's crisis context forced practical adaptation. Economic collapse, banking and liquidity constraints, energy shortages, conflict escalation, movement restrictions and agricultural market disruption made it difficult for many actors to invest or take risk. BOUZOUR therefore kept its AIMS orientation, but combined facilitation with targeted and time-bound de-risking where market actors could not realistically carry investment risk alone.

Geographically, the evaluation covered the main areas where BOUZOUR operated, including Akkar, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon and Beirut-based institutional and market actors. South Lebanon and some conflict-affected locations could not be covered through direct fieldwork because of security conditions. The project was managed by ILO, with Sida funding, AIMS technical backstopping and implementation through several partners and market actors.

Present situation of the project

The project was implemented in a highly volatile context marked by economic crisis, liquidity constraints, inflation, institutional fragility, conflict escalation and geographic access restrictions. Several interventions had to adapt to changing security, market and partner conditions, and South Lebanon could not be covered through direct fieldwork during the evaluation period.

By project closure, BOUZOUR had exceeded several formal output and outcome targets and had generated credible early behaviour-change and systemic-change signals, particularly in greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart services and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring. The cherry pathway also showed important potential, but requires more seasons and more stable market conditions to confirm its systemic potential. Solar energy access was relevant, but remained constrained by affordability and liquidity.

The overall situation of the project can therefore be explained simply: BOUZOUR delivered strongly under crisis conditions, but some results remain early. The project opened doors, tested models and created practical examples. Several promising pathways now require follow-up, finance, repeated market testing or stronger institutional ownership before they can be considered fully sustainable or systemic.

Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation

The independent final evaluation assessed the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation and sustainability of BOUZOUR, including cross-cutting issues related to gender equality, disability inclusion, environmental sustainability, decent work, tripartism and social dialogue. The evaluation covered the full implementation period from July 2023 to March 2026, all four outcome areas, and the main geographic areas where BOUZOUR operated, including Akkar, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon and Beirut-based institutional and market actors. Due to security conditions, South Lebanon and some conflict-affected locations could not be covered through direct fieldwork and were assessed through remote interviews, project documentation, partner data and triangulation with other stakeholder perspectives. The evaluation focused on both accountability and learning. Its primary clients are ILO, Sida, project stakeholders, implementing partners, constituents and future programme designers working on inclusive market systems and decent work in fragile and crisis-affected agricultural contexts.

Methodology of evaluation

The evaluation used a mixed-methods, theory-based contribution analysis approach, combining document review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and analysis of project monitoring data and result chains. Evidence was assessed against the Evaluation Question Matrix agreed in the inception phase and interpreted through OECD-DAC criteria and the AIMS/AAER lens. The evaluation distinguished between project-reported results, triangulated evidence and evaluator judgement. The evaluation did not try to prove strict attribution. This was a performance evaluation, not an impact evaluation with a counterfactual. It therefore assessed plausible project contribution by comparing evidence from documents, interviews, focus groups, monitoring data and stakeholder validation.

Gender equality, disability inclusion and other ILO cross-cutting issues were integrated through sampling, data-collection tools and analysis across the criteria. The evaluation included women workers, farmers, IYAB participants and relevant institutional actors where feasible. It also reviewed whether decent work, worker voice, child labour, OSH, disability inclusion and just transition were built into the intervention logic and evidence.

The main limitations were the short evaluation timeframe, exclusion of South Lebanon from direct fieldwork due to conflict, reliance on available project and partner data, and limited in-season validation of some cherry labour findings because one cherry worker focus group was conducted outside the harvest season. These limitations do not invalidate the findings, but they require careful wording, especially where evidence concerns systemic change, seasonal labour or longer-term sustainability.

2.2. MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

Overall assessment

BOUZOUR was a highly relevant and strongly delivered project implemented under exceptionally difficult conditions. The project team and partners delivered important results despite economic crisis, financial-sector dysfunction, energy shortages, conflict escalation, access restrictions and market volatility. This is a major positive finding. At the same time, the evaluation keeps a clear line between delivery, behaviour change and mature systemic transformation. BOUZOUR delivered strongly and generated credible early systems-change signals, but full systemic transformation across the whole portfolio was not yet mature at project closure.

This distinction is not a criticism of the project. It is a realistic reading of what can be expected from a short AIMS project in a crisis context. Several models were tested, adopted and partly adapted by market actors. Some are close to a stronger sustainability pathway. Others still need finance, repeated seasons, institutional follow-through or stronger market response. The evaluation therefore assesses BOUZOUR positively while remaining careful about claims that require more time to prove.

Relevance - High

BOUZOUR was highly relevant to Lebanon's crisis-affected agricultural market system and to the economic realities of Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees. Agriculture was an appropriate sector because Lebanese farmers, agri-food SMEs, cooperatives, service providers, Syrian seasonal and permanent agricultural workers, and women workers are all present in this market. This made agriculture a practical entry point for inclusive livelihoods, decent work and enterprise resilience.

The project was most relevant where it addressed concrete constraints that actors already felt: productivity, water and energy efficiency, greenhouse working conditions, market access, certification, business skills and post-harvest quality. These were not abstract development topics. They were problems that farmers, workers, service providers and enterprises had to deal with in daily economic life.

Relevance to Syrian workers and women was also clear, but more difficult to translate into strong worker-side pathways. Agriculture in Lebanon is highly informal. Worker representation is weak. Syrian workers are vulnerable and often have limited bargaining power. This meant that decent work could be addressed where it was connected to productivity, OSH, quality or buyer requirements, but it was harder to build a strong independent worker-voice pathway.

Coherence - Medium-high overall; high strategic coherence

BOUZOUR was strategically coherent. It aligned well with ILO's Decent Work mandate, AIMS, sustainable enterprises, productive employment, social justice and just transition priorities. It also aligned with Sida's focus on resilience, livelihoods, inclusion, market systems and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Lebanon. The project addressed the right types of market-system functions: access to technology, climate-smart services, certification, market access, business skills, energy, recruitment, OSH and decent work.

Internal ILO coherence was strong. The project coordinated with relevant ILO project teams and technical structures, including DWT, ROAS and AIMS backstopping. This supported a practical OneILO approach by linking market systems, sustainable enterprise development, OSH, gender, decent work and just transition perspectives. It also kept relevant ILO structures informed on progress and results.

The main coherence weakness was not strategic. It was operational portfolio integration. Several pathways were relevant and worked on complementary functions, but they often operated in parallel rather than as one deliberately connected portfolio. Solar addressed energy, greenhouse upgrades addressed technology and OSH, cherry addressed

certification and export access, IYAB addressed business skills, PlantLab addressed recruitment, and QOOT addressed structured sourcing. These are coherent functions, but they were not always strongly linked around shared bottlenecks such as finance, market access, certification, labour services or buyer requirements.

Access to finance was the clearest unresolved cross-portfolio connector. The project did test affordability, rental, shared-use and de-risking approaches. Still, Lebanon's financial crisis, frozen liquidity and weak feasibility of conventional finance made this a structural constraint. This affected solar adoption, cold chain, greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand uptake, cherry post-harvest investment and scale-up of promising models.

Effectiveness - Medium-high

BOUZOUR was effective in delivering outputs and exceeding formal targets. The project reported 274 farms with improved productivity or working conditions against a target of 60; 146 farmers connected to new market opportunities against a target of 50; 490 farmers enabled to benefit from solar-powered productive infrastructure or services against a target of 100; and 303 farmers and small agri-businesses capacitated to better manage their operations against a target of 200. These are strong delivery results in a highly constrained context.

The effectiveness rating is medium-high rather than simply high because target achievement does not automatically mean mature systemic change. The project did what it said it would do, and in many cases exceeded planned targets. However, immediate outcome-level behaviour change varied across pathways. Some pathways generated strong behaviour-change evidence. Others delivered outputs but still need more evidence of continued adoption, adaptation or scale.

The strongest evidence of behaviour change and early systemic signals was found in greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart services and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring. These pathways had clearer actor incentives, more visible benefits and stronger continuation logic. They show why BOUZOUR was more than a standard delivery project.

Greenhouse upgrades were one of the strongest pathways. The intervention linked affordable local manufacturing with farmer productivity and improved working conditions. Farmers had a practical reason to adopt the upgrades because they improved ventilation, usable planting space, movement and heat-related working conditions. Local manufacturers also had a reason to continue because the model opened a possible commercial service line in agriculture. This created a credible market relationship, not only a one-off transfer of equipment.

SmartLand climate-smart agriculture also showed strong evidence. The project helped reduce farmer uncertainty around sensor-based irrigation and fertigation. The business case was linked to water, fertiliser, energy and productivity benefits. BOUZOUR did not create SmartLand's commercial growth from zero because SmartLand was already an existing provider. Its contribution is better understood as strengthening the evidence base, farmer confidence and market uptake around an existing actor.

IYAB/SIYB showed a strong institutional signal. The project trained and anchored an agribusiness-adapted training offer through trainers, institutions and MoET-related processes. This is important because institutional anchoring can continue beyond direct project delivery. However, participant-level business outcomes still need longer-term follow-up to show how far training translated into durable business performance.

The cherry pathway was promising, but it was the most complex intervention area. It should not be understood as a weaker version of the greenhouse pathway. Cherry export upgrading required coordinated change across farmer-exporter relationships, cooperative functions, production quality, post-harvest handling, certification, phytosanitary compliance, buyer engagement, market positioning and decent work practices. BOUZOUR made important progress in repositioning selected cherry actors toward higher-value markets. However, systemic transformation in cherry cannot yet be confirmed because it requires repeated seasons, consistent quality, certification use, buyer continuity, farmer benefits and embedded decent work mechanisms.

Solar energy access was highly relevant but showed weaker evidence of direct farmer-level adoption. The technical assessment pathway reduced information gaps and helped farmers understand investment options, but affordability, liquidity and capital access remained binding barriers. Most of the reported outreach under the solar outcome came from shared or rental productive solar infrastructure. This is a promising response to the finance constraint, but it is different from 490 individual farmers buying or installing solar systems. Scale remains dependent on finance and capital access.

Efficiency - High at portfolio and management level

BOUZOUR was efficient at portfolio and management level. It delivered strongly through a lean team, adaptive management and strong ILO technical backstopping. The project exceeded logframe targets despite extreme operating conditions and repeated crisis-related disruption. The hybrid AIMS model - facilitation combined with targeted de-risking - was appropriate for Lebanon's compound crisis context.

In line with the agreed evaluation questions, efficiency was assessed primarily at portfolio, outcome and management-structure level. The evaluation does not rank each intervention by cost per beneficiary or cost per systemic result, because the pathways differed in maturity, risk, leverage potential and time needed for change to materialise. This is a fairer way to assess a diverse AIMS portfolio.

The main efficiency caveat concerns MRM and real-time steering. Result chains and documentation helped reconstruct contribution, but they could have been used earlier and more systematically as a management tool. In a crisis context, MRM should help teams decide what to scale, adapt, pause or stop. It should not only support reporting after the fact.

Impact orientation and sustainability - Medium / conditional

BOUZOUR had strong impact orientation and generated credible AAER progression in several pathways. The strongest pathways were greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart services and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring. These showed strong adoption and early adaptation signals, and they had clearer commercial or institutional incentives for continuation.

BOUZOUR was impact-oriented to the extent that could reasonably be expected at the time of design and implementation. As implementation progressed, however, the more complex transformational pathways revealed additional constraints around finance, certification, buyer relationships, labour practices and market continuity. This does not weaken the project's performance; it explains why several promising pathways now require further consolidation and repeated market testing before their full systemic potential can be confirmed.

Sustainability is strongest where actors can see a practical reason to continue. Farmers need visible returns. Service providers need a business case. Institutions need ownership and capacity. Buyers and exporters need quality, reliability and commercial value. This is why greenhouse upgrades and SmartLand look relatively stronger: the economic logic is visible. It is also why IYAB/SIYB has a credible institutional pathway.

Other pathways are promising but more conditional. Cherry export upgrading has strong systemic potential, but needs repeated seasons and more stable market conditions. Solar rental and shared-use models respond to the affordability problem, but need capital and finance to scale. Recruitment and worker-service innovations remain early-stage. QOOT and structured sourcing were relevant, but need stronger evidence of continuation and wider uptake.

The absence of full systemic transformation at project closure should not be read as weak performance. The project was short and operated through rolling crises. AIMS programming needs time for actors to test, adapt, invest, repeat and respond. BOUZOUR has created useful foundations, but several foundations now need consolidation.

Cross-cutting issues and just transition - meaningful but uneven

BOUZOUR's cross-cutting results were meaningful but uneven. Gender and decent work were strongest where they were embedded in real economic roles and actor incentives. Greenhouse upgrades improved working conditions because better ventilation, movement and lower heat stress were connected to a productivity-oriented upgrade model. IYAB/SIYB had strong women's participation and created a practical entry point for women's agribusiness skills. Cherry created relevant decent work and child labour entry points, but these require in-season verification and stronger responsibilities across cooperatives, exporters, buyers and public actors.

The project should be understood through a just transition lens rather than as a project pursuing standalone environmental objectives. Climate-smart agriculture, solar energy and green jobs were most relevant where they contributed to productivity, enterprise resilience, safer or better work, resource efficiency and longer-term economic viability. This framing is consistent with ILO's mandate.

Disability inclusion and worker voice were weaker. This reflects both project design and structural constraints in Lebanese agriculture. Future programming should make these areas more explicit through accessible training, outreach, monitoring, worker consultations, seasonal worker feedback mechanisms, OSH focal points and stronger links between buyer requirements, cooperative practices and decent work safeguards.

Overall conclusion

BOUZOUR should be assessed positively. It was highly relevant, strategically coherent, effective in delivery, efficient at portfolio level and impact-oriented. Its team and partners achieved strong results in an unusually difficult context. The project also generated credible early systemic signals in several pathways.

At the same time, the most accurate judgement is not that BOUZOUR completed full systemic transformation across the entire portfolio. The better judgement is that BOUZOUR opened and tested several relevant market-system pathways, proved that some are viable, and showed which conditions are still needed for scale and sustainability. A focused follow-up or consolidation phase would be justified, especially for the strongest and most promising pathways.

2.3. RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Main recommendations

Recommendation 1. Launch a focused BOUZOUR follow-up / consolidation phase around fewer, better-connected intervention pathways.

A next phase should build on the strongest and most promising pathways, but should avoid spreading effort across too many parallel activities. It should focus on pathways where actor incentives, technical assistance, market access, quality assurance, finance, institutional ownership and decent work requirements reinforce each other. Potential examples

include upgraded and climate-smart horticulture, productive energy and cold-chain solutions linked to concrete investment cases, agribusiness skills and women's enterprise development, and cherry export and certification consolidation.

Recommendation 2. Test and address access to finance where it prevents adoption and scale.

Future programming should not treat access to finance as a generic add-on. It should identify where finance is the actual binding constraint and link support to concrete investment decisions and realistic business returns. Possible models may include asset leasing, buyer-backed or exporter-backed finance, seasonal repayment, cooperative-based repayment or other locally feasible arrangements. More complex instruments should only be considered after feasibility testing in Lebanon's constrained financial context.

Recommendation 3. Match intervention ambition to project duration and management expectations.

Complex value-chain transformation pathways, such as cherry export and certification, should not be expected to deliver completed systemic transformation within a short crisis-phase project. This does not mean that such pathways are inappropriate. It means that expectations must be calibrated. They should be framed as proof-of-concept or early consolidation work unless the project has enough time, resources and stable seasons to test repeated performance and scale.

Recommendation 4. Use project documentation as an adaptive management system, not only as donor reporting.

Future AIMS programming should establish intervention-level documentation systems from the start. These should include result chains, assumptions, adoption and behaviour-change indicators, AAER signals, evidence-confidence ratings, cost and leverage tracking, and periodic portfolio reviews. Monitoring should help teams decide what to scale, adapt, pause or stop.

Recommendation 5. Embed decent work, gender, worker voice and just transition objectives in economic and institutional incentives.

Future programming should continue one of BOUZOUR's strongest features: linking gender, decent work and just transition to real economic and institutional incentives. Gender should remain connected to women's actual roles as workers, farmers, agri-entrepreneurs and household economic decision-makers. Decent work should be embedded in productivity, OSH, worker reliability, product quality, certification, buyer requirements and service quality. Worker voice, child labour monitoring and disability inclusion should be made more explicit.

Main lessons learned and good practices

Lesson 1. Access to finance and visible business returns are critical for sustainability.

Market systems interventions gain stronger traction where actors can see a clear link between investment and expected return. In BOUZOUR, this was clearest in greenhouse upgrades and selected climate-smart agriculture services. By contrast, models requiring higher upfront investment or longer payback periods - such as solar installation, cold-chain infrastructure, YY ReGen rental scale-up or cherry post-harvest investment - remained more conditional. Where finance remains unresolved, technical relevance may not translate into adoption or scale.

Lesson 2. Complex value-chain transformation requires sufficient time and repeated market cycles.

The cherry pathway shows that value-chain upgrading cannot be fully assessed through one-off pilots or a single season. Each season tests sourcing, quality, logistics, buyer relationships, labour needs and climate risks in different ways. Short projects can test relationships and generate proof of concept, but resilience develops when farmers, cooperatives, exporters, buyers and institutions have enough time to adapt across multiple seasons.

Lesson 3. Decent work is more likely to be sustained when embedded in economic and institutional incentives.

Decent work outcomes are more likely to continue when they are linked to productivity, OSH, quality, buyer requirements, certification, worker reliability or service quality. Greenhouse upgrades showed this most clearly. Cherry and other seasonal labour pathways also created relevant entry points, but these require stronger monitoring, repeated enforcement and clearer roles for cooperatives, exporters, buyers and public actors.

Emerging good practice 1. Locally sourced affordable greenhouse upgrades as a practical access-to-technology solution.

The affordable greenhouse upgrade model is an emerging good practice because it addressed an access-to-technology constraint through local market actors rather than imported solutions or project-delivered equipment. Farmers needed lower-cost improvements that could increase productivity and improve production conditions. Local manufacturers had an opportunity to develop a new commercial service line. Workers, including Syrian women workers, benefited from improved ventilation, reduced heat stress, easier movement and a safer working environment.

The model is important because it linked access to technology, commercial continuation potential and decent work benefits within one intervention logic. It also created a more interactive relationship between farmers and local

manufacturers, where farmers could give feedback on design, quality and practical improvements. The practice remains emerging rather than fully proven because scale is still limited and continuation depends on farmer demand, manufacturer quality, affordability and finance.

Emerging good practice 2. Using cherry export upgrading to combine market access, certification and decent work entry points.

The cherry pathway is an emerging good practice because it used export upgrading as an entry point to connect several functions that are often treated separately: market access, product quality, certification, traceability, post-harvest handling and decent work. This was especially relevant because higher-value markets require not only better products, but also more reliable production, clearer sourcing arrangements and stronger compliance with buyer expectations.

The practice is promising because it shows how decent work and child labour concerns can be linked to commercial incentives, rather than handled only through awareness raising. Certification, buyer requirements and export readiness can create practical reasons for farmers, cooperatives and exporters to improve production and labour practices. However, this remains an emerging practice because it requires repeated seasonal validation, stronger in-season monitoring and continued buyer and exporter engagement before its full systemic potential can be confirmed.

Emerging good practice 3. Using sector and value-chain selection as an inclusion strategy.

BOUZOUR showed that inclusion can be strengthened when a project deliberately selects sectors and parts of value chains where target groups are already economically present and where market incentives can support their participation. This is important because inclusion is not only about adding vulnerable groups to activities. It is also about choosing intervention spaces where women, refugees, small farmers, workers and agri-entrepreneurs have realistic roles and can benefit through market change.

This practice is relevant for future AIMS and MSD programming because it links inclusion to intervention design from the start. In BOUZOUR, agriculture, greenhouse work, cherry production, agribusiness skills and selected service pathways created different entry points for Lebanese host communities, Syrian refugees, women workers and small producers. The practice remains context-specific, but the transferable lesson is clear: projects should select sectors and value-chain functions not only for growth potential, but also for where decent work, gender equality and inclusion can realistically be advanced.

3. Project Background

3.1. Country and sector context

Lebanon has faced a prolonged compound crisis since 2019, including economic collapse, currency depreciation, institutional fragility, inflation, declining purchasing power, and disruptions to basic services and infrastructure. These conditions have directly affected the agriculture and agri-food sectors, where farmers, workers, cooperatives, small enterprises and service providers face rising input costs, unstable demand, weak access to finance, energy shortages, limited public extension capacity and increasing climate-related pressures.

In practical terms, this meant that BOUZOUR was implemented in an environment where many market actors could not take investment decisions in the way assumed in more stable market systems programmes. The banking sector was effectively dysfunctional, liquidity was severely constrained, and even actors who could see a credible business case often faced high uncertainty around security, displacement, demand, input prices, exchange rates and agricultural seasons. The escalation of conflict in 2024 and renewed escalation in March 2026 further disrupted access, mobility and business planning. These conditions are therefore important for interpreting both what the project achieved and why some promising models remained at early adoption or consolidation stage rather than reaching full scale or sustainability by closure.

Agriculture remains an important livelihood sector for both Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees. It provides income opportunities for farmers, agri-food small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives, seasonal workers and permanent agricultural workers. However, the sector is characterized by informality, weak labour protection, limited access to quality services, fragmented market linkages, and uneven capacity to meet quality, certification and export requirements. Syrian workers, including women, are heavily represented in agricultural labour, but often face precarious employment, low wages, limited bargaining power, weak representation and exposure to unsafe working conditions.

The project was implemented during a period of continued instability and, from 2024 onwards, escalating conflict and displacement. Security constraints affected access to parts of South Lebanon and the Bekaa, requiring the project and the evaluation to adapt implementation and data collection modalities. The crisis context shaped both the relevance and feasibility of the project's market systems approach: it increased the importance of agricultural livelihoods and decent work, but also constrained the ability of market actors to invest, take risks and sustain new models without some form of de-risking or institutional support.

3.2. Project purpose, logic and objectives

BOUZOUR — Building Inclusive Markets and Decent Work for Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Host Communities — was implemented by the International Labour Organization with funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The project aimed to promote inclusive market systems and decent work in Lebanon's agriculture and agri-food sectors, with a focus on Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees, including women.

The project applied ILO's Approach to Inclusive Market Systems. Rather than relying primarily on direct delivery to beneficiaries, BOUZOUR sought to work through market actors, public institutions, service providers, cooperatives and private-sector partners to improve the functioning of agricultural market systems. Its logic was to identify constraints that limit productivity, market access, decent work and resilience, and then facilitate changes in services, business models, institutional capacities and market relationships that could continue beyond project support.

The project was structured around four outcome areas. Outcome 1 focused on improving productivity and decent working conditions in covered horticulture through greenhouse upgrades, climate-smart practices, occupational safety and health and contract farming. Outcome 2 focused on upgrading farmers and agri-businesses in the cherry value chain and linking them to new market opportunities, including export readiness, certification and post-harvest improvements. Outcome 3 focused on enabling farmers to access and use solar energy solutions for agricultural electricity needs. Outcome 4 focused on strengthening the management capacity of farmers and small agri-businesses through Improve Your Agribusiness and SIYB-related institutional anchoring.

3.3. Theory of Change and AIMS approach

The project's Theory of Change was based on a market systems logic. If ILO facilitated changes among commercial and institutional actors in the agriculture sector, and if these actors had sufficient commercial or institutional incentives to continue new practices, then farmers, workers and agri-businesses would gain improved access to technologies, services, markets, skills, energy solutions and decent work entry points. These changes were expected to contribute to more inclusive and resilient agricultural livelihoods for Lebanese and Syrian target groups.

The project's AIMS logic combined "push" and "pull" elements. Push-side interventions aimed to strengthen the capacity of farmers, workers and small agri-businesses to engage more effectively in markets, including through business skills, occupational safety and health, and market information. Pull-side interventions aimed to improve the functioning of markets and value chains by working with manufacturers, exporters, service providers, cooperatives, institutions and sector actors to create better opportunities for target groups.

During implementation, the Theory of Change evolved in response to Lebanon's crisis context. In practice, the project applied a hybrid AIMS model: it retained a facilitative market systems orientation, while also using targeted and time-bound support to reduce risk where market actors were unable to invest or adopt new practices under crisis conditions. This adaptation was particularly relevant in areas such as greenhouse upgrades, solar energy, climate-smart agriculture and cherry export readiness, where market actors saw potential benefits but faced liquidity, risk and coordination constraints.

For the final evaluation, the key question was therefore not only whether activities were delivered, but whether supported actors changed their practices, whether these changes had credible commercial or institutional incentives, and whether there were early signs of adoption, adaptation, expansion or response beyond direct project support.

3.4. Geographic coverage and target groups

BOUZOUR operated in agricultural areas of Lebanon where the selected value chains and target groups were present, including Akkar, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon and other locations linked to project interventions and partners. Geographic implementation evolved in response to security conditions, partner presence, sector opportunities and feasibility of access. Conflict escalation and access restrictions affected implementation and evaluation coverage, particularly in South Lebanon and parts of the Bekaa.

The project targeted Lebanese farmers, agri-food SMEs, cooperatives, service providers and agricultural workers, as well as Syrian refugees working in or linked to agricultural value chains. Women were an important target group, especially Syrian women working in greenhouses, women agri-business owners and women participating in IYAB/SIYB activities. The project also engaged market actors and institutions whose behaviour was expected to shape access to services, markets, technology, skills, energy and decent work improvements.

3.5. Management structure and implementation arrangements

The project was managed by ILO in Lebanon with technical backstopping from ILO regional and technical specialists, including AIMS and decent work expertise. Implementation was carried out through a combination of direct ILO facilitation, implementing partners, technical experts, private-sector actors, cooperatives, chambers, ministries and service providers.

The implementation model relied on a lean project team supported by ILO technical advisors and partners. This structure allowed flexibility and adaptation in a volatile context, but also placed high demands on coordination, monitoring and partner management. Project interventions were implemented through a range of partnerships, including greenhouse manufacturers and technical partners, SmartLand and other climate-smart service providers, QOOT and agri-food SMEs, cherry exporters and cooperatives, solar-sector actors, LSES, YY ReGen, MoA, MoET and IYAB/SIYB training institutions.

3.6. Funding arrangements

The project was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, with a total budget of approximately USD 3.54 million. The budget supported implementation across the four outcome areas, including technical assistance, partner engagement, training, research, tools, pilots, capacity building and project management. Budget data were structured primarily by outcome area in line with the project document, donor agreement and standard ILO administrative practice. The evaluation therefore reviewed budget and expenditure information mainly at aggregate and outcome level, consistent with the agreed efficiency questions.

3.7. Main implementation milestones and adaptations

BOUZOUR was implemented from July 2023 to March 2026. The inception phase translated the original project strategy into concrete intervention pathways and confirmed the focus on selected agricultural market systems and value chains. During implementation, the project supported affordable greenhouse upgrade models, climate-smart irrigation and fertigation services, QOOT contract farming, cherry export and certification pathways, solar assessment and rental models, and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring.

The project adapted repeatedly to Lebanon's changing context. It adjusted geographic priorities in response to conflict and access constraints, refined intervention pathways based on market feasibility, and combined facilitation with

targeted support where market actors could not absorb risk. The most significant adaptations included repositioning work in covered horticulture towards affordable greenhouse upgrades, developing cherry export and certification pathways under difficult market conditions, testing solar models despite finance constraints, and anchoring IYAB/SIYB through institutional mechanisms.

By project closure, several interventions had exceeded formal output targets and generated credible early signs of behaviour change. However, the degree of maturity varied across intervention pathways. Some models had clear commercial or institutional continuation prospects, while others remained dependent on finance, repeated seasonal validation, buyer continuity, institutional follow-through or further market actor investment.

4. Evaluation Background

4.1. Purpose and intended use of the evaluation

This independent final evaluation was commissioned by the ILO to assess the performance, relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation and sustainability of the BOUZOUR project over its full implementation period. The evaluation has both accountability and learning purposes.

From an accountability perspective, the evaluation assesses the extent to which BOUZOUR delivered against its intended objectives, outputs and outcomes, and how far reported results are supported by available evidence. It also assesses whether the project was relevant to the needs of target groups and stakeholders, coherent with ILO, Sida and national priorities, efficiently managed, and likely to generate sustainable results.

From a learning perspective, the evaluation aims to identify lessons for future ILO and Sida programming in Lebanon and similar fragile or crisis-affected market systems. Particular attention is given to the application of ILO's Approach to Inclusive Market Systems in a context of economic crisis, conflict, displacement, liquidity constraints and institutional fragility. The evaluation also seeks to generate learning on the use of hybrid AIMS models, where facilitation is combined with targeted de-risking or time-bound support to enable market actors to test and adopt new practices.

The evaluation is intended to inform ILO, Sida, national stakeholders, implementing partners and future programme designers. It also contributes to wider ILO learning on inclusive market systems, decent work in agriculture, gender-responsive programming, tripartite engagement and results measurement in fragile contexts.

4.2. Scope and evaluation clients

The evaluation covers the full implementation period of BOUZOUR from July 2023 to March 2026. It examines all four outcome areas: covered horticulture and greenhouse upgrades, climate-smart agriculture and contract farming; cherry value chain upgrading, export readiness and certification; solar energy access for agriculture; and IYAB/SIYB agribusiness skills and institutional anchoring.

The evaluation covers the main geographic areas where the project operated or where relevant stakeholders were located, including Akkar, Bekaa, Mount Lebanon and Beirut-based institutions and partners. Due to the security situation, South Lebanon and some conflict-affected locations could not be covered through direct fieldwork. Where field access was not possible, the evaluation relied on remote interviews, project documentation, partner data and triangulation with other stakeholder perspectives.

The primary clients of the evaluation are ILO and Sida. Other users include the ILO Regional Office for Arab States, ILO technical backstopping units, project staff, national ministries, social partners, implementing partners, private-sector actors, cooperatives, service providers, and future ILO or donor-supported programmes working on agriculture, livelihoods, market systems and decent work in Lebanon.

4.3. Evaluation timeline and process

The evaluation process began with a kick-off meeting with ILO on 4 May 2026. The inception phase included a desk review, reconstruction of the project Theory of Change, finalisation of the Evaluation Question Matrix, design of data collection tools and agreement on the revised sample and data collection approach. The inception report was submitted and approved in May 2026.

Primary data collection was conducted during May 2026 through a combination of remote and in-person methods. The evaluation team conducted key informant interviews with ILO staff, Sida, government counterparts, implementing partners, private-sector actors, technical experts, workers' organisations, cooperatives and service providers. Focus group discussions and group interviews were conducted with selected farmers, workers, agri-business owners and project participants, subject to feasibility, security and stakeholder availability.

Preliminary findings were discussed with ILO and project stakeholders during the data collection and analysis phase to test emerging interpretations, identify additional evidence and clarify caveated findings. A formal stakeholder validation presentation was scheduled separately for 18 June.

4.4. Evaluation criteria and questions

The evaluation was structured around the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation and sustainability, with cross-cutting issues integrated throughout the analysis. These included gender equality and non-discrimination, disability inclusion, tripartism and social dialogue, international labour standards, decent work, environmental sustainability and medium- and long-term effects of capacity development.

The evaluation questions were agreed in the inception phase through the Evaluation Question Matrix. The matrix translated the Terms of Reference into criterion-specific questions and sub-questions and linked each question to indicators, data sources, methods and analysis approaches. The evaluation also integrated AIMS-specific questions under each criterion to assess whether the project generated credible evidence of market actor behaviour change, systemic-change signals and sustainability.

In line with the AIMS and market systems logic, the evaluation did not treat output achievement alone as sufficient evidence of success. It distinguished between activity delivery, adoption by direct participants, behaviour change by market and institutional actors, early systemic signals, and mature systemic transformation. This distinction was particularly important for interpreting results in intervention pathways such as cherry export and certification, solar energy access, greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart services and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring.

5. Methodology

5.1. Evaluation approach

The evaluation used a mixed-methods, theory-based approach anchored in contribution analysis. This approach was selected because BOUZOUR operated in a complex, crisis-affected and multi-actor environment, where observed changes cannot be attributed to the project alone in a strict experimental sense. The project worked alongside other donor, government, private-sector and humanitarian actors, and its results were also affected by external factors such as economic crisis, conflict, inflation, liquidity constraints, seasonal agricultural dynamics and market disruptions.

Contribution analysis was therefore used to assess whether BOUZOUR plausibly contributed to observed changes, and through which mechanisms. The evaluation reconstructed the project's Theory of Change and examined whether the expected causal pathways were supported by evidence. It also considered alternative explanations, including broader market trends, partner initiatives, donor-funded activities, conflict-related shocks and pre-existing commercial incentives among market actors.

The evaluation applied the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation and sustainability. It also applied an AIMS/market systems lens to distinguish between activity delivery, adoption by direct participants, behaviour change by market and institutional actors, early systemic signals, and mature systemic transformation. The Adopt-Adapt-Expand-Respond framework¹ was used as a practical analytical lens to assess whether interventions generated evidence of wider market-system change beyond direct project-supported actors.

5.2. Data collection methods

The evaluation combined document review, key informant interviews, focus group discussions and analysis of project monitoring and results data.

The document reviews covered project design documents, progress reports, the inception report, the mid-term review, intervention briefs, result chains, studies, technical reports, logframe data, partner reports, financial and budget information, and relevant ILO, Sida and contextual documents. The document review was used to reconstruct the project logic, assess reported results, identify evidence gaps and prepare the Evaluation Question Matrix and data collection tools.

Key informant interviews were conducted with ILO staff, Sida, government counterparts, implementing partners, technical experts, private-sector actors, cooperatives, workers' organisations and service providers. Interviews were semi-structured and adapted to the respondent's role and knowledge of specific interventions. They were used to understand project design, implementation, partnerships, adaptation, observed changes, sustainability prospects, evidence quality and alternative explanations.

Focus group discussions and group interviews were conducted with selected project participants and beneficiary groups, including farmers, workers, agri-business owners and SMEs, where feasible. These discussions were particularly important for capturing beneficiary perspectives on relevance, working conditions, income changes, access to services, business practice changes, gender-related outcomes and sustainability of supported practices.

The evaluation also reviewed quantitative and monitoring data where available, including logframe indicators, outreach figures, project-reported results, partner-reported results and intervention-level evidence. These data were used cautiously and triangulated where possible, especially where figures were based on project or partner reporting.

5.3. Sampling and stakeholder participation

The evaluation used purposive sampling to ensure coverage of all four outcome areas, key stakeholder categories and the main evaluation questions. Priority was given to stakeholders and interventions with the highest evidentiary value for assessing relevance, effectiveness, systemic-change potential and sustainability. The sample included ILO and Sida stakeholders, government and institutional actors, implementing partners, market actors, cooperatives, service providers, workers' organisations and project participants.

Stakeholder participation was designed to support both accountability and learning. The evaluation sought to include perspectives from project management, technical backstopping, donor, government, private sector, workers' organisations, farmers, workers and women participants. The national consultant led or supported Arabic-language

¹ [Adopt-Adapt-Expand-Respond: a framework for managing and measuring systemic change processes, Springfield Centre](#)

engagement with local stakeholders and beneficiaries, which helped ensure that farmers, workers and women participants could express their views in an appropriate language and format.

The final sample was shaped by security conditions, time constraints, availability of stakeholders and feasibility of arranging group discussions. Where originally planned focus group discussions or in-person meetings were not feasible, the evaluation used smaller group interviews, remote interviews or triangulation through other sources. The evaluation therefore treated evidence depth as uneven across interventions and reflected this in the confidence assigned to findings.

Cross-cutting issues were integrated into the evaluation through sampling, data collection tools and analysis. The sample included women and men, Lebanese and Syrian respondents, farmers, workers, agri-business owners, institutions, private-sector actors and workers' organisations. Interview and FGD guides included questions on gender equality, non-discrimination, decent work, OSH, child labour, environmental sustainability, conflict sensitivity, social dialogue and inclusion. Disability inclusion was reviewed through documentation and interview evidence where available. These issues were analysed across the OECD-DAC criteria and consolidated in the dedicated cross-cutting section.

5.4. Data analysis and evidence confidence

Data analysis was structured around the Evaluation Question Matrix agreed during the inception phase. Evidence was organised by OECD-DAC criterion, project outcome, intervention pathway and cross-cutting theme. For each major finding, the evaluation assessed the type and strength of evidence available, including whether evidence was based on project reporting, partner reporting, beneficiary perspectives, independent technical assessments, stakeholder interviews, focus group discussions or triangulated sources.

The evaluation distinguished between three levels of evidence: project-reported results, independently triangulated evidence, and evaluator judgement. Project-reported results were not rejected, but they were treated as requiring interpretation and, where possible, validation through other sources. Triangulated evidence was considered stronger where similar findings were supported by multiple independent sources, such as documents, KIIs, FGDs and quantitative data. Evaluator judgement was used to synthesize findings, assess plausibility, identify caveats and distinguish between direct delivery, behaviour change and systemic-change signals.

Evidence confidence varied by intervention. Findings were considered stronger where there was consistent evidence from documents, project data, technical reports, market actors and beneficiary perspectives. Findings were treated as more caveated where evidence relied heavily on project or partner reporting, where field validation was limited, where changes were highly seasonal, where attribution was difficult, or where results depended on future market or institutional behaviour.

This evidence-confidence approach was particularly important for interpreting cherry export and certification, solar conversion, SmartLand attribution, child labour and worker outcomes, sustainability of market actor behaviour change, and claims of systemic change.

5.5. Ethics and safeguards

The evaluation was conducted in line with ILO evaluation standards and ethical principles. Participation in interviews and group discussions was voluntary. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the evaluation, how information would be used, and their right to decline to answer questions or withdraw from the discussion. Individual responses were treated confidentially and findings are reported in a way that avoids attributing sensitive statements to named individuals unless explicitly appropriate and already part of an institutional record.

Particular care was taken in discussing sensitive topics such as Syrian refugee labour, working conditions, child labour, informality, wages, recruitment practices and relations between Lebanese host communities and Syrian workers. Questions were framed in a conflict-sensitive and non-accusatory manner. With non-institutional respondents, the evaluation avoided unnecessary technical terminology and focused on concrete experiences, observed changes and perceptions of benefits or constraints.

The evaluation also considered gender and inclusion safeguards. Arabic-language engagement and local facilitation were used to support participation by local stakeholders and women beneficiaries. Where direct field access or group discussions were not appropriate or feasible, remote or smaller-scale alternatives were used to reduce risk and avoid placing respondents under unnecessary burden.

Informed consent was obtained verbally before interviews and focus group discussions. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the evaluation, voluntary participation, confidentiality and how information would be used. The evaluation was conducted in line with ILO's code of conduct, evaluation ethical standards and do-no-harm principles.

5.6. Limitations

The most significant limitation was the compression of the evaluation timeframe. The assignment was implemented within a fixed level of effort shared between two consultants and against a submission deadline of 20th June. Although the original calendar window anticipated an earlier start, the evaluation effectively began on 4 May, leaving a substantially shorter period for inception, data collection, analysis and reporting than initially envisaged. This compressed calendar required the evaluation team, in agreement with ILO, to revise the sample at inception from the proposal's 30 KIIs and 10 FGDs to a minimum of 15 KIIs, and at least 5 FGDs.

Within this compressed window, the evaluation still completed 28 KIIs and all 7 FGDs, meeting or exceeding the revised sample targets across all four outcomes and six DAC criteria. One planned technical KII (OSH guidelines expert, K14) could not be scheduled; OSH evidence was instead triangulated through the greenhouse implementing partner, the Ministry of Agriculture and worker FGDs. The compressed timeframe nonetheless reduced the depth of evidence achievable for some pathways, especially those requiring seasonal verification, follow-up with market actors or validation of post-project continuation. Findings are therefore qualified accordingly throughout the report.

Security conditions affected the evaluation's geographic coverage. South Lebanon and some conflict-affected areas could not be covered through direct fieldwork. As a result, the evaluation relied on remote interviews, documents, project and partner data, and triangulation with other stakeholder perspectives for those areas. This reduced the ability to directly observe working conditions, technology use, solar installations, farm practices or post-harvest infrastructure in some locations.

Some results were seasonal and could not be fully validated within the evaluation timeframe. This was particularly relevant for the cherry value chain, where worker conditions, child labour, wages, quality performance, export relationships and buyer continuity are best assessed during or across multiple harvest seasons. One cherry worker focus group discussion was conducted outside the harvest season, which limited direct validation of some labour-related findings.

The evaluation also faced attribution limitations. Several market actors supported by the project were already active before BOUZOUR, and some changes may reflect their own commercial trajectory, broader market dynamics or other external support. This is particularly relevant for interpreting growth claims related to SmartLand, cherry exporters, solar providers and institutional partners. The evaluation therefore uses contribution language and avoids attributing all observed changes solely to BOUZOUR.

Budget data were structured primarily by outcome area rather than by intervention model. This limited the evaluation's ability to assess intervention-level cost-efficiency. Efficiency findings are therefore stronger at portfolio and management-structure level than at the level of individual intervention cost-effectiveness.

Finally, the evaluation did not treat limited evidence as equivalent to weak performance. In several cases, especially cherry, solar and selected decent work outcomes, the project may have generated promising results, but the evaluation could not fully verify their maturity, scale or sustainability within the available timeframe. Findings are therefore caveated where evidence is partial, early, seasonal or dependent on future market and institutional behaviour.

6. Findings

6.1. Relevance

Summary judgement: Relevance was high overall, but stronger for farmers, SMEs, service providers and government institutions than for formal worker-side participation. BOUZOUR selected a highly relevant livelihood sector and addressed binding constraints affecting Lebanese farmers, agri-food SMEs and Syrian agricultural workers, especially women in greenhouse labour. However, some of the most important worker-side constraints — informality, representation, legal status and enforcement — were only partially addressable through the project design.

The evaluation assessed relevance against the following questions: whether BOUZOUR addressed the priority needs and constraints of target groups and sector stakeholders; whether the design was responsive to Lebanese and Syrian farmers and workers, including women; whether the AIMS approach remained relevant as the context changed; whether Syrian women workers were prioritised and reached; whether the design reflected ILO constituents' priorities; and whether the Theory of Change was logical and appropriate.

Table 1. Relevance by target group and pathway

Target group / stakeholder	Relevance judgement	Rationale
Lebanese farmers	High	Directly addressed productivity, input costs, climate risk, energy constraints, market access and farm-level business practices.
Agri-food SMEs / exporters	High	Responded to sourcing, quality, certification, buyer linkages, competitiveness and export-readiness constraints.
Service providers and market actors	High	Engaged manufacturers, agritech providers, solar actors, cooperatives and training providers with clear commercial or institutional roles.
Government institutions	High	Aligned with MoA and MoET priorities on agriculture, certification, OSH, entrepreneurship and institutional anchoring.
Syrian agricultural workers	Medium-high / uneven	Needs were highly relevant, but pathways were strongest where workers were directly embedded, especially greenhouse upgrades; other interventions reached workers more indirectly.
Syrian women workers	Medium-high / pathway-specific	Highly relevant across agriculture because Syrian women are present in greenhouse labour, cherry picking and informal/seasonal work. The strongest direct pathway was greenhouse upgrades; relevance was also present in cherry and recruitment-related work, but evidence and design directness varied by intervention.
Informal / seasonal workers	Relevant need, weaker design pathway	Informality, legal status, weak representation and limited enforcement were central constraints but only partially addressable through a short AIMS project.
Workers' organisations / worker-side constituents	Medium	Worker-side priorities were consulted, and decent work issues were included, but formal worker-side role in design/adaptation remained limited and structurally constrained.

Relevance varied across target groups. It was strongest for Lebanese farmers, agri-food SMEs, service providers and public institutions, whose constraints were directly addressed through productivity, market access, certification, energy, technology and business-skills pathways. Relevance for Syrian workers, including Syrian women, was also clear but pathway-specific. It was strongest where workers were directly embedded in the intervention logic, especially greenhouse upgrades and selected labour/recruitment pathways. It was also relevant in cherry harvesting and other seasonal work, but the directness of the design pathway and the strength of evidence varied by intervention.

BOUZOUR was highly relevant to the needs of target groups and the agricultural market system in Lebanon. The selection of agriculture was appropriate because the sector remains a critical source of livelihoods for Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees. It is also a sector where productivity, market access, climate resilience, energy costs and decent work constraints intersect. The project's focus on agricultural value chains therefore responded to both economic and social priorities: improving the performance of farms and agri-food SMEs while addressing working conditions, informality and vulnerability among agricultural workers.

The relevance of sector selection was strengthened by the AIMS-based sector selection process, which considered target-group relevance, inclusive growth potential and feasibility to stimulate change. This helped ensure that the project was not only responding to general agricultural needs, but selecting market systems where there was at least a plausible pathway to improved livelihoods and decent work.

The project design was particularly relevant because it did not treat agriculture only as a production sector. It identified a wider set of market-system constraints, including weak access to affordable technology, limited advisory services, unstable buyer relationships, insufficient business skills, lack of market information, energy constraints, certification barriers, weak post-harvest systems and limited decent work practices. This made the project more relevant than a

narrow livelihood or training intervention would have been. It allowed BOUZOUR to work at the level of market relationships, services, business models and institutional functions.

The initial design was broadly responsive to the needs of Lebanese farmers, agri-food SMEs and Syrian agricultural workers. Greenhouse upgrades responded to productivity losses, high technology costs, climate risk, ventilation problems, heat stress and unsafe working conditions. This was confirmed by Syrian women greenhouse workers, who described the upgraded structures as directly relevant to their daily working conditions, particularly because of improved ventilation, reduced heat stress, fewer insects, fewer allergies, easier movement and the possibility to rest or remain in the greenhouse more safely during the working day. SmartLand climate-smart agriculture responded to water scarcity, high input costs, weak precision agriculture services and farmers' need for clearer evidence on return on investment. QOOT and contract farming responded to unstable sourcing relationships, limited buyer–farmer coordination and weak structured market access. The cherry intervention responded to low wholesale prices, weak export access, insufficient post-harvest capacity, certification gaps and decent work risks in seasonal agriculture. Solar interventions responded to the energy crisis and high diesel costs affecting farm and cold storage operations. IYAB/SIYB responded to weak business skills among farmers and small agri-businesses.

The AIMS approach remained relevant as Lebanon's context changed, but it required adaptation. A pure direct-delivery model would likely have generated short-term benefits but weaker sustainability. Conversely, a pure facilitation model would have been too light-touch in a context where market actors faced severe liquidity constraints, high risk and limited ability to invest. The project's hybrid AIMS approach — facilitation combined with targeted, time-bound de-risking — was therefore relevant to the crisis context.

The project was also relevant to women, but the strength of women's pathways varied by intervention. Syrian women workers were most clearly reached through the greenhouse intervention, where they formed a significant part of the greenhouse labour force and where upgraded greenhouse conditions directly affected ventilation, heat exposure, safety and working conditions. Women were also reached through IYAB/SIYB and selected agri-business training pathways. In QOOT, gender coaching added relevance to SME practices and sourcing relationships. In cherry, women were present among farmers and workers, but the pathway to structural improvement for women seasonal workers remained more difficult to verify. Overall, BOUZOUR reached women through practical market pathways rather than through a standalone gender intervention. This was appropriate for an AIMS project, but it also means that relevance to Syrian women should be assessed by pathway: strongest where women's roles were directly targeted or visible, and more cautious where women were present in the sector but not specifically tracked or validated.

The design reflected ILO constituents' priorities, but unevenly. Government priorities were strongly reflected through alignment with agriculture, productivity, certification, occupational safety and health, entrepreneurship and institutional anchoring. Engagement with ministries, especially MoA and MoET, was relevant and helped anchor selected interventions. Employer and private-sector needs were also addressed operationally through work with SMEs, exporters, manufacturers, service providers, cooperatives and chambers. However, worker-side priorities were less structurally embedded in design and adaptation. Workers' organisations were consulted and relevant decent work issues were included, but formal worker-side engagement was constrained by the informality of agricultural labour, the weak institutional representation of Syrian and Lebanese agricultural workers and the broader exclusion of many agricultural workers from formal labour protections. This was also shaped by the wider institutional context: Lebanon has not ratified ILO Convention No. 87 on Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, which reinforces the need to interpret worker representation as a structural constraint rather than only as a project-level design weakness. However, this does not remove the importance of finding practical ways to include worker voices in design, monitoring and adaptation.

The Theory of Change was logical and appropriate for a short, crisis-affected market systems project. It correctly assumed that sustainable improvements would require changes in supporting functions and rules, not only direct support to farmers or workers. The push–pull logic was also relevant: the project aimed both to strengthen the capacity of target groups to engage in markets and to improve the market opportunities available to them. However, some ToC assumptions were ambitious for a two-year crisis-phase project. In particular, the assumption that market actors would be able to invest, adopt and sustain new practices quickly was only partially valid. Access to finance, conflict disruption, market uncertainty and seasonal agricultural cycles limited the extent to which early adoption could become mature systemic change within the project period.

The main relevance caveat is that several highly relevant needs were structural rather than easily actionable through a short market systems project. Access to finance, Syrian workers' legal status, weak worker representation, informality and enforcement of labour protections were central to the target groups' situation, but could only be partially addressed through BOUZOUR's intervention pathways.

Overall, the project's relevance was high. The project selected a highly relevant sector and addressed binding constraints affecting farmers, SMEs, service providers, institutions and agricultural workers. However, relevance was stronger and more direct for market and institutional actors than for formal worker-side participation, and several of the most important barriers to sustainability and decent work were beyond what a two-year crisis-phase project could fully resolve.

6.2. Coherence

Summary judgement: Coherence was high at strategic, external and internal ILO coordination levels, with a medium rating for operational portfolio integration across intervention pathways. BOUZOUR was strongly aligned with ILO, Sida, AIMS, Decent Work, SDG 8 and Lebanon-related priorities. It worked through relevant national, institutional and market actors, and demonstrated strong coordination with relevant ILO technical structures. The main coherence caveat is therefore operational rather than institutional: interventions addressed complementary market-system functions, but they were not always operationally connected into a fully integrated portfolio.

The evaluation assessed coherence against the following questions: how coherent BOUZOUR was across its Theory of Change and intervention streams; how coherent it was with ILO's other relevant initiatives and external coordination arrangements; how clearly it linked to ILO Programme and Budget outcomes and Lebanon Country Programme Outcomes; how coherent it was with the UNSDCF and SDGs; and how well it aligned with ILO's AIMS approach, Decent Work mandate and tripartite principles.

Table 2. Coherence assessment by dimension

Coherence dimension	Assessment	Rationale
Alignment with ILO mandate and AIMS	High	Strong fit with ILO's Decent Work mandate, AIMS approach, sustainable enterprises, productive employment and market systems logic.
Alignment with Sida priorities	High	Coherent with Sida priorities on resilience, livelihoods, inclusion, market systems and the humanitarian-development-peace nexus in Lebanon.
Alignment with UNSDCF / SDGs	High	Clear fit with prosperity, resilience, decent work and inclusive economic growth priorities, especially SDG 8.
Coherence with national / institutional priorities	High	Strong engagement with MoA, MoET and relevant sector actors around agriculture, certification, OSH, entrepreneurship and institutional anchoring.
External coherence with ILO/Sida and sector ecosystem	High / medium-high	Strongest within the ILO/Sida and immediate sector-partner ecosystem. Coordination could have been more active in the final phase, but this was partly constrained by project closure.
Internal ILO coherence / OnelO coordination	High	Strong coordination with relevant ILO project teams and technical structures, including DWT, ROAS and AIMS backstopping. This supported a practical OnelO approach by linking market systems, sustainable enterprise development, decent work, OSH, gender and just transition perspectives, and by keeping relevant ILO structures informed on progress and emerging results.
Portfolio integration across intervention pathways	Medium	BOUZOUR addressed complementary market-system functions, but these were often managed as separate result chains rather than as one portfolio strategy around shared functions such as finance, market access, labour services, certification, energy and business skills.

The market-system map used in the evaluation illustrates why BOUZOUR was coherent at design level. The assessment distinguishes between internal ILO coherence, which was strong, and portfolio integration across BOUZOUR intervention pathways, which was more uneven. Across its intervention portfolio, the project addressed many of the core supporting functions and rules that shape agricultural market performance: access to technology, services, information, markets, skills, certification, OSH, recruitment, business practices, energy infrastructure and selected institutional rules. This confirms that BOUZOUR did not operate as a collection of unrelated activities. It worked on a coherent set of constraints around the same agricultural market system.

The main coherence issue was therefore not the selection of functions, but the degree of operational integration between them. In practice, several functions were addressed through separate intervention pathways. Solar addressed energy constraints; greenhouse upgrades addressed technology, productivity and OSH; cherry addressed certification, export access and post-harvest constraints; IYAB addressed business skills; PlantLab addressed recruitment; QOOT addressed structured sourcing and SME-farmer links. These were all relevant and coherent functions, but they were not always combined into one deliberately managed portfolio pathway around shared bottlenecks such as finance, market access, labour services or certification.

At strategic level, BOUZOUR was coherent because its four outcome areas addressed interrelated constraints within the same agricultural market system. The portfolio combined productivity, market access, energy, business skills, certification and decent work entry points in a way that was consistent with an AIMS logic.

The project was strongly coherent with ILO and Sida priorities. It aligned with ILO's Decent Work mandate, AIMS, sustainable enterprises, productive employment and social justice priorities, and with Sida's focus on resilience, livelihoods, inclusion and HDP nexus programming in Lebanon.

BOUZOUR was coherent with ILO's AIMS approach. Its design and implementation reflected a facilitative logic, working through market and institutional actors rather than substituting for them. The project sought to create incentives for manufacturers, SMEs, exporters, service providers, cooperatives and ministries to continue practices after project support. The AIMS logic was especially visible in greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart agriculture, selected cherry export pathways and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring. However, the crisis context required adaptation, and the project used targeted direct support and cost-sharing where market actors were unable to absorb initial risk. This adaptation was coherent with AIMS in a fragile context, because support was generally linked to future commercial or institutional continuation.

External coherence was strongest within the ILO/Sida ecosystem. The project built on and complemented previous and parallel ILO and Sida-supported work, including PROSPECTS, AIMS-related learning, entrepreneurship support and solar or climate-smart market learning. The project also had relevant links with MoA, MoET, CCIAZ, CCIA-BML, QOOT, LSES, cooperatives and private-sector actors. These relationships supported practical implementation and institutional anchoring in selected areas. Coordination with wider UN, donor, finance and investment actors around scale-up pathways was more uneven. This should be interpreted less as weak external coherence overall, and more as a missed opportunity to use closure and transition planning to mobilise finance, donor and investment actors around the most promising models.

Internal operational coherence was the main caveat. The missed opportunity was not that interventions were incoherent, but that several of them were solving adjacent constraints without being sufficiently sequenced or bundled. For example, solar could have been more systematically linked to greenhouse upgrades and cherry cold-chain needs; IYAB could have been linked more directly to cherry farmers, greenhouse farmers, cooperatives and SMEs participating in market-access pathways; PlantLab's recruitment model could have been tested more deliberately in intervention areas with high Syrian worker participation; and finance could have been treated as a cross-portfolio function rather than as an external constraint affecting solar, cold chain, certification and greenhouse upgrading separately. YY ReGen's work with the Deir el Ahmar cooperative is a positive example of cross-outcome coherence, because it linked solar energy access to productive cold-storage infrastructure; however, this type of integration was not systematic across the portfolio.

In simple terms, BOUZOUR covered most of the right boxes in the market-system map, but did not always connect those boxes into sequenced intervention packages.

Formal alignment with ILO Programme and Budget outcomes, Lebanon CPOs, UNSDCF priorities and SDG 8 was strong. BOUZOUR was aligned with ILO P&B Outcome 4 on sustainable enterprises for inclusive growth and decent work, Outcome 3 on full and productive employment for just transitions, and Outcome 8 on integrated policy and institutional responses for social justice through decent work. At country level, the project was linked to Lebanon CPOs LBN101 and LBN102, particularly through its focus on decent work, enterprise development, employment, inclusive livelihoods and market-system opportunities for vulnerable Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees. It was also consistent with UNSDCF Lebanon 2023–26 priorities related to inclusive socio-economic recovery, resilience, livelihoods and decent work, and with SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, with secondary relevance to poverty reduction and climate action through its agriculture, solar and climate-smart pathways. However, this should be treated as strategic alignment rather than evidence that all interventions produced equally strong measurable SDG-level or UNSDCF-level contributions. Substantive contribution was clearest where market upgrading and decent work converged, such as greenhouse upgrades, cherry decent work entry points, PlantLab recruitment and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring.

Tripartite coherence was uneven. Government engagement was strong, especially through MoA and MoET. Private-sector engagement was operational and central to the AIMS model, through SMEs, manufacturers, exporters, service providers, chambers and cooperatives. Worker-side engagement was weaker. CGTL and FENASOL were relevant stakeholders and were consulted, and decent work issues were addressed through OSH, recruitment, child labour and working-condition entry points. However, workers' organisations were not structurally integrated into design, implementation or adaptation in the same way as government and market actors. This partly reflects the informality of agricultural labour and weak formal representation of Syrian agricultural workers, but it remains an important coherence caveat for an ILO project.

Overall, coherence was high at strategic and external level, and medium at the level of internal operational integration. BOUZOUR was strongly aligned with ILO, Sida, AIMS, Decent Work, UNSDCF/SDG and national priorities, and it addressed many of the right market-system functions. The main limitation was that these functions were not always managed as a connected portfolio. Future programming should retain the same coherent market-system logic, but organise implementation around fewer, deliberately connected packages of functions — for example, finance, technology and market access; or certification, cold chain, buyer relationships and decent work monitoring. This limitation should be interpreted in light of the project's short duration, crisis-driven adaptations and the fact that several intervention pathways emerged sequentially as opportunities and constraints became clearer during implementation.

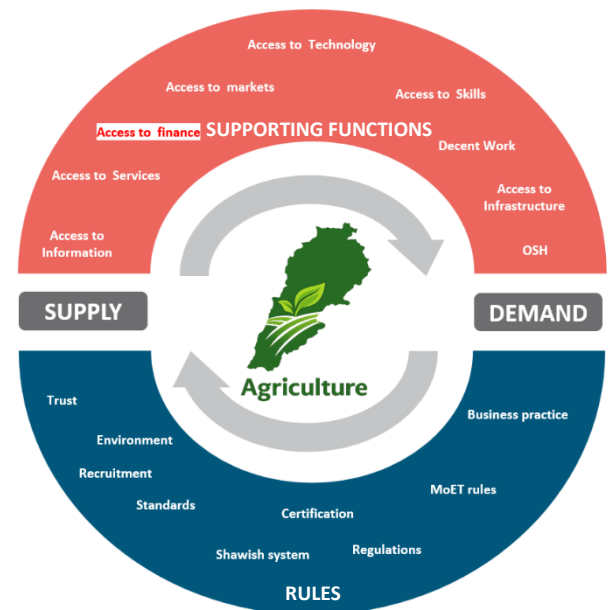


Figure 1 BOUZOUR intervention portfolio mapped against agricultural market-system functions

6.3. Effectiveness

Summary judgement: Effectiveness was medium-high overall: strong in delivery and achievement of formal indicators, but uneven in the depth, quality and evidence strength of substantive outcome-level change across pathways. All four outcomes exceeded logframe targets, and several interventions generated credible adoption and behaviour change. However, the strength of evidence varies by pathway. Greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart agriculture and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring show the strongest effectiveness evidence. Contract farming, cherry export upgrading, solar rental models for agricultural production, and agricultural service innovations that integrate labour-related functions show promising but still maturing pathways. Solar assessment and advisory models were relevant and useful, but showed weaker conversion into investment and use. Wider systemic change, AAER progression, durability and post-project continuation are assessed under the combined Impact Orientation and Sustainability section.

The evaluation distinguishes between three levels of effectiveness: output delivery, achievement of formal outcome indicators, and immediate outcome-level behaviour change by supported participants, market actors and institutions. This distinction is important because BOUZOUR exceeded most formal logframe targets, but an AIMS project should not be assessed only by delivery numbers. The key effectiveness question is whether supported actors changed practices in ways that demonstrate plausible outcome-level change within the project period. The AAER lens is used under Impact Orientation and Sustainability to assess the depth and quality of systemic change.

Table 3. Effectiveness by intervention pathway

Intervention / pathway	Delivery	Behaviour change	Evidence confidence
Greenhouse upgrades	High	High	Strong
SmartLand climate-smart agriculture	High	High	Strong, contribution caveat
QOOT / contract farming	High	Medium-high	Mixed
Cherry export / certification	High	Medium	Mixed / early
PlantLab / recruitment pathway	Medium	Medium	Mixed; model still maturing
Solar — LSES	High	Low	Weak conversion to investment
YY ReGen solar rental	Medium-high	Medium	Mixed; finance-dependent
IYAB / SIYB	High	High	Strong

At the level of formal delivery, BOUZOUR was highly effective, all four outcomes exceeded logframe targets. However, these figures mainly capture access, delivery and participation. They do not, by themselves, demonstrate the full depth or quality of substantive outcome achievement. The evaluation therefore interprets logframe achievement together with evidence on behaviour change, contribution plausibility and evidence confidence.

Outcome 1 generated the strongest overall evidence of effectiveness. The greenhouse upgrade intervention was one of the clearest cases where relevance, delivery and behaviour change aligned. The intervention addressed clear constraints faced by farmers and workers: productivity losses, high-cost technology, heat, ventilation, pesticide exposure and unsafe working conditions. It also engaged local manufacturers and service providers in developing a more affordable upgrade offer. Evidence from project data, implementing partners, manufacturers, farmers and worker discussions indicates that the intervention plausibly contributed to practical improvements in productivity and working conditions. The greenhouse upgrade pathway provides the strongest effectiveness evidence because delivery, adoption, behaviour change are all visible. The model enabled local workshops to offer upgrades at 33–50% lower cost than prevailing market solutions. Farmers adopting upgraded structures recorded 20–35% more usable planting area and estimated 20–30% higher seasonal income. Worker interviews and FGDs confirmed improved ventilation, reduced heat stress, fewer insects, easier movement and a more comfortable working environment. This makes greenhouse upgrades the clearest case where productivity and decent work improvements were mutually reinforcing rather than treated as separate project objectives.

BOUZOUR's contribution is assessed as strong because the project helped shape an affordable upgrade offer, supported local manufacturers to take up the function, and generated evidence of farmer demand. The effectiveness evidence is strongest at the level of direct adoption and practical change among supported farmers, workers and manufacturers. The extent to which this becomes a wider market function is assessed under Impact Orientation and Sustainability.

The climate-smart agriculture intervention with SmartLand was also effective and showed a credible commercial pathway. The intervention generated strong technical evidence on water, fertiliser, energy, yield and productivity benefits, and helped demonstrate the business case for sensor-based irrigation and fertigation services. SmartLand's clients, technical stakeholders and farmers confirmed that the model has traction. The evaluation treats SmartLand as

a strong effectiveness case, and frames BOUZOUR's contribution in line with the AIMS approach: catalysing change through an existing commercial actor with incentives and capacity to continue. BOUZOUR's contribution is best understood as strengthening evidence, supporting demonstration, accelerating adoption among supported farmers and increasing confidence in an existing commercial model.

SmartLand climate-smart agriculture also shows strong effectiveness based on technical results. The intervention rested on two distinct evidence layers. First, an independently monitored pilot on 15 demonstration farms generated the technical business case. The control-vs-pilot assessment found water savings of up to around 50%, fertiliser reductions up to 67%, yield increases of 6–20%, a higher share of Class A produce, and payback within one to three cropping cycles. Second, separate from these 15 pilot farms, SmartLand's own commercial client base reportedly grew from 101 in 2024 to 275 in 2025. The company attributed roughly 20–30% of new clients to the demonstration plots. The evaluation treats this as credible evidence that BOUZOUR strengthened the technical evidence base, demonstrated the business case and increased market confidence. It does not attribute all SmartLand growth to the project.

The QOOT contract farming intervention generated useful changes in buyer–farmer relationships and SME sourcing practices. It helped agri-food SMEs structure relationships with farmers, improve sourcing predictability and integrate gender coaching into SME practices. The intervention was relevant and delivered under difficult wartime conditions. It generated useful operational behaviour change by helping SMEs and farmers move towards more structured sourcing relationships. This was particularly relevant during market disruption, when diversified and predictable sourcing became more important.

Additional validation indicates that some participating actors extended the contract farming relationship into the following season. The contract helped formalise a pre-existing commercial relationship, with both parties reportedly satisfied. Prices were considered better than wholesale market alternatives. BOUZOUR's contribution is assessed as direct in initiating and structuring this specific arrangement. Contract farming as a model was not new globally or in Lebanon. The project's added value was to test it in this production and market context and to formalise a relationship with stronger predictability than wholesale market alternatives. Evidence is therefore strongest for improved sourcing relationships among participating actors.

Outcome 2, focused on cherry export and certification, is one of the most promising but also most caveated areas of effectiveness. The intervention addressed important constraints: low wholesale prices, weak export access, insufficient buyer coordination, limited certification readiness, quality consistency, post-harvest weaknesses and decent work risks in agriculture. It helped create proof of concept for linking cherry farmers, cooperatives and exporters to higher-value markets and introduced important practices around sourcing, quality, certification and decent work monitoring. BOUZOUR plausibly contributed to initiating and testing the cherry export-readiness pathway, particularly through certification, quality upgrading and coordination among farmers, cooperatives and exporters.

The cherry pathway was effective as a proof of concept, but not yet repeated seasonal performance. Project data and stakeholder interviews indicate improvements in wages, awareness, child labour monitoring, agricultural practices and cherry diversification among selected buyer/cooperative relationships. These are important results. However, the evidence remains seasonally constrained. The pathway was affected by weather, logistic, conflict and market competition. Each export season is likely to reveal additional requirements around sourcing, quality consistency, certification use, buyer continuity, farmer benefits and embedded decent work mechanisms.

Project monitoring also reported important economic and labour-related results in the cherry pathway, including estimated farmer income gains of approximately USD 688,000 in 2025, a cumulative wage increase of 74.4%, and 1,046 workers with improved working conditions. The evaluation reviewed these figures as project-reported monitoring results and assessed their plausibility through triangulation with available documentation and stakeholder interviews. Interviews with exporters, cooperatives, technical actors and workers provide partial triangulation of the direction of change: the intervention contributed to more structured farmer–exporter relationships, improved quality awareness, better post-harvest discipline, selected wage and working-condition improvements, and stronger attention to decent work risks. These figures should therefore be used as monitoring signals of positive change, not as independently verified sector-wide effects.

The decent work pathway in cherry also requires caution. Project monitoring across three seasons reports the share of farmers hiring children falling from 34% in 2023 to 20% in 2024 and 10.5% in 2025. This is a project-reported, self-reported measure for a small tracked group, not a sector-wide rate². It should be read with caution. The 2025 season was exceptional: frost cut cherry production by around 94% and the workforce by roughly 74%, so part of the fall likely reflects sharply reduced hiring overall rather than behaviour change. The out-of-season cherry worker FGD raised indications that child labour-related risks may persist in some cherry harvest locations, and the out-of-season FGD indicated that the involvement of children and adolescents in harvest work may remain socially accepted in that specific context. Direct validation of worker-level change was limited by the timing of data collection, the seasonality of cherry labour and the fact that one worker FGD was conducted outside harvest season. Taken together, the monitoring trend,

² Intervention-specific child labour monitoring data are anonymised because they concern a sensitive protection issue. The evaluation reports the trend at pathway level rather than attributing it to named private-sector or cooperative actors, in line with do-no-harm and confidentiality principles.

increased awareness of child labour risks, stronger attention to decent work in sourcing and certification practices, and project-supported monitoring mechanisms suggest early signals of behavioural change. However, the evaluation treats these signals as plausible and promising rather than verified sustained worker-level change, given the small self-reported sample, seasonality, the exceptional 2025 production shock and limited in-season worker validation.

The PlantLab / recruitment pathway is promising but still maturing. It addressed a real decent work and market-function constraint: the lack of more formal, transparent and reliable recruitment and worker-matching mechanisms in agricultural labour markets. The intervention is relevant to Syrian and Lebanese seasonal and permanent agricultural workers, including women, and to employers seeking more reliable labour. However, evidence on employer demand, worker uptake, commercial viability and replication remains limited. The evaluation therefore treats PlantLab as an early but not yet proven pathway.

Outcome 3, solar energy access, was highly relevant but showed uneven effectiveness. It is best assessed in two parts, corresponding to the two constraints the project tackled: an information-and-trust pathway and a demonstration-and-rental pathway.

The information pathway, built around the LSES assessment tool and village-agent model, addressed a genuine market gap: farmers lacked reliable, independent guidance on system sizing, return on investment, trusted suppliers and payback periods. Solar companies treated agricultural clients as too costly to screen. This pathway reached 156 farmers and agri-businesses with pre-investment technical assessment. It created enabling infrastructure that was coherent with the energy crisis facing agriculture. It was effective at reducing information asymmetry and improving investment readiness. However, there is little evidence that assessments converted into purchase or installation. The binding constraint was not relevance or information but affordability: farmers could understand the business case and still be unable to invest.

BOUZOUR's contribution through the LSES pathway is assessed as clear but limited to investment readiness. The pathway reduced information asymmetry and helped farmers understand technically appropriate solar options. However, this did not translate into broad individual adoption because affordability, liquidity and access to capital remained binding constraints.

The demonstration pathway is where the reported headline of 490³ farmers originates, and this figure requires careful interpretation. It should be read as benefit through shared productive infrastructure, not as individual solar adoption. The figure aggregates users of four solar-powered facilities established through YY ReGen rental pilots: cold storage in Deir el Ahmar and Ainata, a nursery in Ras Baalbek, and a carob-pressing SME (Agro Cedrus). It counts farmers who used those storage or processing services as beneficiaries. No evidence indicates that these farmers themselves purchased, rented or operated solar systems. This does not diminish the result. Solarising shared cold-chain and processing infrastructure is a plausible way to extend solar benefits to many smallholders. It may also be more efficient than individual installation where farmers lack capital. The operational gains were real. The Deir el Ahmar cooperative reduced energy costs by around 50%, lowering storage fees for over 150 members. The evidence therefore supports effectiveness at the level of shared productive service access, rather than individual farmer-level solar adoption. This finding accepts the relevance of the shared-use/rental pathway as a deliberate response to affordability constraints, while maintaining the distinction between direct user benefits, facility-level operational gains and wider market adoption of the model.

YY ReGen's rental model is the more promising response to affordability constraint because it offers service-based access rather than upfront purchase. It links energy access to productive value-chain infrastructure. BOUZOUR plausibly contributed to testing a more affordable shared-use model. Its effectiveness lies in demonstrating a viable service model and generating credible operational gains at facility level. Its scale depends on access to capital and financing mechanisms, which are assessed further under Impact Orientation and Sustainability.

Overall, solar effectiveness was uneven. The assessment model built useful enabling infrastructure but did not unlock investment; the rental model produced credible operational gains and early facility-level continuation but reached individual farmers indirectly and depends on scale finance. Solar therefore illustrates the portfolio's central necessary-but-not-sufficient problem most sharply: information and demonstration were delivered, but finance — the missing market function — determined whether either translated into adoption.

Outcome 4, IYAB/SIYB agri-business participants, supported local training capacity and contributed to institutional anchoring through MoET and training institutions. It generated strong evidence of capacity development and institutional delivery. The programme is more likely to be effective where local institutions, trainers and MoET remain engaged. However, the evaluation is more cautious on business-level outcomes among participants. Training participation and application of business skills are positive, but longer-term effects on business survival, income, growth and market access require follow-up beyond the evaluation period. The evaluation therefore treats IYAB/SIYB effectiveness as stronger at institutional delivery level than at participant business-performance level.

³ The figure of 490 refers to farmers benefiting through shared productive solar infrastructure, including users of four solar-powered facilities established through YY ReGen rental pilots, and should not be interpreted as 490 individual farmers purchasing or installing solar systems.

BOUZOUR's contribution is assessed as strong at the institutional delivery level. While entrepreneurship training capacity and related institutional experience already existed in Lebanon, IYAB represented a specific agribusiness-oriented adaptation supported through BOUZOUR. The pathway shows strong adoption by certified trainers and institutional partners. Evidence on participant-level business outcomes is positive but not yet sufficient to assess longer-term business performance.

The most effective partnerships were those where commercial or institutional incentives were clear. Greenhouse manufacturers, SmartLand, MoET/IYAB/SIYB institutions and selected cherry exporters had a plausible reason to engage with the supported models during implementation. Partnerships were weaker where uptake depended mainly on subsidy, unresolved finance, limited willingness to invest, or continued project facilitation.

BOUZOUR also generated useful knowledge and relationships across climate-smart agriculture, greenhouse upgrades, contract farming modules, solar assessment, cherry export readiness, recruitment, OSH and IYAB/SIYB. These assets strengthen future programming. Their future use is assessed further under Impact Orientation and Sustainability.

The core Theory of Change assumptions held only partially. The assumption that market actors have incentives to adopt new models held most strongly in greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring. It held more weakly in solar, where demand existed but finance prevented adoption. It held only partially in cherry, where effectiveness depends on repeated seasons, stable buyers and reliable quality/logistics. The assumption that decent work can be embedded in commercial models held in selected cases, especially greenhouse upgrades, but structural labour barriers remain significant.

Overall, BOUZOUR was effective in delivery and in generating credible behaviour change. Its strongest effectiveness cases are greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring. QOOT, cherry, YY ReGen and PlantLab-type pathways are promising but require further validation, consolidation or finance. Solar assessment infrastructure was relevant and useful, but effectiveness was constrained by weak conversion into investment. Across the portfolio, the evidence is strongest for delivery, adoption and immediate behaviour change. It is weaker for deeper and more consistent substantive outcome achievement across all pathways.

6.4. Efficiency

Summary judgement:

Efficiency is assessed as High at portfolio and management-system level. BOUZOUR delivered strongly through a lean, adaptive and technically backstopped implementation structure under exceptionally difficult operating conditions. The project achieved or exceeded formal output and outcome targets, mobilised market actors and private-sector co-investment, and used a pragmatic hybrid AIMS model that combined facilitation with targeted de-risking where market actors could not realistically absorb investment risk. The main efficiency limitation was not overall delivery, but the extent to which MRM and intervention-level evidence were used early enough and systematically enough for real-time portfolio steering.

The evaluation assessed efficiency against four main questions: how efficiently resources, including human resources, were used to generate outputs and catalyse system change; whether the Theory of Change and monitoring system supported efficient delivery; whether the management structure, backstopping functions, partner coordination and management oversight supported achievement of results; and whether the AIMS facilitation modality was appropriate and efficient in Lebanon's compound crisis context.

At portfolio level, BOUZOUR used resources efficiently. The project achieved or exceeded formal output and outcome targets despite operating in a context of economic crisis, inflation, security disruption, liquidity constraints and geographic access limitations. It did not rely on a large delivery infrastructure. Instead, it worked through a lean project team, implementing partners, technical experts, market actors, institutions and service providers. This model reduced overheads and allowed the project to remain adaptive as the context changed.

Based on project-reported results, BOUZOUR reached 4,412 farmers and workers directly, of whom 40% were women and 67% Syrian workers, with an estimated indirect household reach of 8,000–10,000 people. The project also reported 109 new jobs created, 3,288 jobs maintained and improved, 1,952 workers with improved working conditions, USD 1.76 million in farmer income generated, USD 534,314 in private-sector co-investment leveraged, USD 708,062 in private-sector revenues generated and USD 128,670 in cherry export value. These figures suggest meaningful reported economic and decent-work outputs relative to the project budget, but they should be interpreted as project-reported portfolio-level results rather than independently verified value-for-money estimates. They also cannot be reliably disaggregated by intervention pathway.

The use of human resources was broadly efficient. The management setup was lean, but this appears to have been appropriate for the context and for the AIMS modality. A heavier implementation structure may have increased administrative capacity, but it could also have reduced flexibility and increased costs. The project team was able to coordinate multiple intervention pathways, draw on ILO technical backstopping and maintain implementation despite conflict-related and market-related disruptions. The lean structure was therefore a strength in terms of adaptability, although it also created pressure on monitoring, coordination and intervention-level learning.

ILO technical backstopping contributed positively to efficiency. Regional and technical advisors provided support on AIMS, decent work, occupational safety and health, gender, enterprise development and intervention design. This allowed a small national team to access specialised expertise without building all technical capacity internally. The combination of local implementation knowledge and ILO technical support was important for maintaining quality in a project that covered several different market functions and outcome areas.

The AIMS facilitation modality was appropriate and efficient for Lebanon's compound crisis context, but only because it was applied pragmatically. A purely direct-delivery model would likely have produced more visible short-term outputs but weaker ownership and sustainability. A purely light-touch market facilitation approach would likely have been insufficient where market actors were unable to absorb risk because of liquidity constraints, conflict and market uncertainty. BOUZOUR's hybrid model — facilitation first, with targeted de-risking where needed — was therefore a reasonable and efficient adaptation. It enabled the project to leverage market actor incentives while still addressing the reality that some models required initial risk reduction to be tested.

The project also mobilised private-sector engagement and co-investment in several pathways. This is an important efficiency signal in a market systems project, because results are not generated only through project expenditure. Where market actors invested time, resources, networks or capital, project resources were able to leverage broader change. This was most visible in greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand services, selected cherry export pathways, QOOT SMEs and IYAB/SIYB institutional delivery. However, the strength and sustainability of this leverage varied across interventions.

Project monitoring reported USD 534,314 in private-sector co-investment across supported pathways. The evaluation reviewed this figure as a project-reported result and assessed their plausibility through triangulation with project documentation, monitoring data, KIIs, FGDs and partner evidence where available. Interviews with private-sector actors, service providers and implementing partners confirmed the underlying direction of the finding: several market actors contributed time, resources, networks, equipment, technical capacity or capital where they saw a credible commercial or institutional incentive. This is an important efficiency signal for an AIMS project, because it indicates that results were not generated only through project expenditure.

The Theory of Change supported efficiency by giving the project a clear market systems logic and by encouraging work through actors that could potentially continue beyond project support. Intervention-level result chains helped clarify causal pathways and provided a basis for reconstructing contribution claims during the evaluation. However, the monitoring and results measurement system could have supported efficiency more strongly if it had been used earlier and more systematically as a real-time management tool.

MRM improved over time, but it appears to have been stronger for aggregation, reporting and contribution reconstruction than for continuous portfolio steering. For a complex AIMS portfolio, MRM should support regular decisions about which models to scale, adapt, pause or stop. This would have required early intervention-level result chains, assumption tracking, evidence confidence ratings, clear cost and leverage data, and periodic portfolio reviews. BOUZOUR did generate valuable learning, but some of this learning was reconstructed late rather than systematically used throughout implementation.

Partner coordination was generally functional and supported delivery, but it was uneven across the portfolio. The project worked with a diverse set of partners and market actors, including ministries, chambers, cooperatives, private firms, service providers and training institutions. This diversity was necessary for a market systems project, but it also increased coordination complexity. In some cases, stronger coordination could have improved synergies between interventions, especially around market access, finance, solar energy, cold chain, business skills and labour services.

External coordination also affected efficiency. Alignment with ILO and Sida priorities was strong, and coordination with core sector partners was relevant. However, wider coordination with finance, investment and donor actors was not sufficiently mobilised to unlock scale in finance-dependent pathways. This was particularly important for solar energy, cold chain, greenhouse upgrades and commercial scale-up of promising models. In these cases, the project could demonstrate models or generate information, but adoption remained constrained where finance was not available.

Overall, BOUZOUR was efficient at portfolio level because it delivered substantial outputs and credible early results through a lean, adaptive and technically supported implementation model. The hybrid AIMS approach was an efficient response to Lebanon's crisis conditions, provided that its limits are recognised. The main efficiency caveats are that intervention-level value for money cannot be robustly ranked, MRM was not sufficiently systematic early enough as a real-time adaptive management system, and finance-dependent pathways required stronger coordination with investment and financing actors to move from demonstration to scale.

6.5. Impact Orientation and Sustainability

Summary judgement: Impact Orientation and Sustainability are assessed as medium overall, with an important caveat. BOUZOUR created credible pathways towards systemic change, especially in greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart agriculture and IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring. Cherry export upgrading also has strong systemic potential, but its outcome visibility remains constrained by abnormal production seasons and external shocks. Overall, the project

shows strong impact orientation: the intervention logics are relevant, actor incentives are visible, and several pathways have reached Adopt and early Adapt. However, sustainability cannot yet be fully assessed for several models because they require more time, repeated market cycles, finance, institutional follow-through or scale to demonstrate durable continuation. Evidence of Expand and Respond therefore remains more limited.

The absence of full sustainability or mature systemic transformation at project closure should not be read as weak performance, given BOUZOUR's short implementation period and crisis operating context. The evaluation therefore assesses how far each pathway progressed toward adoption, adaptation, continuation and scale within the time and operating conditions available, while maintaining a distinction between promising early signals and demonstrated sustainability.

Although the inception report presented impact orientation and sustainability separately, the final report assesses them together for analytical clarity. This is consistent with the Terms of Reference and better reflects the AIMS logic, where systemic-change pathways and sustainability prospects are closely linked. The section responds to the Evaluation Question Matrix questions on whether interventions were steered towards impact and sustainability, and what broader systemic changes can plausibly be linked to BOUZOUR's AIMS approach. The combined assessment uses the AAER lens to assess both the intended systemic logic of each pathway and how far that logic had progressed by project closure.

Adopt refers to supported actors taking up a new practice or model. Adapt refers to actors modifying, investing in or improving the model based on their own incentives. Expand refers to uptake beyond directly supported actors. Respond refers to wider system actors changing rules, services, relationships or practices in response to the model.

Table 4. AAER progression by intervention pathway

Intervention pathway	Adopt	Adapt	Expand	Respond	Sustainability judgement
Greenhouse upgrades	Strong	Early / visible	Early	Early response signals	Relatively strong
SmartLand climate-smart agriculture	Strong	Provider-side visible	Gradual	Not yet confirmed	Medium-high
IYAB/SIYB	Strong institutional	Early institutional	Possible	Not yet confirmed	Medium-high
Cherry export / certification	Promising	Early / partial	Not yet confirmed	Not yet confirmed	Conditional
YY ReGen solar rental	Facility-level visible	Early	Limited	Not yet confirmed	Conditional
QOOT / contract farming	Visible	Limited	Weak	Not confirmed	Moderate / uncertain
LSES solar assessments	Information use	Mixed	Not confirmed	Not confirmed	Conditional
PlantLab / recruitment	Early	Weak	Not confirmed	Not confirmed	Early-stage

Strongest pathways

Greenhouse upgrades had one of the clearest systemic logics in the portfolio. The project identified a missing market relationship between farmers and local metal workshops or manufacturers. Farmers needed affordable greenhouse improvements, but did not necessarily see local metal producers as providers of agricultural upgrading solutions. At the same time, local workshops and manufacturers had the technical capacity to produce useful structures, but did not necessarily see small farmers as a viable market segment. The intervention therefore aimed to bring both sides together around a practical, lower-cost offer.

The model created incentives on both sides. Farmers had a reason to adopt the upgrades because they increased usable planting area, improved ventilation, reduced heat stress and made greenhouse work easier and safer. Manufacturers had a reason to engage because the intervention helped open a potential commercial market in agriculture. The model therefore did not depend only on awareness or training. It tested a concrete business relationship around a product that farmers could value and manufacturers could supply.

In AAER terms, the pathway shows clear Adopt and early Adapt. Supported farmers used the upgrades and reported benefits. Local workshops and manufacturers took up the upgrade function. Around 20 additional farmer orders after direct project support indicate early Expand. Farmers also started comparing manufacturer quality and providing feedback on what worked and what needed improvement. This is an important response signal because it shows that the model is becoming more demand-driven on both sides.

The greenhouse pathway therefore shows strong impact orientation and relatively strong sustainability prospects. It is not yet mature systemic transformation because the number of upgraded greenhouses remains small relative to the wider Lebanese greenhouse market. Around 27 supported greenhouses and around 20 post-support orders are

promising, but not yet enough to shift market practice at sector level. However, the direction of change is strong. The model has a credible commercial logic, visible farmer demand, local production capacity and worker benefits.

SmartLand climate-smart agriculture followed a clear market-system logic. The project aimed to reduce farmer uncertainty around sensor-based irrigation and fertigation. Farmers needed credible proof that the technology could reduce water, fertiliser and energy costs while improving yield and produce quality. The intended change was not to create a new market actor, but to accelerate trust, uptake and market confidence around an existing commercial provider with a relevant service model.

In AAER terms, Adopt is visible among demonstration farmers and supported clients. Adapt is visible on the provider side, as SmartLand used the evidence generated through the pilot to strengthen its offer, refine its market positioning and build farmer confidence. Expand is also credible: SmartLand's commercial client base more than doubled, from 101 clients in 2024 to 275 in 2025, and the company attributed part of this growth to the demonstration plots and evidence generated through the intervention. This is consistent with the AIMS logic of working through existing market actors rather than replacing them. BOUZOUR did not create SmartLand's commercial growth from zero. Its contribution was to strengthen the technical evidence base, reduce farmer uncertainty, demonstrate the business case and accelerate market uptake around an existing service provider.

SmartLand therefore shows one of the stronger impact-orientation cases in the portfolio. Sustainability prospects are also credible because the model is commercially grounded and provider incentives are clear. However, deeper systemic change will require broader farmer adaptation over repeated seasons and a more developed provider market, including competition or complementary service providers. Wider market response is therefore emerging, but not yet fully confirmed.

IYAB/SIYB represents the strongest institutional sustainability pathway. The intended change was that local trainers, institutions and MoET would be able to continue delivering an agribusiness-adapted training offer beyond the project. This was less dependent on individual farmer investment and more dependent on institutional anchoring, trainer capacity and continued demand for agribusiness support.

In AAER terms, the pathway shows strong institutional Adopt and early Adapt. Certified trainers and local institutions took up the model, and MoET anchoring strengthened its legitimacy. Expand and Respond remain possible if institutions continue delivery independently and if the model becomes part of regular agribusiness support services. Sustainability prospects are stronger at institutional delivery level than at participant business-performance level. Longer-term participant outcomes still require follow-up.

Promising but conditional pathways

The cherry export and certification pathway had the most complex systemic logic in the portfolio. It should not be understood as one simple model. It was a bundle of interdependent changes intended to move selected cherry actors from fragmented local market sales towards higher-value and more demanding markets. This required change across farmer practices, cooperative coordination, exporter sourcing, certification readiness, quality consistency, post-harvest handling, buyer relationships, cold-chain capacity and decent work monitoring.

A critical distinction is needed between intervention logic validity and outcome visibility. The intervention logic appears sound. BOUZOUR addressed the right bottlenecks: quality, post-harvest handling, certification readiness, cooperative coordination, exporter sourcing and buyer access. It also engaged the right types of actors: farmers, cooperatives, exporters, technical actors and relevant institutions. The approach was consistent with AIMS because it tried to shift incentives in the value chain rather than only provide direct support.

However, full outcome visibility requires repeated market seasons under relatively normal production conditions. This did not happen during the evaluation period. The pathway was affected by conflict, logistics disruption and the 2025 frost shock, which reportedly reduced cherry production by around 94% and labour demand by roughly 74%. These conditions limited the ability to judge whether the model could consistently deliver higher-value sales, farmer benefits, certification use and embedded decent work practices.

The logic of the intervention was that premium or export markets could create stronger incentives for better production and labour practices. Farmers would have a reason to improve quality if higher-value buyers were accessible. Exporters would have a reason to invest in sourcing, sorting, quality control and buyer relationships if supply became more reliable. Cooperatives could become more useful coordination actors if they helped aggregate farmers, support certification and manage quality expectations. Decent work requirements could become more credible if they were linked to market access, buyer expectations and structured sourcing.

In AAER terms, the cherry pathway shows promising Adopt. Farmers, cooperatives and exporters adopted improved practices around quality, sourcing, certification readiness, post-harvest discipline and decent work monitoring. The intervention also generated evidence of improved farmer-exporter relationships and stronger awareness of higher-value market requirements. These are important changes because they show that actors understood the pathway and were willing to test it.

The pathway also shows early Adapt. Some actors expressed continued interest in higher-value markets, and stakeholder interviews confirmed that farmers and exporters saw potential value in the model. However, Adapt is not yet consolidated. The model still depends on whether actors repeat the practices across seasons, maintain buyer

relationships, continue quality discipline, use certification commercially and keep decent work monitoring embedded in the sourcing model.

Expand and Respond are not yet confirmed. The pathway has not yet demonstrated that the model can spread beyond selected farmers, cooperatives and exporters. Nor has it yet shown that wider institutions, buyers, exporters or service providers have changed their rules, services or investment behaviour in response to the model. This does not mean the intervention logic was weak. It means the market conditions required to validate the pathway did not fully materialise within the project and evaluation period.

The cherry pathway should therefore be treated as a high-potential pathway with deferred validation. It has a credible systemic-change logic and positive early signals. But it requires a longer validity window before mature systemic change can be confirmed. At minimum, the model needs repeated normal production seasons, stable buyers, commercial use of certification, functioning post-harvest arrangements, farmer benefits and in-season verification of decent work effects.

YY ReGen's solar rental pathway also has a relevant systemic logic for the crisis context. Instead of expecting individual farmers to buy solar systems, the model tested shared access through solar-powered productive infrastructure. This made sense where farmers lacked capital but still needed affordable energy for storage, nursery production or processing.

In AAER terms, Adopt is visible through the use of four shared solar-powered facilities. Adapt is visible where facility-level use continued or moved towards more permanent arrangements. The model responds more directly to affordability constraints than the assessment-only pathway because it offers service-based access rather than requiring individual farmer purchase. However, Expand remains dependent on access to capital, asset finance and viable facility-level business models. Sustainability potential is credible, but broad market expansion is not yet demonstrated.

QOOT / contract farming aimed to test whether more structured buyer–farmer relationships could improve sourcing predictability, reduce market uncertainty and offer farmers a better alternative to wholesale market sales. The systemic logic was that SMEs would value more reliable supply, while farmers would value more predictable buyers, prices and quality requirements.

In AAER terms, the pathway shows Adopt among participating SMEs and farmers. It helped structure sourcing relationships and improve operational predictability. There is limited evidence of Adapt where some actors reportedly continued the relationship into the following season. However, Expand remains weak because there is limited evidence that contract farming became a broader market function beyond the directly supported relationships. Sustainability therefore depends on whether buyers and farmers continue to see clear commercial value without project support.

Early-stage or constrained pathways

The LSES solar assessment pathway aimed to address information asymmetry in agricultural solar investment. Farmers lacked trusted advice on system sizing, suppliers, payback periods and return on investment. Solar providers had limited incentives to screen small agricultural clients. The intended change was that independent technical assessments would reduce uncertainty and help farmers make investment decisions.

In AAER terms, the pathway reached Adopt mainly at the level of information use and investment readiness. Farmers received assessments and better understood solar options. However, the pathway did not move strongly into Adapt because affordability, liquidity and access to capital remained binding constraints. Expand is therefore limited unless technical advice is linked to feasible finance or investment mechanisms.

The PlantLab / recruitment pathway aimed to address a weak labour-market function in agriculture by testing a more formal, transparent and reliable worker-matching mechanism for employers and agricultural workers. This was relevant because agricultural labour markets remain informal, fragmented and weakly protected. The model also had a clear decent work logic, including better matching, improved OSH practices, PPE, skills upgrading and, in some cases, improved wages and working conditions.

In AAER terms, the pathway remains mainly at an early Adopt stage. This should not be read as evidence that the model lacked relevance or potential. Rather, sustainability could not be fairly assessed at project closure because the pathway was disrupted by conflict and access constraints, including the March 2026 escalation, which affected operations during the evaluation period. Evidence of sustained employer demand, worker uptake, commercial viability and wider replication therefore remains incomplete. The pathway is promising, but not yet mature enough to demonstrate Adapt, Expand or Respond. This uncertainty should also be interpreted in light of the March 2026 escalation, which disrupted PlantLab operations during the evaluation period and meant that sustainability was being assessed at a particularly unfavourable moment.

Cross-cutting sustainability constraint: access to finance

Access to finance remains the central unresolved sustainability constraint across the portfolio. This is not a simple design gap. The project tested affordability, rental, shared-use and de-risking approaches. However, Lebanon's financial crisis limited the feasibility of conventional investment pathways. In several cases, actors understood the business case but could not mobilise capital to act on it. Investment decisions were also affected by security risks, displacement, market volatility and unpredictable agricultural seasons, not only by the availability or cost of credit.

This affected solar adoption, post-harvest investment, cold-chain services, greenhouse scale-up and other finance-dependent models. It also helps explain why some interventions showed strong relevance and adoption but weaker expansion. Future programming will need to treat finance not as a separate add-on, but as a core market-system function linked to each pathway's scaling logic.

Conclusion for follow-on programming

The central question for follow-on programming is not whether BOUZOUR's models worked in principle. Most pathways showed credible logic and some level of adoption. The question is whether the enabling conditions for scale and durability can be created. These include feasible finance mechanisms, repeated market seasons, institutional commitment, continued actor incentives and quality assurance.

Overall, most pathways reached Adopt, and several reached early Adapt. Greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand and IYAB/SIYB show the strongest progression. Cherry, YY ReGen and QOOT show promising but conditional pathways. LSES and PlantLab remain earlier-stage models. Evidence of Expand or Respond remains limited across the portfolio. This supports a medium judgement for Impact Orientation and Sustainability.

6.6. Cross-cutting issues

This section responds to the ToR question on gender, disability inclusion and environmental sustainability as cross-cutting issues. In line with ILO's mandate, climate-related and green-sector findings are interpreted through a just transition lens, focusing on how climate-smart practices, solar energy and greener business models affected jobs, working conditions, enterprise resilience, productivity, gender equality and longer-term economic viability, rather than as standalone environmental objectives.

Summary judgement: BOUZOUR integrated cross-cutting issues meaningfully, but unevenly. Gender equality, decent work and just transition-related results were visible across several intervention pathways and were most convincing where they were embedded in practical market or institutional models. Disability inclusion was comparatively weak and not systematically integrated. Tripartism and social dialogue were relevant to the project's mandate, but structurally constrained by the nature of Lebanon's agricultural labour market, limited worker representation in agriculture and the informality of Syrian refugee labour. Overall, the project made credible contributions to gender-responsive programming, just transition-related climate-smart agriculture, green jobs and selected decent work improvements, including through collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and the development of agricultural OSH guidance and sector-wide awareness materials.

Table 5. Decent work and just transition contribution by intervention pathway

Intervention pathway	Decent work / just transition contribution	Evidence strength and caveats
Greenhouse upgrades	Directly improved working conditions for Syrian women workers through better ventilation, temperature control, reduced heat and insect exposure, improved spacing and safer daily working conditions. The pathway also strengthened productivity and local supply opportunities.	Strong. FGD evidence indicates clear perceived improvement in working conditions, including workers rating conditions from 5/10 to 8/10.
Greenhouse OSH guidelines	Supported safer greenhouse installation through participatory OSH guidelines for installers, linking productivity upgrading with safer on-site work practices.	Medium. Relevant pathway, but wider uptake among installers still requires further awareness and dissemination.
QOOT / contract farming	Introduced labour rights, decent work, responsible business conduct and prevention of sexual harassment into SME and farmer engagement. This raised awareness on workers' rights and women workers, though implementation effects appear uneven.	Medium. Evidence is strongest for awareness raising among SMEs; direct changes in worker conditions are less consistently evidenced.
Cherry export and certification	Linked access to higher-value export markets with quality, traceability, certification, decent work and child labour mitigation. Training and certification requirements helped raise awareness of working conditions, worker safety and child labour risks.	Medium. Positive shifts are visible, including safety practices and portable facilities in some cases, but child labour risks remain structurally present and require seasonal follow-up.
PlantLab / labour-service pathway	Offered one of the clearest decent work pathways by testing an alternative to informal labour intermediation, with better wages, housing, insurance, OSH training, PPE and improved workplace practices. It also created new permanent and seasonal job opportunities.	Medium-high. Strong model logic and evidence of improved conditions, but continuity was affected by conflict and geographic access constraints.

Solar / YY ReGen rental	Addressed energy constraints affecting agricultural productivity and business continuity through shared-use solar-powered infrastructure. Its just transition contribution lies mainly in enterprise resilience, productive continuity and potential green jobs, rather than individual solar adoption.	Medium. Relevant and promising, but scale remains dependent on access to finance and capital for expansion.
IYAB / SIYB	Strengthened business skills, financial practices, women's economic voice and confidence. Women participants reported stronger roles in household and business decision-making. Some training also covered labour rights.	Medium-high. Strong evidence of self-reported empowerment and business confidence; longer-term income and employment effects require follow-up.

The table shows that BOUZOUR's cross-cutting results were strongest where decent work, gender equality, productivity, market access and greener business models were embedded in the same intervention logic.

The evaluation assessed cross-cutting issues by examining whether gender equality, disability inclusion, environmental sustainability, international labour standards, decent work, tripartism and social dialogue were integrated in design, implementation, monitoring and results. It also considered whether these issues were treated as standalone safeguards or embedded within market systems and institutional change pathways.

Gender equality

Gender equality was one of the stronger cross-cutting dimensions of the project. BOUZOUR selected a sector in which women are economically present but often under-recognised, particularly in agricultural labour, family farming, food processing and small agri-businesses. The project addressed women's inclusion through several pathways: improving working conditions in greenhouse production, strengthening women's participation in IYAB/SIYB training, supporting women-led networks and market participation, and encouraging implementing partners and trainers to adopt more inclusive facilitation approaches.

The greenhouse upgrade intervention generated the clearest worker-level gender result. Syrian women working in greenhouses directly benefited from improved ventilation, more space, reduced heat discomfort, fewer insects and easier movement. FGD evidence suggests that these changes were meaningful in daily work. Women workers reported improved working conditions and rated the upgraded greenhouse environment more positively than before the intervention. This is an important gender and decent work result because it affected women in their actual work environment rather than only through awareness-raising or training.

IYAB/SIYB also contributed to women's economic empowerment, although mainly among women farmers and agri-entrepreneurs rather than Syrian women wage workers. Women participants reported applying record-keeping, costing, pricing and planning tools, engaging more confidently with customers and suppliers, and participating in markets and exhibitions. Some also described stronger roles in household and business decision-making. These findings should be interpreted as self-reported qualitative empowerment effects, not as proof of structural gender transformation, but they show that the training contributed to women's confidence, agency and economic voice.

Gender was also visible in implementation practice. The project and its partners made efforts to ensure women's participation in outreach, training and networks, and the IYAB approach included attention to inclusive training environments. However, gender integration varied across interventions. It was strongest where women were clearly present in the pathway, such as greenhouse work and IYAB/SIYB. It was less visible in some market-linkage and energy interventions, where gender-disaggregated evidence and gender-specific outcomes were less developed.

Overall, BOUZOUR should be assessed as gender-responsive, with selected early signals toward greater agency and more equal economic participation. It adapted programming to women's realities and generated qualitative evidence of improved working conditions and agency. However, it did not consistently transform gender relations across the portfolio, and future programming should strengthen gender-specific result chains, sex-disaggregated outcome tracking and follow-up on women's control over income, decision-making and access to services.

Disability inclusion

Disability inclusion was the weakest cross-cutting dimension. The evaluation found limited evidence that disability was systematically integrated into intervention design, targeting, partner selection, monitoring or results analysis. This does not mean that persons with disabilities were excluded in practice, but the project did not generate a clear disability inclusion pathway or evidence base.

The limited visibility of disability is partly understandable given the project's focus on agriculture, market systems, refugees, host communities, women and decent work in a crisis context. However, disability inclusion is an ILO and UN system priority and should have been more explicitly considered. Potential entry points could have included accessible training venues and materials, disability-sensitive outreach, identification of persons with disabilities in beneficiary monitoring, and analysis of whether agricultural technologies or business training reduced or increased barriers for persons with disabilities.

The finding should therefore be cautious but clear: disability inclusion was not a major feature of BOUZOUR's design or implementation. Future programming should move beyond "do no harm" and include a practical disability inclusion lens in outreach, training, workplace improvements, service access and monitoring.

Tripartism and social dialogue

BOUZOUR was relevant to ILO's tripartite mandate, but tripartism was applied pragmatically rather than fully structurally. Engagement with government actors was relatively strong, especially around the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Economy and Trade, chambers and institutional partners. Engagement with employers, SMEs, exporters, cooperatives and service providers was also strong and central to the AIMS approach.

Worker-side engagement was weaker and more consultative. This reflects structural constraints rather than only project design limitations. Agriculture in Lebanon is highly informal, many workers are seasonal, and Syrian refugee workers face legal, social and economic vulnerabilities that limit formal representation. Agricultural workers also have limited coverage under labour protections and weak institutional channels for collective voice. These realities constrained the extent to which the project could build a full tripartite model in the sector.

The project did create decent work entry points through worker consultations, OSH improvements, awareness-raising, fairer recruitment discussions, child labour monitoring mechanisms and engagement with worker-related stakeholders. However, these did not amount to a strong social dialogue structure in agriculture. Future programming should therefore continue to work pragmatically through available worker organisations, community-level worker voice mechanisms, cooperatives, buyer requirements and sector platforms, while recognising the political and institutional limits of formal social dialogue in Lebanese agriculture.

International Labour Standards and decent work

Decent work was meaningfully integrated in several intervention pathways, but depth varied. The strongest decent work evidence relates to greenhouse upgrades, where productivity and working conditions improved together. This is a strong example of how decent work can be embedded in a market-based model: farmers have a productivity incentive, manufacturers have a commercial incentive, and workers benefit from safer and more comfortable working conditions.

In the cherry pathway, decent work was addressed through OSH awareness, certification-related requirements, worker training, social responsibility practices and child labour monitoring mechanisms. These are relevant entry points, especially because export-oriented markets can create incentives for better compliance. However, the evaluation cannot robustly verify sustained improvements in working conditions or child labour reduction across the cherry sector. Cherry work is seasonal, and some worker evidence was collected outside the harvest period. Claims on child labour should therefore remain carefully caveated.

Given the relevance of ILO Conventions C138⁴ and C182⁵, child labour should remain a clearly identified risk area for future programming. BOUZOUR helped introduce awareness and monitoring entry points, but the evaluation did not have sufficient in-season evidence to confirm reduction. Future programming should include stronger seasonal monitoring, worker and household-level verification during harvest, and clearer links between market access requirements, cooperative systems and child labour prevention.

The PlantLab pathway was highly relevant to decent work because it addressed recruitment mechanisms, labour intermediation and worker skills in agriculture. However, evidence remains early. The model should be treated as a promising entry point for fairer recruitment and improved labour services, not yet as a proven structural change in the agricultural labour market. Its future value will depend on whether fair recruitment principles, worker trust, farmer demand and business viability can be maintained beyond project support.

Overall, BOUZOUR contributed to decent work most effectively when labour improvements were embedded in commercial, technical or market access incentives. This is an important lesson for ILO market systems programming: decent work results are more likely to be sustained when they are linked to productivity, quality, buyer requirements, OSH risk reduction or service quality rather than delivered only through standalone awareness activities.

Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability was a strong cross-cutting dimension, particularly through climate-smart irrigation, water-efficient agriculture and solar energy. The SmartLand climate-smart pathway directly addressed water scarcity, inefficient irrigation, fertiliser use, energy costs and productivity risks. The pilot evidence helped demonstrate that environmental and economic incentives can be aligned: farmers can save water, reduce inputs and improve productivity or quality when the business case is credible.

Solar energy interventions also addressed an important environmental and economic constraint. The LSES assessment tool and village-agent model helped farmers and agribusinesses better understand energy needs, system sizing and payback periods. YY ReGen's rental model addressed the affordability barrier by offering an alternative to upfront investment. Both pathways were environmentally relevant, although their sustainability and scale depend on conversion, finance and business-model viability.

⁴ Minimum Age / Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1973 (No. 138)

⁵ Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

The greenhouse pathway also had environmental relevance, although indirectly. Improved structures can contribute to better resource use, improved productivity and reduced crop losses, while the climate-smart component more directly addressed water and input efficiency. Across these interventions, BOUZOUR showed that climate resilience and market systems development can be mutually reinforcing when environmental solutions also solve concrete business problems.

The cherry and farm-management pathways also contributed to environmental sustainability through improved agricultural practices, although the evidence is stronger at practice and compliance level than at measured environmental-outcome level. GLOBALG.A.P. and related good agricultural practice requirements in the cherry pathway introduced or reinforced practices linked to safer input use, traceability, water and soil management, waste handling and farm-level risk management. In Aarsal, organic farming efforts and improved farm-management practices also provided environmentally relevant entry points, while PlantLab's work on organic management and better on-farm practices contributed to more responsible production methods. These examples show that environmental sustainability was not limited to solar energy or irrigation technology, but was also embedded in certification, quality upgrading and improved farm-management practices.

The main limitation is that environmental results were stronger at pilot and adoption level than at sector-wide scale. Future programming should therefore build on the strongest climate-smart and energy models, but also integrate finance, service delivery and adoption tracking to verify whether environmental benefits continue and expand beyond supported actors.

Capacity development effects

Capacity development was a major cross-cutting contribution of BOUZOUR. The project strengthened the capacities of local manufacturers, farmers, service providers, trainers, cooperatives, exporters, chambers and selected public institutions. This was not only a support activity; it was central to the project's sustainability and impact logic.

Capacity development was strongest where it was linked to a concrete market or institutional function. Greenhouse manufacturers were supported to understand, price and offer upgrade services. SmartLand and related advisory actors strengthened the demonstration and delivery of climate-smart services. IYAB/SIYB trainers and institutions were supported to deliver agribusiness training. Cherry exporters, cooperatives and chambers developed capacities related to sourcing, quality, certification and market access. These capacity gains matter because they can continue generating benefits after the project if incentives remain in place.

However, capacity development did not always translate into sustained system change. In some cases, actors gained knowledge or tools but still faced constraints such as finance, weak demand, conflict disruption, limited institutional resources or unclear payment models. This means capacity development should be viewed as necessary but not sufficient for sustainability. Future programming should combine capacity building with stronger follow-up on incentives, finance, service models and institutional mandates.

Overall assessment

Overall, BOUZOUR integrated cross-cutting issues in a meaningful but uneven way. Gender equality, decent work and just transition-related results were the strongest cross-cutting dimensions, particularly where they were linked to clear economic incentives for farmers, SMEs, service providers or buyers. Gender results were particularly visible in greenhouse working conditions and women's business confidence through IYAB/SIYB. Environmental sustainability was strongly reflected in climate-smart agriculture and solar energy pathways. Decent work was most convincing where it was embedded in productivity, OSH, recruitment or market access incentives. Disability inclusion remained weak. Tripartism and social dialogue were relevant but constrained by informality and weak worker representation in agriculture.

The main lesson is that cross-cutting issues were most effective when they were not treated as add-ons. They worked best when embedded in market incentives, service models, institutional functions or concrete workplace improvements. Future ILO programming should build on this approach while strengthening disability inclusion, worker voice, child labour monitoring, gender-specific outcome tracking and the operationalisation of decent work mechanisms beyond project-supported actors.

7. Conclusions

C1 - BOUZOUR was highly relevant and strategically coherent, but operational portfolio integration was weaker.

Linked to findings 6.1 and 6.2. The project selected highly relevant sector in which Lebanese farmers, agri-SMEs, cooperatives, service providers, public institutions, Syrian seasonal workers and women are all economically present. It addressed relevant system functions, including technology access, productivity, climate-smart services, market access, certification, business skills, energy, recruitment and decent work. However, interventions often operated as parallel pathways rather than as a consistently connected portfolio, which limited the extent to which individual successes could reinforce one another.

C2 - BOUZOUR delivered strongly against formal targets, but target achievement should not be equated with mature systemic transformation.

Linked to findings 6.3. The project exceeded several formal outcome targets, including productivity, market-linkage, solar access and business-management indicators. These are significant achievements in a highly constrained context. However, the strongest evidence is for delivery and adoption by supported actors, while evidence of wider continuation, replication, crowding-in or independent response beyond directly supported actors is more uneven. This delivery record also supports a High efficiency judgement, given the project's lean structure, adaptive management, strong technical backstopping and ability to mobilise market actors under exceptionally difficult operating conditions.

C3 - The clearest early systemic signals were in greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand climate-smart services and IYAB/SIYB.

Linked to findings 6.3, and 6.5. These pathways generated the clearest signals because evidence of adoption, behaviour change and continuation was stronger and the incentive logic was easier to observe. In these cases benefits were visible, economically realistic and relatively close to the actor expected to change practice.

C4 - Several promising pathways remain conditional rather than fully consolidated.

Linked to findings 6.3, and 6.5 Cherry export and certification, QOOT-related contract farming, YY ReGen and PlantLab addressed relevant constraints and tested potentially useful models, but they require further validation, finance, repeated market cycles, partner follow-up or stronger institutional ownership before sustainability or systemic change can be assessed more strongly. Cherry is the clearest example of an unfinished multi-season transformation process rather than a completed model.

C5 - Cross-cutting results and just transition results were strongest where they were embedded in actor incentives and visible returns.

Linked to findings 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 Gender equality, decent work and just transition-related results were strongest where they were connected to real economic roles, productivity, OSH, quality, buyer requirements or service incentives. Climate-smart and energy-related results were most relevant where they contributed to productivity, working conditions, enterprise resilience and longer-term economic viability, rather than as standalone environmental outcomes. Sustainability is also strongest where actors can see a clear link between investment, expected return and continuation incentives. Disability inclusion, worker voice and social dialogue remained weaker and structurally constrained by informality, weak representation and the vulnerability of Syrian agricultural workers.

8. Recommendations

Recommendation 1. Launch a focused BOUZOUR follow-up / consolidation phase around fewer, better-connected intervention pathways.

Addressed to: ILO ROAS, Sida, ILO AIMS technical team and any future project design team; Priority: High

Timeframe: Short term, during follow-up planning and design of future programming

Resource implication: Medium; mainly design, portfolio planning, technical support and resource mobilisation

Linked conclusions: C1, C2, C3, C4, C5

A follow-up or consolidation phase should be considered to build on BOUZOUR's strongest and most promising pathways. The project generated several relevant models and early adoption signals under exceptionally difficult conditions, but many of these pathways remain at an early consolidation stage. A next phase should therefore focus on converting promising pilots and early market uptake into deeper adaptation, expansion and response by market and institutional actors.

Future BOUZOUR-related or AIMS programming should be organised around fewer, better-connected intervention pathways rather than a broad set of parallel activities. This does not mean simply reducing the number of interventions. It means designing pathways where actor incentives, technical assistance, market access, quality assurance, finance, institutional ownership and decent work requirements reinforce each other.

Priority should be given to pathways where there is a clear market opportunity, a visible actor incentive, a realistic continuation logic and a defined role for the project. Potential examples include upgraded and climate-smart horticulture; productive energy and cold-chain solutions linked to concrete investment cases; agribusiness skills and women's enterprise development; and cherry export and certification consolidation and selected value-chain upgrading where market actors have sufficient incentive to continue.

Future follow-up programming should also consider regional value-chain opportunities where BOUZOUR's agriculture, market access and decent work learning can inform wider ILO programming across Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, particularly where cross-border complementarities can support inclusive job creation, refugees/returnees, enterprise development and decent work.

Each pathway should include a clear scale logic, actor incentive map, finance or investment assumption, decent work entry point, sustainability test and adaptive management framework. This would allow a second phase to move from testing and early adoption toward deeper adaptation, expansion and response by market and institutional actors.

Recommendation 2. Test and address access to finance where it prevents adoption and scale.

Addressed to: ILO ROAS, Sida, future programming teams, financial institutions, cooperatives, buyers and private-sector partners; Priority: High

Timeframe: Short to medium term

Resource implication: Medium to high, depending on whether financial instruments, guarantees or investor partnerships are developed

Linked conclusions: C2, C3, C4, C5

Future programming should systematically assess the main binding market constraint for each intervention pathway. Where access to finance is confirmed as the constraint preventing adoption or scale-up, finance-related facilitation should be built into the intervention design and linked to concrete investment decisions and realistic business returns.

BOUZOUR was not designed as an access-to-finance project, but implementation showed that affordability, liquidity and investment risk limited the adoption and scale-up of several otherwise relevant models. This was particularly visible in solar systems, YY ReGen rental scale-up, cold-chain equipment, greenhouse upgrades, SmartLand adoption and cherry post-harvest infrastructure.

Access to finance support therefore should not be designed as a generic component. It should be linked to specific investment cases where farmers, cooperatives, service providers or agri-businesses need to decide whether expected returns justify the cost and risk of finance. Possible instruments may include asset leasing, buyer-backed or exporter-backed finance, seasonal repayment linked to harvest cycles, cooperative-based repayment models or other local feasible agreements. More complex instruments, such as guarantees or blended finance, should only be explored after feasibility testing in Lebanon's constrained financial context.

Recommendation 3. Match intervention ambition to project duration and management expectations.

Addressed to: ILO ROAS, Sida, future programming teams, ILO AIMS technical team and project steering structures; Priority: Medium-high

Timeframe: During design and inception of future programming

Resource implication: Low to medium; mainly design discipline, portfolio prioritisation and expectation management

Linked conclusions: C2, C4

Future AIMS programming should better match intervention ambition to project duration, resources and management expectations. Complex value-chain transformation pathways, such as cherry export and certification, should not be expected to deliver systemic transformation within a short crisis-phase project. The implication is not that these pathways were inappropriate, but that their expected maturity should be calibrated to the time and crisis conditions available.

Where such pathways are included, they should be framed explicitly as proof-of-concept or early consolidation work, with realistic expectations around what can be achieved during the project period. Success should be measured through tested relationships, quality systems, buyer engagement, certification use, learning across seasons and clearer actor roles, rather than through claims of completed systemic change.

For cherry, this means focusing on structured sourcing, quality consistency, certification, post-harvest handling, phytosanitary compliance, buyer relationships, farmer benefits and decent work mechanisms, while recognising that systemic transformation would require repeated seasons and continued coordination among exporters, cooperatives, chambers, public institutions and buyers.

For complex AIMS pathways such as cherry export and certification, solar access models and recruitment/service innovations, future projects should be designed with longer implementation timelines or sequenced consolidation phases, as extended timelines can make a material difference to sustainability, repeated market testing, actor investment decisions and evidence of adoption, adaptation and scale.

Recommendation 4. Use project documentation as an adaptive management system, not only as donor reporting.

Addressed to: ILO ROAS, ILO AIMS technical team, future project teams and monitoring/evaluation support functions; Priority: Medium-high

Timeframe: Immediate during inception or design of future programming

Resource implication: Medium to high; requires dedicated MRM capacities, tools and regular management time

Linked conclusions: C2, C3, C4

Future AIMS programming should establish intervention-level documentation systems from the start. These should include result chains for major intervention pathways, explicit assumptions, indicators for adoption, behaviour change and systemic response, evidence-confidence ratings, cost and leverage tracking, and periodic portfolio reviews.

Monitoring should support management decisions, not only donor reporting. It should help teams decide which models to scale, adapt, pause or stop, and should distinguish between project-reported outputs, independently verified results and management or evaluator judgement. This is especially important in crisis-affected market systems, where early traction can be encouraging but does not necessarily mean that a model is ready for scale.

The system should also provide the evidence base for assessing contribution, AAER signals, value for money, de-risking decisions and sustainability prospects. This would strengthen adaptive management and reduce the risk of treating output delivery as evidence of systemic transformation.

Recommendation 5. Embed decent work, gender, worker voice and just transition objectives in economic and institutional incentives

Addressed to: ILO ROAS, future programming teams, ILO gender/decent work/environment specialists and implementing partners; Priority: Medium

Timeframe: Short to medium term

Resource implication: Medium; mainly technical assistance, partner capacity development and monitoring

Linked conclusions: C1, C5

Climate-smart and energy-related interventions should be promoted where they strengthen productivity, working conditions, enterprise resilience, green jobs or longer-term economic viability. Gender should remain connected to women's actual roles as workers, farmers, agri-entrepreneurs and household economic decision-makers. Environmental sustainability should be promoted where climate-smart and energy solutions have a credible business case. Decent work should be embedded in productivity, OSH, worker reliability, product quality, certification, buyer requirements and service quality.

At the same time, future programming should respond more explicitly to the structurally weak worker-side pathway in Lebanese agriculture. Given informality, weak representation and the vulnerability of Syrian seasonal workers, a conventional tripartite model may not be sufficient. ILO should combine engagement with available workers' and employers' organisations with practical worker-voice mechanisms at sector, cooperative, buyer or workplace level.

This could include structured worker consultations during design and monitoring, seasonal worker feedback mechanisms, OSH committees or focal points where feasible, and stronger links between buyer requirements, cooperative practices and decent work safeguards. For cherry and other seasonal labour pathways, child labour monitoring should include in-season verification and clearer responsibilities for cooperatives, exporters, buyers and public actors. Disability inclusion should also be strengthened through accessible training, outreach, monitoring and service design.

9. Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices

9.1. Lessons learned

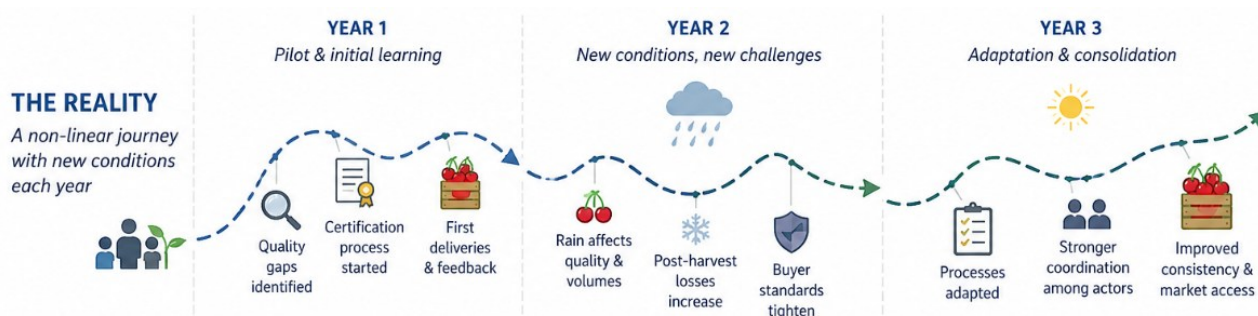
Lesson learned 1. Access to finance and visible business returns are critical for sustainability

Market systems interventions gain stronger traction where actors can see a clear and relatively quick link between investment and expected return. In BOUZOUR, this was clearest in greenhouse upgrades and selected climate-smart agriculture services, where farmers and service providers could see practical benefits such as improved production conditions, resource savings, productivity gains or a more affordable commercial offer. By contrast, models requiring higher upfront investment, longer payback periods or more complex coordination — such as solar installation, cold-chain infrastructure, YY ReGen rental scale-up or cherry post-harvest investment — generated more conditional motivation. The lesson is that market actors need a clear understanding of expected costs, benefits, risks and timeframes if their motivation to continue is to be sustained. Where finance remains unresolved, interest and technical relevance may not translate into adoption or scale.

In crisis contexts, investment decisions are shaped not only by affordability and access to finance, but also by perceived risk and uncertainty. Even where farmers or market actors understand the business case and see potential returns, conflict, displacement, security concerns, market volatility and unpredictable agricultural seasons may reduce their willingness to invest. Future programming should therefore distinguish between affordability constraints, which may be addressed through finance, phased payment, cost-sharing or rental models, and uncertainty-driven constraints, which may require risk-sharing, shorter investment horizons, shared-use models, delayed scale expectations or a decision not to scale until conditions become more predictable.

Lesson learned 2. Complex value-chain transformation requires sufficient time and repeated market cycles.

Complex value-chain upgrading cannot be fully assessed through one-off pilots or a single season. The cherry pathway illustrates this clearly: in the first season, actors may test sourcing arrangements, certification requirements and buyer relationships; in the next season, new conditions such as rainfall, quality variation, logistics constraints or changing buyer expectations may reveal different weaknesses in the system. Each cycle therefore generates new information and requires actors to adapt. Short projects can test relationships, clarify constraints and generate proof of concept, but resilience only develops when farmers, cooperatives, exporters, buyers and institutions have enough time to respond to changing conditions across multiple seasons. Systemic transformation should therefore be assessed through repeated performance, adaptation and consolidation, not only through initial export or certification results.



Complex value-chain transformation is not linear: each season reveals new market, climate, quality and coordination challenges that the system must learn to manage.

Lesson learned 3. Decent work is more likely to be sustained when embedded in economic and institutional incentives.

Decent work outcomes are more likely to continue when they are linked to productivity, OSH, quality, buyer requirements, certification, worker reliability or service quality. In BOUZOUR, greenhouse upgrades provided the clearest example: improvements in ventilation, heat exposure, movement and working conditions were linked to a productivity-oriented upgrade model that also made commercial sense for farmers and manufacturers. In cherry and other seasonal labour pathways, decent work entry points were relevant but more fragile because they depended on buyer requirements, cooperative practices, monitoring and repeated seasonal enforcement. The lesson is that stand-alone awareness or training may improve knowledge, but decent work is more likely to change practice sustainably when employers, buyers, service providers or institutions have practical reasons to maintain it.

9.2. Emerging good practices

Emerging good practice 1. Locally sourced affordable greenhouse upgrades as a practical access-to-technology solution

The affordable greenhouse upgrade model is an emerging good practice because it demonstrates how an access-to-technology constraint can be addressed through local market actors, rather than through imported solutions or project-delivered equipment. In a context where standard greenhouse improvements were often too costly for smallholder farmers, BOUZOUR tested whether local manufacturers and workshops could produce a more affordable and functional upgrade offer.

The practice is significant because it connected three incentives that are often treated separately. Farmers had a practical need for lower-cost improvements that could increase productivity and improve production conditions. Local manufacturers had an opportunity to develop a new commercial service line. Workers, including Syrian women workers, benefited from improved ventilation, reduced heat stress, easier movement and a safer working environment. The model therefore linked access to technology, commercial continuation potential and decent work benefits within one intervention logic.

The practice also generated an early shift in how the market function is understood. Manufacturers began to see affordable greenhouse upgrading as a potential market opportunity, while farmers were not only purchasing standard inputs from existing suppliers but also discussing how greenhouse structures could be further improved or adapted to their needs. Farmers' feedback on manufacturer quality and possible design improvements suggests that the intervention helped move the relationship from one-off technology delivery toward a more interactive local service function.

The transferable element is not the specific greenhouse design itself, but the problem-solving approach: identifying the missing market function, testing whether it can be supplied locally, and aligning the interests of farmers, manufacturers and workers. This is particularly relevant in crisis-affected markets where imported technologies are expensive, finance is constrained and project-led equipment delivery risks creating dependency.

The practice should still be interpreted as emerging rather than fully proven. Evidence of post-support farmer orders, manufacturer interest and farmer feedback suggests credible continuation potential, but scale remains limited and will depend on farmers' ability to finance upgrades, manufacturers' capacity to maintain quality, and continued market demand without project facilitation. Replication should therefore be preceded by local feasibility testing, including assessment of technical quality, affordability, farmer willingness to pay, manufacturer incentives and worker-safety benefits.

Overall, the good practice lies in showing that technology access can sometimes be improved by redesigning the supply function locally, rather than by subsidising imported solutions or accepting affordability as a fixed barrier.

Emerging good practice 2. Using cherry export upgrading to combine market access, certification and decent work entry points

BOUZOUR used cherry export upgrading as an entry point to connect market access, quality improvement, certification, traceability and decent work requirements. This is an emerging good practice because it treats export readiness and decent work as mutually reinforcing rather than separate workstreams.

The practice is relevant because Lebanon's cherry sector has market potential, but faces constraints linked to fragmented farmer-exporter relationships, inconsistent quality, weak post-harvest systems, certification and phytosanitary requirements, limited buyer confidence, and decent work risks including OSH and child labour concerns. By working with exporters, cooperatives, chambers and public actors, the project supported a more structured pathway for higher-value market access while introducing decent work and child labour monitoring entry points.

Evidence remains early but promising. The pathway engaged farmers through cooperative/exporter arrangements, supported exporter-level buyer engagement and market positioning, and generated learning on certification, post-harvest requirements and decent work monitoring. It also demonstrated how higher-value markets can create incentives for better production practices, stronger traceability, improved coordination and stronger labour safeguards.

The practice should remain clearly caveated. Cherry is a complex and seasonal pathway, and systemic transformation cannot be confirmed through one or two seasons or a limited number of exporter experiences. Replication would require repeated seasonal validation, sustained buyer relationships, quality consistency, functioning certification and phytosanitary systems, cold-chain solutions, farmer benefits and embedded decent work and child labour monitoring. It should therefore be treated as a promising emerging practice, not yet a proven model.

Emerging good practice 3. Using sector and value-chain selection as an inclusion strategy

BOUZOUR's selection of agriculture, and specific agricultural value-chain pathways, functioned as an inclusion strategy in itself. Agriculture was a sector where Lebanese farmers, Syrian refugees, women workers, agri-food SMEs, cooperatives and service providers were all economically present. This allowed the project to connect market-system change with target-group relevance, rather than treating inclusion as a separate add-on.

This is an emerging good practice because it shows how sector and value-chain selection can create practical entry points for gender equality, decent work and just transition objectives. The strongest examples were pathways where commercial or productivity incentives overlapped with inclusion outcomes, such as greenhouse upgrades for Syrian

women workers, cherry export upgrading with decent work and child labour entry points, and IYAB/SIYB support for women's business confidence and decision-making.

The practice is transferable to future AIMS programming. It suggests that inclusion should be considered from the earliest stage of sector selection, by asking where target groups are economically present, where market actors have incentives to change, and where productivity, market access, decent work and gender outcomes can reinforce each other.

The practice should remain caveated. Sector selection alone does not guarantee inclusion. It needs to be followed by intervention designs that directly address target-group constraints, track differentiated results, and include safeguards for groups whose voice and bargaining power remain weak, especially informal, seasonal and refugee workers.

10. Annexes

10.1. Annex 1: Terms of Reference



Terms of Reference

rfx_5150_ROAS - RFP/56/2026/MOS/ROAS

Independent Final Evaluation

BOUZOUR Project – Lebanon

Regional Office for Arab States

March 2026

1. Key facts

Project title	Building Inclusive Markets and Decent Work for Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Host Communities (BOUZOUR)
Type of evaluation	Independent final evaluation
Country	Lebanon
Project duration	July 2023 – March 2026
Donor	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)
Total project budget	USD 3,541,326
Administrative Unit	ILO Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)
Technical Backstopping Unit	ENTERPRISES/MSME
Evaluation manager	Regional Evaluation Officer
Evaluation use	Accountability to Sida and stakeholders; learning and decision-making on scale-up/phase II and AIMS adaptation in Lebanon

2. Background and rationale

Lebanon has experienced a protracted economic and financial crisis since 2019, compounded by governance challenges, currency devaluation, and recurring shocks. The crisis has severely affected households' purchasing power, enterprises' viability, and access to essential inputs, including in agriculture. The combined effects of the crises have resulted in unprecedented levels of unemployment and pushed both the Lebanese population and the approximately 1.5 million Syrian refugees further into poverty. Agriculture remains one of the few sectors where both Lebanese and Syrian refugees can find income-generating opportunities, but it is characterized by informality, limited labour protections (including for agricultural workers), occupational safety and health (OSH) risks, and gender segmentation.

The Bouzour Project, funded by Sida and implemented by the ILO in Lebanon from July 2023 to December 2025, applies the ILO's Approach to Inclusive Market Systems (AIMS). AIMS adapts market systems development to forced displacement and fragile contexts, combining facilitation of system change with targeted capacity-building ('push-pull') to improve access to markets, services, and opportunities for vulnerable groups. The project seeks to support more productive and climate-smart agricultural production, improved working conditions, stronger market linkages and value

addition, expanded use of solar solutions to address energy constraints, and improved enterprise management and financial capabilities. By developing agricultural value chains, the project fosters mutual benefits for Lebanese communities and Syrian refugees, easing job competition and promoting peaceful coexistence. It supports climate resilience through greener production practices, addressing key challenges to unlock the potential of agri-businesses and farmers, leading to increased revenues, job security, and improved working conditions. Decent work aspects are integrated across all interventions, ensuring actions positively impact working conditions, strengthen workers' rights, and create mutually beneficial solutions for all stakeholders.

A mid-term internal evaluation was conducted during implementation to assess progress and recommend course corrections, including strengthening coherence across outcomes, clarifying pathways to sustainability and scale, and deepening the decent work and gender strategies. The independent final evaluation will assess overall results and performance over the full project period, with particular attention to what changed in market systems and behaviour, what is likely to endure, and how learning can be used to inform future programming in Lebanon and the region.

3. Project overview

3.1 Development objective and theory of change (summary)

The project's overall intent is to contribute to safeguarding jobs and decent job creation and improved livelihoods for vulnerable Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees through market systems development interventions. The project's theory of change assumes that if farmers and agri-businesses can access relevant information, services, technology, finance, and market opportunities, and if decent work and gender considerations are embedded in system change pathways, then productivity, incomes, and job quality will improve in a sustained manner, including for women workers in agriculture.

3.2 Project Outcomes (as per project design)

- **Outcome 1:** Increased productivity and decent working conditions in the covered horticulture sector.
- **Outcome 2:** Farmers and agri-businesses upgraded and connected to new market opportunities in an identified sector/value chain.
- **Outcome 3:** Farmers enabled to use solar energy systems for electricity generation and related services strengthened.
- **Outcome 4:** Farmers and small agri-businesses capacitated to better manage their activities and resources (including business and financial skills).

The evaluation will consider any refinements to these outcomes and intervention strategies introduced during implementation (including adaptations made due to the evolving security and economic situation).

4. Purpose, objectives and intended use

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this independent final evaluation is to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact orientation and sustainability of the Bouzour Project over its full implementation period. It also serves accountability purposes to the ILO constituents, to the donor (Sida), and other relevant stakeholders including the Agricultural stakeholders and actors in Lebanon. The final evaluation is learning oriented and aims to inform future ILO programming and strategic choices in Lebanon and similar context.

4.2 Primary intended users and use

Primary users are: (i) Sida; (ii) ILO ROAS and DWT-Beirut; (iii) ILO EVAL and headquarters technical teams (including AIMS/Inclusive Markets and Enterprises); (iv) ILO constituents in Lebanon; (v) national partners and implementing partners; and (vi) relevant UN and government counterparts.

5. Evaluation scope

The evaluation will cover the entire project implementation period (July 2023–March 2026), all outcomes and major intervention streams, and all main geographical areas of implementation (including any shifts in geographic focus due to security considerations).

6. Evaluation criteria and key questions

The evaluation will be guided by the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and ILO/EVAL requirements for decentralized evaluations. The evaluation team will refine the evaluation matrix during the inception phase in consultation with ILO and key stakeholders.

Relevance

- To what extent did the project address the priority needs and constraints of target groups (women and men, Lebanese and Syrian), sectorial partners and stakeholders in the agriculture sector throughout the project period?
- To what extent did the project design take into consideration the needs and priorities of the ILO's constituents (Government, workers, and employers)?
- To what extent is the project's Theory of Change logical with clear shifts between the different results?

Coherence

- How coherent was the project across its theory of change (across the different results levels) and intervention streams (e.g., linkages between productivity upgrades, solar solutions, business skills, and market linkages)?
- How coherent was the project with ILO's other relevant initiatives and how effective were coordination and complementarities?
- To what extent does the project have clear linkages with ILO's P&B (2022-23, 2024-25) and the relevant CPOs in Lebanon?
- Is the project coherent with ILO's contributions to the UNSDCF (2023-26) and the SDGs?

Effectiveness

- To what extent were the planned outputs and outcomes achieved, and what were the main enabling and constraining factors?
- Which individual partnerships/relationships with stakeholders and the private sector is leading to or can potentially lead to the most effective results from implementing the project?
- Did the implementation of the project take into consideration gender, disability inclusion, environmental sustainability?
- How did the project contribute to knowledge development, capacity building, and building strategic relationships with stakeholders?
- Which assumptions in the Theory of Change held true, partially held, or did not hold, and why?

Efficiency

- How efficiently were resources used to generate outputs and catalyse system change (including human resources)?
- To what extent did the ToC and monitoring system support an efficient delivery of results?
- To what extent was the management structure (human resources at national and regional levels including backstopping functions, partner coordination, and management oversight) and capacities of personnel of the project supporting the achievement of results and objectives?

Impact orientation (what difference does the intervention make?) and Sustainability

- To what extent did the programme interventions steer towards impact and sustainability?
- What unintended effects occurred (positive/negative), including on social cohesion?
- To what extent are results likely to be sustained after project completion (ownership, institutionalization, commercial viability, financing pathways)?
- What ongoing good practices are showing (early) signs of systems change? Which have the most potential to be leveraged for scaleup?

6.1 Cross-cutting themes (mandatory)

The evaluation will integrate cross-cutting analysis across criteria and questions, including: gender equality and non-discrimination (including disability inclusion where relevant), international labour standards and ILO's tripartite mandate, human rights and safeguarding, environmental sustainability and climate resilience, and conflict sensitivity/social cohesion.

7. Methodology

The evaluation will use a theory-based mixed-methods approach. The evaluation team will be responsible for proposing and justifying the final methodology in the inception report, ensuring methodological rigor, triangulation, and ethical data collection. The evaluation team is expected to study and use ILO's evaluation policy guidelines (wcms_57133pdf), checklists, and templates.

7.1 Methods

- Desk review of project documentation (project document, results framework, monitoring data, financial information, progress reports, studies, midterm evaluation, other relevant evaluations, ILO's P&B and other relevant documents).

- Consultations with specific staff and stakeholders during the inception phase to agree on the final scope of the evaluation.
- Key informant interviews (KIIs) with ILO staff, implementing partners, private sector actors, service providers, relevant government counterparts, social partners (employers and workers representatives), and Sida as appropriate – around 30 interviews are expected.
- Focus group discussions (FGDs) with beneficiary groups, disaggregated by gender and status where feasible, including women workers in agriculture and enterprise owners – about 10 FGDs are expected.
- Field visits and direct observation in selected sites (subject to security and access). If in-person access is restricted, remote/phone-based alternatives should be proposed, with mitigation for bias and exclusion.
- Case studies of selected intervention pathways (e.g., greenhouse upgrades, solar solutions, market linkages/value chain upgrading, IYAB institutionalization) to assess plausibility of system change and sustainability.
- Contribution analysis / theory of change validation, including review of assumptions, external factors, and evidence of behaviour change among system actors.

7.2 Sampling and inclusion

The evaluation team will propose a sampling strategy that ensures coverage of different regions, intervention types, and stakeholder groups, with explicit attention to inclusion (women, youth where relevant, persons with disabilities where possible, and refugee/host community balance). Sampling should be transparent and justified, recognizing access constraints and potential biases.

7.3 Data quality, ethics and safeguarding

The evaluation will comply with UNEG norms and standards, ILO evaluation policies and guidelines, and EVAL ethical requirements. The evaluation team must ensure confidentiality, informed consent, data protection, and do-no-harm principles. Special precautions are required when interviewing vulnerable populations.

8. Governance and management arrangements

8.1 Evaluation management

The evaluation will be completely independent and managed by the ILO Regional Evaluation Officer in the Arab States in coordination with the ILO Evaluation Office (EVAL) in Geneva as required for decentralized evaluations.

8.3 Roles and responsibilities

The evaluation team is responsible for preparing all deliverables in accordance with the Terms of Reference and ILO's evaluation guidelines. They are also responsible for arranging and coordinating the data collection phase ensuring ethical conduct. The ILO project team will support in logistical introductions, and access to information, and will organize stakeholder validation for the draft findings.

Deliverables and timeline

1 The timeline is very strict and no extensions are expected. The evaluation is expected to start 3 April and finish by 15 June 2026.

Deliverable	Indicative number of working days
Deliverable 1: Inception report and its comments log	7
Deliverable 2: PowerPoint presentation for an internal debriefing / preliminary findings presentation	1
Deliverable 3: Draft evaluation report (Maximum of 30 pages excluding annexes)	20 (includes data collection)
Deliverable 4: PowerPoint presentation for a stakeholders validation workshop	1
Deliverable 5: Draft 2 evaluation report and a comments log	4
Deliverable 6: Final evaluation report with its comments log, executive summary with all templates	2

Total number of working days	35
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10. Payment schedule

Note – this schedule will be updated and finalized with the selected vendor according to agreed timelines and is contingent on the delivery of outputs to the satisfaction of the ILO, and upon approval of the outputs by the ILO.

Instalment	Requirement	Date of submission
First payment (20%)	Upon submission of deliverable 1	April 14, 2026
Second payment (50%)	Upon submission of deliverable 2 and deliverable 3	May 30, 2026
Third (final) payment (30%)	Upon submission of deliverable 4, 5, and 6	June 15, 2026

11. Reporting requirements and quality assurance

The evaluation report must comply with ILO/EVAL decentralized evaluation standards and the checklists. The evaluation team will ensure that conclusions are clearly linked to evidence and that recommendations are prioritized, feasible, and addressed to the right entities. The ILO will coordinate a management response process after report finalization.

10.1 Report structure (Max 35 pages excluding annexes)

- Executive summary (max. 5 pages) with key findings, conclusions, lessons learned, good practices, and prioritized recommendations.
- Introduction and background (context, project description, theory of change).
- Methodology (including limitations and mitigation).
- Findings organized by OECD-DAC criteria, evaluation questions, and cross-cutting themes.
- Conclusions (clear linkages to the findings).
- Recommendations (prioritized; with timeframe and responsible entity).
- Lessons learned and good practices.
- Annexes: Lessons Learned, and Good Practices templates; evaluation matrix; list of people consulted; data collection tools; documents reviewed; additional case studies and quantitative tables as needed – should align with the evaluation report checklist.

11. Evaluation Team profile and qualifications

11.1 Team composition

ILO encourages proposals that combine international and national expertise.

- **Team Leader (international):** overall evaluation methodological leadership, analysis, reporting, and quality assurance.
- **Local consultant (Lebanon-based):** context knowledge, Arabic language, facilitation of fieldwork and stakeholder engagement.
- A team member needs to have experience with the Market Systems Development (MSD) approach, DCED Standards, and measuring systemic change should have high contribution to the design, analysis, and reporting of the report.

11.2 Required qualifications

- Advanced university degree in economics, development studies, labour studies, social sciences, agriculture/agri-economics, renewable energy policy, or a related field.
- At least 10 years (team leader) / 5 years (national evaluator) of proven experience in designing and conducting evaluations, including independent final evaluations.
- Demonstrated experience with market systems development / value chain development and private sector engagement in fragile contexts; experience with the DCED Standards and measuring systemic change, as well as strong expertise and experience designing, implementing and evaluating market systems development projects is required.
- Strong knowledge of decent work, labour standards, OSH, and gender equality in economic development programming; experience evaluating interventions involving refugees is an asset.

- Experience in Lebanon and/or similar crisis contexts; understanding of agriculture and renewable energy dynamics in Lebanon is highly desirable.
- Proven ability to apply OECD-DAC criteria and produce high-quality, utilization-focused reports.
- Excellent analytical writing skills in English. Arabic is required for the national evaluator.
- No prior involvement in the design or implementation of the Bouzour Project that could compromise independence; ability to disclose and manage conflicts of interest.

12. Preparation of proposals and selection criteria

The interested service providers are requested to prepare a technical and financial proposal for the assignment.

12.1 Technical Proposal

Technical proposals will account for 70% of the total scoring and will be assessed based on the consistency of the proposed approach with the Terms of Reference, the qualifications of the evaluation team, and the profile of the service provider company.

The technical proposals must include:

- Details of, references for, and available web links to recent evaluation exercises carried out by the lead evaluator.
- CVs of the team leader and proposed team members;
- A detailed workplan, including number of working days, sequencing of activities and deliverables, and allocation of responsibilities;
- A clear description of the approach, including tools for data collection, analysis, and validation.
- A contingency plan in case the security situation would not allow for face-to-face interaction.

Criteria	Description	Score
Methodological rigor and compliance with ToR	Completeness and adequacy of the proposed approach, coverage of the evaluation criteria, and understanding of the project backgrounds.	20
Technical proposal	Proven experience in conducting evaluations for UN agencies and development programmes, and specific expertise in ILO evaluations and AIMS interventions.	15
Team qualifications and expertise	Relevance of proposed personnel, with proven experience in development cooperation evaluations meeting all requirements as set in the TORs.	15
Implementation and management plan	Feasibility and clarity of the proposed plan, reasonable number of working days, including timelines, risk mitigation, management structure (level of effort of each team member), coordination mechanisms, and quality assurance.	20
Total Technical Score		70

Financial Proposal

The financial proposal will account for 30% of the total score for selection. The company is expected to lead on all expenses and logistics related to the evaluation including data collection. Please submit two financial proposals, one for in-person data collection and one for online in case the security situation will not allow.

- The lowest price scores the maximum score for the financial proposal, i.e. 30 points.
- All other price proposals receive scores in inverse proportion (score for Proposal A = $(30 - \text{Price of the lowest priced proposal}) / \text{Price of proposal A}$).
- The total score for the final evaluation shall be 100.
- The financial proposal shall be accompanied by a table detailing expense category, number of working days, management fees etc.

12. Ethical considerations, confidentiality and data protection

- This evaluation will comply with ILO evaluation guidelines and UN Norms and Standards.
- The ToRs is accompanied by the code of conduct for carrying out the evaluation “Code of conduct for evaluation in the ILO”. The selected evaluation company will sign the Code of Conduct form along with the contract.

- UNEG ethical guidelines will be followed throughout the evaluation.
- The evaluation team will not have any links to project management or any other conflict of interest that would interfere with the independence

10.2. Annex 2: Evaluation questions matrix and tools (EQM)

Evaluation questions matrix (EQM)

The matrix below organises the evaluation questions from the TOR. Sub-questions are added where the evaluation team assessed that the TOR question requires disaggregation to be answerable in the BOUZOUR context. AIMS-specific questions are integrated under each criterion to ensure systemic change is assessed. The EQM is a living document and will be updated as evidence emerges.

Question / Sub-Question	Indicator(s)	Data Sources	Method	Stakeholders	Analysis
RELEVANCE					
To what extent did the project address the priority needs and constraints of target groups (women and men, Lebanese and Syrian), sectorial partners and stakeholders in the agriculture sector throughout the project period?	Alignment between project design and documented needs; evidence of needs assessment; gender-sensitive targeting; evidence of adaptation to changing needs	Project document; ILO inception report (Dec 2023); cherry sector survey; progress reports; context literature	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K7, K8, K10, K26	Map theory of action against documented needs at design and at key adaptation points; assess whether needs remained central throughout implementation
SQ1: To what extent was BOUZOUR's initial design responsive to the needs of Lebanese and Syrian agricultural workers and farmers, including women?	Alignment between project design and documented needs; evidence of needs assessment	Project document; ILO inception report (Dec 2023); cherry sector survey; context literature	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K7, K8	Assess design assumptions at project start
SQ2: To what extent did the AIMS market facilitation approach remain relevant as Lebanon's context changed dramatically (conflict, economic collapse)?	Evidence of project adaptation to context; stakeholder assessment of relevance post-2024 conflict; comparison of planned vs. adapted strategy	Progress reports; adaptive management records; KIIs	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K3, K7	Timeline analysis of contextual shifts vs. project adaptations; test whether AIMS logic held under crisis conditions
SQ3: Were Syrian women workers specifically prioritised and reached as target beneficiaries?	% women among beneficiaries disaggregated by nationality; evidence of gender-sensitive design; reach of FGDs	Beneficiary data disaggregated by sex/nationality; project design documents; FGDs 2 & 4	Desk review; FGDs	K26; FGD 2 (greenhouse women); FGD 5 (cherry workers)	Quantitative review of disaggregated data; qualitative assessment of gender integration depth
To what extent did the project design take into consideration the needs and priorities of the ILO's constituents (Government, workers, and employers)?	Evidence of tripartite constituent engagement in design; alignment with constituent priorities; depth of engagement vs. formal compliance	Project document; KIIs with workers' organisations and government; progress reports	Desk review; KIIs	K3, K5, K8, K10, K11	Assess whether constituent priorities shaped project design and implementation, not only as beneficiaries but as tripartite partners
To what extent is the project's Theory of Change logical with clear shifts between the different results levels?	Logical consistency of ToC; clarity of causal pathways from outputs to outcomes to impact; validity of key assumptions	Project document; ToC reconstruction; inception report; progress reports	Desk review	K1, K2	Assess internal logic of ToC; identify weak links or untested assumptions; evaluate whether

					shifts between results levels are plausible
COHERENCE					
How coherent was the project across its theory of change (across the different results levels) and intervention streams (e.g., linkages between productivity upgrades, solar solutions, business skills, and market linkages)?	Evidence of linkages between outcome areas; cross-outcome synergies documented; extent to which interventions reinforced each other	Progress reports; project document; KIIs with project team	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K3	Assess whether four outcome areas functioned as a connected system or parallel silos; map cross-outcome linkages against ToC logic
How coherent was the project with ILO's other relevant initiatives and how effective were coordination and complementarities?	Evidence of coordination with FAO, UNDP, UNHCR, EU ENABLE, PROSPECTS, other ILO projects; documented complementarities; absence of duplication	Progress reports; coordination meeting records; donor KII	Desk review; KIIs	K5, K7, K1	Mapping of actors in same intervention space; division of labour assessment
To what extent does the project have clear linkages with ILO's P&B (2022-23, 2024-25) and the relevant CPOs in Lebanon?	Explicit alignment between project outcomes and P&B priorities; contribution to LBN101, LBN102; documented linkages	ILO P&B 2022-23 and 2024-25; CPO documentation; project document	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K3	Map project outcomes against P&B outcome areas and CPO indicators; assess depth of contribution vs. formal alignment
Is the project coherent with ILO's contributions to the UNSDCF (2023-26) and the SDGs?	Alignment with UNSDCF Lebanon 2023-26; contribution to SDG 8 and other relevant SDGs; documented UN coordination	UNSDCF Lebanon 2023-26; project document; progress reports	Desk review	K1, K7	Assess formal and substantive alignment with UNSDCF priorities and SDG targets relevant to decent work and agricultural livelihoods
How well did BOUZOUR align with and advance ILO's AIMS approach, Decent Work mandate, and tripartite principles?	AIMS methodology elements present and correctly applied; decent work standards mainstreamed across outcomes; tripartite constituents genuinely engaged	AIMS framework documentation; project logframe; progress reports; KIIs with ILO AIMS team and workers' organisations	Desk review; KIIs	K2, K3, K10, K11	Systematic mapping of BOUZOUR activities against AIMS principles and AAER framework; assess depth of tripartite engagement vs. formal compliance
EFFECTIVENESS					
To what extent were the planned outcomes and outputs achieved and what were the main enabling and constraining factors.	Achievement rate against logframe indicators for all four outcomes and outputs; % of target reached; quality assessment beyond counting	Logframe with actuals; output tracking sheets; progress reports; final Q1 2026 data from ILO	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K4; all implementing partner KIIs (K12–K20)	Quantitative comparison actuals vs. targets; qualitative assessment of result quality and attribution

SQ — Outcome 1: Did the greenhouse, climate-smart, and contract farming interventions change market actor behaviour (manufacturers, service providers, agri-food SMEs)?	No. of manufacturers offering affordable upgrades commercially; SmartLand Agri client growth; independent market orders post-project	Output tracking; ILO briefs; SmartLand Agri commercial data; KIIs	Desk review; KIIs; FGD 1	K12, K13, K14, K15, K16, K21, K22; FGD 1	AAER framework: adopt (farmers), expand (market-driven orders), respond (manufacturer business models); verify whether growth is continuing
SQ — Outcome 2: Did cherry export interventions generate market-level change in the value chain, and did decent work improve for workers?	Farmer income gains (USD 688k in 2025); wage increase (74.4% cumulative); child labour decline (34% to 10.5%); no. of workers with improved conditions (target: 1,046)	Output tracking; cherry survey; endline data; worker FGD; KIIs	Desk review; KIIs; FGDs 3	K8, K9, K17, K18, K23, K24, K25; FGDs 3	Contribution analysis for cherry income and wage results; assess whether decent work changes are embedded in commercial logic or contingent on facilitation
SQ — Outcome 3: Were farmers enabled to access and use solar energy systems, and is the enabling infrastructure sustainable?	No. of farmers assessed (156); solar companies engaged (20); PV tool institutionalised in LSES; village agent network operational	LSES data; solar tool documentation; KII with LSES leadership	Desk review; KII	K19; K1	Assess commercial viability of models without ILO support; identify financing gap as key barrier
SQ — Outcome 4: Were IYAB trainers certified and is the programme institutionally anchored for independent delivery?	Master trainers certified; 303 agri-businesses trained (64% women); Ministerial Decision (MoET, June 2025); 10 local institutions independently delivering	IYAB briefs; Ministerial Decision documentation; KIIs; FGD 3 & 6	Desk review; KIIs; FGD 3 & 6	K20; FGD 3; FGD 6	Assess whether Ministerial Decision translates into actual independent delivery; test institutional dependency risk
Which individual partnerships and relationships with stakeholders and the private sector are leading to or can potentially lead to the most effective results?	Depth of private sector engagement; commercial sustainability of partnerships; evidence of continued engagement post-project	KIIs with implementing partners and private sector actors; progress reports	KIIs	K12–K20	Assess which partnerships show strongest commercial logic and sustainability potential; identify leverage points for Phase II
Did the implementation take into consideration gender, disability inclusion, and environmental sustainability?	Gender-disaggregated results; evidence of disability inclusion where relevant; environmental outcomes (water reduction 22–50%; solar adoption)	Progress reports; gender analysis; FGDs; environmental data	Desk review; FGDs; KIIs	K26; all FGDs	Cross-cutting assessment across all four outcomes; assess depth vs. formal compliance
How did the project contribute to knowledge development, capacity building, and building strategic relationships with stakeholders?	Training outputs; publications and tools developed; institutional relationships formed; evidence of knowledge transfer	Output tracking; ILO briefs; KIIs	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K8, K20	Assess whether capacity and knowledge remain embedded in institutions beyond project closure
Which assumptions in the Theory of Change held true, partially held, or did not hold, and why?	Evidence for/against each key ToC assumption across all four outcomes; alternative explanations examined	All data sources	All methods	All stakeholders	Systematic testing of ToC assumptions using contribution analysis; identify which assumptions need revision for Phase II

EFFICIENCY

How efficiently were resources used to generate outputs and catalyse system change (including human resources)?	Budget utilisation rate; cost per beneficiary (where calculable); outputs delivered per unit cost; private sector co-investment (documented: USD 534k)	Financial reports; budget vs. expenditure; output data aggregation sheets	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K6, K7	Cost-effectiveness analysis per outcome; comparison of planned vs. actual resource use; assess adaptive management efficiency
To what extent did the TOC and monitoring system support an efficient delivery of results?	Quality of results chains as management tools; evidence of adaptive management decisions based on monitoring data; DCED Standard compliance	Progress reports; results chains; MRM framework; KII with MRM expert	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K6	Assess whether MRM system functioned as adaptive management tool or primarily for reporting; evaluate DCED Standard application
To what extent was the management structure (human resources at national and regional levels, backstopping functions, partner coordination, and management oversight) supporting the achievement of results?	Evidence of effective coordination between national and regional teams; backstopping quality; partner management effectiveness	Progress reports; KIIs with project team and implementing partners	Desk review; KIIs	K1, K2, K3, K12, K20	Assess management efficiency across levels; identify bottlenecks in coordination and oversight
SQ: Was the AIMS facilitation modality appropriate and efficient for achieving results in Lebanon's compound crisis context?	Stakeholder assessment of modality fitness; comparison with counterfactual direct delivery; evidence that facilitation catalysed private co-investment	KIIs; financial co-investment data	KIIs	K1, K2, K7	Qualitative efficiency assessment; test whether AIMS light-touch approach was more or less efficient than direct delivery would have been under crisis conditions
IMPACT ORIENTATION					
To what extent did the programme interventions steer towards impact and sustainability?	Evidence of AIMS facilitation logic maintained under crisis; design of interventions with view to systemic and lasting change; AAER evidence across all four outcomes	Progress reports; results chains; KIIs with market actors	Desk review; KIIs; FGDs	K1, K2, K12, K13, K17, K18, K19, K20	Assess whether interventions were designed and managed with systemic change orientation; distinguish between delivery-focused and facilitation-focused results
SQ: What broader systemic changes in agricultural market systems in Lebanon can be plausibly contributed to BOUZOUR's AIMS approach?	AAER evidence: adopt-adapt-expand-respond indicators across all four outcomes; market-level behaviour change post-project; institutional anchoring	KIIs with market actors; field observation; output briefs; RC tracking sheets; case studies	KIIs; FGDs; field visits; case studies	K12, K13, K17, K18, K19, K20, K21, K22; all FGDs	Contribution analysis: plausible causal pathway; rule out alternative explanations; assess durability of systemic changes under crisis pressure

What unintended effects occurred (positive/negative), including on social cohesion?	Evidence of unintended outcomes; stakeholder perceptions of social cohesion; evidence of tensions or positive spillovers	KIIs; FGDs; progress reports	KIIs; FGDs	All stakeholders	Assess positive and negative unintended effects; specific focus on Lebanese-Syrian relations and community dynamics
SQ: What has been the impact on decent work conditions, particularly for Syrian women agricultural workers?	Wage change; child labour incidence (target: - 41% in cherry; actual: 34% to 10.5%); working conditions improvement; recruitment practices; stability of employment	Progress report data; working conditions studies; worker FGDs	FGDs 2 & 4; KIIs	K10, K11, K26; FGD 2 (greenhouse women); FGD 5 (cherry workers)	Gender-disaggregated analysis; assess whether decent work changes are structural or contingent on project facilitation
To what extent are results likely to be sustained after project completion (ownership, institutionalization, commercial viability, financing pathways)?	Commercial viability of models without project support; institutional embedding (Ministerial Decision; MoA certification framework; LSES tool); private sector expansion plans	KIIs post-project closure; financial viability data; commercial order data	KIIs; case studies	K9, K10, K13, K15, K16, K17, K18, K19; K6, K7	Assess each outcome area against sustainability criteria: commercial incentive, institutional capacity, policy environment, financing access
SQ: What conditions support or threaten sustainability, and what are the priority recommendations for future ILO programming in Lebanon?	Risk factors; enabling conditions; stakeholder views on future programming; financing gaps; legal barriers for Syrian workers	All data sources	All methods	All stakeholders	Synthesis across outcomes; forward-looking analysis of structural gaps; Phase II design recommendations
What ongoing good practices are showing early signs of systems change? Which have the most potential to be leveraged for scale-up?	AAER expand and respond indicators; evidence of crowding-in by non-project actors; institutional adoption beyond project support	KIIs with market actors and institutions; case studies; progress reports	KIIs; case studies	K12, K13, K17, K19, K20	Identify highest-potential interventions for scale-up based on commercial logic, replicability, and systemic reach
SUSTAINABILITY					
To what extent are results likely to be sustained after project completion (ownership, institutionalization, commercial viability, financing pathways)?	Commercial viability of models without project support; institutional embedding (Ministerial Decision; MoA certification framework; LSES tool); private sector expansion plans	KIIs conducted post-project closure; financial viability data; commercial order data	KIIs; case studies	K9, K10, K13, K15, K16, K17, K18, K19; K6, K7	Assess each outcome area against sustainability criteria: commercial incentive, institutional capacity, policy environment, financing access
SQ: Are the results and systemic changes achieved by BOUZOUR likely to continue and expand beyond project closure (March 2026)?	Evidence of continued market actor engagement post-project; institutional anchoring; commercial orders without ILO support	Progress reports; post-closure KIIs; commercial data	KIIs; case studies	K9, K13, K17, K19, K20	Assess continuation and expansion of results per outcome area
What ongoing good practices are showing early signs of systems change? Which have the most potential to be leveraged for scale-up?	AAER expand and respond indicators; evidence of crowding-in by non-project actors; institutional adoption beyond project support	KIIs with market actors and institutions; case studies; progress reports	KIIs; case studies	K12, K13, K17, K19, K20	Identify highest-potential interventions for scale-up based on commercial logic, replicability, and systemic reach

SQ: What conditions support or threaten sustainability, and what are the priority recommendations for a potential Phase II?	Risk factors identified; enabling conditions present; stakeholder views on Phase II priorities; financing gaps; legal barriers for Syrian workers	All data sources	All methods	All stakeholders	Synthesis across outcomes; forward-looking analysis of structural gaps (financing, regulatory framework for Syrian workers); Phase II design recommendations
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KII Interview Guide

The guide was adapted according to the respondent category, including ILO staff, donor representatives, government counterparts, implementing partners, employers' and workers' organizations, cooperatives, private sector actors, service providers, and project beneficiaries.

The questions below guided semi-structured interviews and were adapted according to the respondent's context, role, and personal involvement in the project. Not all questions were asked to all respondents, and the sequence of discussion varied depending on the flow of the interview and the relevance of particular topics to the respondent's experience.

The interview approach is structured around two complementary layers.

- The first and primary layer focuses on reconstructing the intervention story (section C) from the perspective of the respondent. Interviewees were encouraged to explain in detail the intervention, partnership, activity, or process they were involved in, including the original problem or constraint being addressed, the logic behind the intervention design, the roles of different actors, the intended changes in market behaviour or practices, the adaptations made during implementation, and the results or changes observed over time. The evaluation team considers this narrative reconstruction essential for understanding how the project operated in practice, particularly within a complex and rapidly evolving context such as Lebanon. A substantial part of the evaluation evidence — including findings related to relevance, effectiveness, adaptation, sustainability, and early indications of systemic change — is expected to emerge through this form of reflective discussion.
- The second layer consists of targeted evaluation (sections D,E,F,G and H) probes used by the interviewer to address remaining information gaps relevant to the evaluation framework, DAC criteria, Theory of Change assumptions, AIMS principles, results measurement, and cross-cutting themes such as gender, decent work, conflict sensitivity, and sustainability. These follow-up questions will be selected and adapted based on the respondent's role, level of involvement, and specific knowledge of the intervention or partnership being discussed.

For example, when interviewing farmers involved in a particular intervention, the discussion may focus primarily on the practical changes experienced, the support received, changes in farming practices, market access, income, or working conditions, while follow-up probes may explore continuation of practices, relationships with market actors, or perceptions of sustainability. Similarly, interviews with private sector actors, cooperatives, or service providers may focus first on the evolution of the business partnership or intervention model, before exploring questions related to commercial incentives, behavioural change, replication, investment decisions, and continuation beyond project support.

Note to Interviewers — Adaptation Guidance This guide provides a thematic framework for semi-structured interviews. All questions must be adapted to the specific role, context, and intervention of each respondent. The following principles apply:

- **Project familiarity:** Some respondents may not know the project by its name (BOUZOUR) or may not be aware of ILO's involvement. Anchor questions to the specific intervention, activity, or relationship they were part of rather than "the project" as a whole.
- **Technical terminology:** Avoid ILO-specific terminology (AIMS, OECD-DAC, results chains, systemic change) with non-ILO respondents. Use plain language equivalents — "how things work in the sector," "whether practices continued after support ended," etc.
- **Syrian refugees — sensitive framing:** The topic of Syrian refugees and employment is politically sensitive in Lebanon. Avoid framing questions around "jobs for Syrian refugees" or similar language that may trigger negative reactions. Focus instead on "agricultural workers," "seasonal workers," or "workers in the sector" and let respondents characterize groups themselves.
- **Intervention-specific focus:** Depending on the actor, focus on the specific intervention they were involved in. A greenhouse manufacturer, a cherry exporter, and an IYAB trainer have very different reference points — questions should reflect this.
- **Flexibility:** The order of questions may be changed based on the flow of conversation. Not all questions need to be asked in every interview. Priority should be given to questions most relevant to the respondent's DAC criteria coverage as indicated in the KII sample table.

A. Introduction and Consent (3 minutes)

- Introduce the evaluation team and explain the purpose of the independent final evaluation.
- Explain that participation is voluntary and that the respondent may decline to answer any question or stop the interview at any time.
- Confirm that individual responses will be treated confidentially and that comments will not be attributed by name without explicit permission.
- Explain how the information will be used in the evaluation report.
- Request permission to take notes and, where relevant, to record the interview.
- Confirm the expected duration of the interview, approximately 60 minutes.

B. Interviewee Role and Engagement with BOUZOUR (5 minutes)

- Could you briefly describe your role and your organization's involvement with the BOUZOUR project?
- At what stage were you involved in the project: design, implementation, monitoring, coordination, or as a beneficiary/participant?
- Which project activities, interventions, or partnerships were most relevant to your work?
- How regularly did you engage with the project team, implementing partners, or other stakeholders?
- From your perspective, what were the main objectives of BOUZOUR?

C. Reconstruction of the Intervention Journey and Change Process (15–20 minutes)

- Could you walk us through the intervention, partnership, activity, or process you were involved in, and explain how it evolved over time?
- What specific problem, constraint, or market challenge was the intervention originally trying to address?
- Why was this issue considered important at the time, and what changes was the intervention expected to trigger?
- Which actors were expected to change their behaviour or practices, and how?
- What role was the project expected to play in supporting or facilitating these changes?
- Were there specific "push" or "pull" mechanisms the intervention was trying to introduce into the market system?
- How did the intervention evolve during implementation?
 - What worked as expected?
 - What did not work as expected?
 - Were important assumptions revised over time?
- How did the broader context — including economic crisis, conflict, market disruptions, or institutional constraints — affect the intervention and implementation decisions?
- What kinds of changes or responses did you observe among farmers, workers, enterprises, cooperatives, service providers, institutions, or other actors?
- Which changes appear likely to continue beyond project support, and which still depend on external support or facilitation?

- Looking back, what do you consider the most important lesson, success, limitation, or unresolved issue related to this intervention or partnership?

D. Relevance and Design (max 10 minutes)

- To what extent did the project design respond to the needs of Lebanese and Syrian farmers, workers, enterprises, cooperatives, and other actors in the agricultural sector?
- Were the needs and constraints of women, youth, Syrian refugees, Lebanese host communities, and other vulnerable groups adequately considered in the project design?
- Did the project's focus on AIMS — market systems facilitation rather than direct service delivery — make sense in this context? Why or why not?
- How well did the project align with national priorities, ILO decent work priorities, donor priorities, and the strategies of relevant institutions or partners?
- How well was BOUZOUR coordinated with other government, UN, donor, NGO, or private sector initiatives in the agriculture or livelihoods sectors?
- How did the project adapt its strategy in response to Lebanon's evolving crisis context, including economic collapse, currency depreciation, conflict-related shocks, and institutional constraints?
- Were there any important needs or risks that the project design did not sufficiently address?

E. Effectiveness and AIMS Results (max 10 minutes)

- What do you see as the most significant results achieved by the project in relation to employment, livelihoods, enterprise performance, market systems change, decent work, and inclusion?
- Which interventions, partnerships, or models contributed most clearly to these results? Why?
- Did market actors — such as companies, cooperatives, service providers, financial institutions, or public institutions — change their behaviour, practices, or relationships as a result of the project? Please provide examples.
- To what extent did the project contribute to improved access to services, inputs, finance, markets, skills, or employment opportunities?
- Were results different for different groups, such as Lebanese workers, Syrian workers, women, men, youth, farmers, cooperatives, or small enterprises?
- Were there results that were unexpected, either positive or negative?
- What factors helped the project achieve results?
- Probe: partnerships, facilitation approach, technical assistance, private sector engagement, ILO capacity, local ownership.
- What factors limited or delayed results?
- Probe: conflict, economic instability, inflation, legal restrictions, institutional capacity, market demand, access to finance, implementation delays.
- What evidence is available to show that these changes occurred?

F. Efficiency and Management Arrangements — (max 10 minutes)

- To what extent were the project's resources, timeframe, staffing, and management arrangements adequate to deliver the expected results?
- Were project activities implemented in a timely manner? If not, what caused delays?
- How effective were coordination arrangements between ILO, implementing partners, government counterparts, private sector actors, and other stakeholders?
- Were the monitoring, reporting, and learning systems useful for tracking progress and adapting implementation?
- Were there areas where the project could have achieved similar or better results more efficiently?

G. Decent Work and Gender (max 10 minutes)

- To what extent did the project contribute to decent work outcomes for agricultural workers, farmers, and other value chain actors?
- Probe: wages, working conditions, occupational safety and health, working time, contracts, employment security, informality, access to social protection, and protection from exploitation or discrimination.
- Were decent work improvements integrated into the commercial logic of the interventions, or did they depend mainly on direct project support?
- Did the project address barriers faced by women, including Syrian refugee women and Lebanese women, in accessing employment, skills, services, markets, finance, or leadership opportunities?
- Were there differences in how women, men, youth, Lebanese workers, Syrian workers, farmers, enterprises, or cooperatives benefited from the project?
- Did the project identify or address risks related to discrimination, exploitation, unsafe working conditions, child labour, or unequal treatment between different groups?
- Were workers, employers, cooperatives, or representative organizations involved in identifying decent work priorities or monitoring improvements?
- What could have been done better to strengthen gender equality, inclusion, and decent work outcomes?

G. Sustainability max (5 minutes)

- Which project results, models, partnerships, or practices are most likely to continue beyond the project period? Why?
- Are market actors, cooperatives, service providers, government institutions, or private sector partners likely to continue the approaches introduced by the project without further ILO support?
- What are the main risks to sustainability?
- Probe: financing access, legal framework for Syrian workers, market demand, institutional capacity, political instability, conflict, input prices, currency volatility, and partner incentives.
- Were there institutional anchors — such as the Ministry of Agriculture, chambers of commerce, cooperatives, employers' or workers' organizations, financial institutions, or private companies — that may help sustain the results?

- Did the project build sufficient capacity among local actors to continue or scale the interventions?
- Are decent work and inclusion gains likely to continue after the project ends? Why or why not?
- What additional support, policy changes, or partnerships would be needed to sustain or scale the results?

H. Lessons and Recommendations (max 5 minutes)

- What are the most important lessons from BOUZOUR for future AIMS or market systems programming in Lebanon or similar fragile contexts?
- What aspects of the project design or implementation should be replicated?
- What aspects should be changed or avoided in future programming?
- If a second phase were designed, what would be the top three priorities you would recommend?
- What recommendations would you make to ILO, the donor, government counterparts, implementing partners, and market actors?
- Is there anything else the evaluation should know that you think is important?

Focus Group Discussions Facilitation Guide

This guide is for all proposed FGDs and may also be adapted for smaller group interviews where full FGDs are not feasible. Specific probing questions will be adapted per FGD group (greenhouse farmers, greenhouse workers, cherry farmers, cherry workers, IYAB participants, SMEs). All FGDs are facilitated in Arabic by Mounia Barakat. Duration: 90–120 minutes.

A. Opening (15 minutes)

- Welcome participants; introduce evaluation team and purpose (accountability and learning — not an audit of them)
- Explain confidentiality: individual responses will not be attributed; only group-level findings will be reported
- Confirm voluntary participation; establish ground rules (one speaker at a time; all views respected)
- Request recording whenever possible, and if all attendees accept.
- Warm-up: ask each participant to share their name and one word describing their experience of the past two years working in agriculture

B. Experience with the Project (30 minutes)

- How did you first hear about [the greenhouse upgrade / cherry programme / IYAB training / QOOT contract farming]?
- What specifically did you receive or participate in?
- What changed in your work or farm / business after you participated?
- (For workers) What changed inside the greenhouse / on the cherry farm? (probe: ventilation, heat, wages, working hours, contracts, safety)
- (For farmers) Did your income change? How? Would you continue this practice without the project? What improvements did you make to your agricultural practices as a result of the programme? For example, changes in production methods, quality standards, or techniques? Were you able to access new markets or buyers as a result?

C. Decent Work and Wellbeing (25 minutes)

- (For workers) Did your wages change over the past two or three seasons? How?
- (For cherry workers) Did you notice fewer children working on farms during the season?
- (For greenhouse workers) Do you feel safer inside the upgraded greenhouse compared to before?
- Do you feel more secure in this work? Do you have contracts? Do you know your rights?
- (For women) Are there things that made it easier or harder for women specifically to participate and benefit?

D. Looking Forward — Sustainability (20 minutes)

- Do you plan to continue [using the technology / working with the exporter / applying what you learned]? Why?
- Is there anything that would stop you continuing?
- Has anyone else in your community started doing the same thing without project support? — for example, upgrading greenhouses independently, working directly with exporters or buyers such as FAV, Nasr Rahme, or Biomass, applying for cherry certification, or using what they learned in new contexts?
- What would you need to keep improving your situation?

E. Closing (10 minutes)

- Overall, what are the two or three things the project did that made the biggest difference to you?
- What would you have wanted the project to do differently?
- Is there anything else you want to make sure the evaluation team knows?

10.3. Annex 3: List of persons interviewed (28 interviews)

#	Name / Role	Organisation	Outcome
K1	Luana Ayala, Hala Obeid, Bahjat Loutfi (joint)	ILO — Project Coordination Team	All outcomes
K2	Nadja Nutz	ILO HQ — AIMS Coordinator	Market systems / Cross-cutting
K3	Badra Alawa	ILO ROAS — Enterprise Specialist	Workers' engagement / Cross-cutting
K4	Lund, Mette Grangaard	ILO ROAS — Just Transition Specialist	Cross-cutting / Coherence
K5	Jose Manuel Medina	ILO Specialist for Employers' Activities (ROAS)	Cross-cutting / Coherence (ILO mandate)
K6	Muneeb Zulfiqar	MRM Expert — Consultant	Cross-cutting (M&E)
K7	Ingrid Sandström	Sida — Donor Focal Point	All outcomes / Donor
K8	Hala Abdallah (OSH) + Sylvana Gerges (Cherry Certification)	Ministry of Agriculture	Outcomes 1 & 2
K9	Said Gedeon	CCIAZ — Chamber of Commerce Zahle	Outcome 2 — Cherry
K10	Bechara Al Asmar (CGTL)	Workers' Organisations	Decent Work / Cross-cutting
K11	Castro Abdallah (FENASOL)	Workers' Organisations	Decent Work / Cross-cutting
K12	Farah Baroudy	SHIFT — Lead IP Greenhouse	1.1 Greenhouse Upgrades
K13	Khaled Alabbassi	SmartLand Agri — CEO	1.3 Climate-Smart
K15	Dr. Yolla Chamoun	Climate-Smart Data Expert — Independent	1.3 Climate-Smart
K16	Marc Bou Zeidan & Therese Maalouf	QOOT — Agri-food Cluster	1.2 QOOT Contract Farming
K17	Michel Rahme & Mazen Bouchebel	Nasr Rahme / FaV — Export SME	2.1 Cherry Exports
K18	Hania Chahal	Value Chain Development Expert — Independent	2.1, 2.2, 2.3 Cherry / Market
K19	Jean-Paul Sfeir	LSSES — Lebanese Solar Energy Society	3.2 Solar Tool / Village Agents
K20A	Sarah El Khechen	FHF	4.1 IYAB / Agribusiness
K20B	Tarek Matar	Neopreneur	4.1 IYAB / Agribusiness
K21	Ahmad Attiyah	Small Manufacturers — Greenhouse Sector	1.1 Greenhouse Upgrades
K22	Mohamad Al Talawi	Small Manufacturers — Greenhouse Sector	1.1 Greenhouse Upgrades
K23	Mario Massoud and Rania Matar	Biomass — Export SME 2025	2.1 Cherry Exports
K24	Charbel Tannoury	COOP Qaa El Rim	2.1 Cherry Exports
K25	Ahmad Fleity	COOP Aarsal	2.1 Cherry Exports
K26	Daniella Gómez Bonilla	Gender Expert — Consultant	Cross-cutting — Gender
K27	Hussein A Abou Yehiya	PlantLab - CEO	2.3 Recruitment
K28	Mirna Fadel	Fadel holding	2.1 Cherry Exports

10.4. Annex 4: List of FGD organised

FGD #	FGD target group	Gender	Total Number of Invitees	Total number of attendees	Date	Time	Location	Outputs
1	Greenhouse farmers	Mixed	5	6	21.05.2026	10:00-11:30	Mhamara Municipality	1.1
2	Syrian Women Agricultural Workers	Female	10	12	21.05.2026	11:30-12:45	Mhamara Municipality	1.1
3	IYAB	Female	13	13	21.05.2026	13:00-14:30	Mhamara Municipality	4
4	Cherry farmers	Mixed	17	9	26.05.2026	09:00-10:30	CCIAZ	2.1;2.2
5	IYAB	Female	18	8	26.05.2026	10:30-12:00	CCIAZ	2
6	Cherry Workers	Male	5	2	26.05.2026	12:30-13:15	CCIAZ	4
7	QOOT SMEs	Mixed	7	5	27.05.2026	16:00-17:00	Online	1.2

10.5. Annex 5: Documents reviewed / bibliography

A. Project design and management documents

- Project proposal / project document: Promoting decent jobs for Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees.
- BOUZOUR inception report, 2023.
- BOUZOUR progress report, 2023.
- BOUZOUR narrative/progress report, 2024.
- BOUZOUR final progress report, July 2023 – March 2026.
- BOUZOUR risk register and logframe annexes.
- Project budget and financial information

B. Evaluation documents

- Terms of Reference for the independent final evaluation.
- BOUZOUR Independent Final Evaluation Inception Report, May 2026.
- Evaluation Question Matrix.
- Key Informant Interview guide.
- Focus Group Discussion guide.
- Mid-term internal evaluation, 2025.
- Initial findings / validation presentation, June 2026.

C. AIMS, market systems and sector selection documents

- Sector Selection Summary – Approach to Inclusive Market Systems.
- Market Systems Analysis / AIMS study.
- Cherry value chain rapid market analysis.
- Cherry baseline survey.
- Theory of Change and result chain documents.
- Regional value chains for recovery: Creating jobs and shared growth in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan

D. Intervention-specific documents and reports

- Greenhouse upgrades brief: Boosting productivity and decent work through affordable greenhouse upgrades.
- Climate-smart agriculture study: Climate-Smart and Water-Efficient Agriculture in Lebanon.
- Climate-smart agriculture brief: Building pathways for green jobs and climate-smart agritech in Lebanon.
- Contract farming / QOOT brief and related result chain.
- Gender and QOOT case study: Integrating Gender Equality into Agri-SME Competitiveness.
- Natagri cherry export progress report, 2024.
- Nasr Rahme final report, 2024.
- Biomass Lebanese Cherry Export Development Project report, 2025.
- Solar / LSES assessment tool documents.
- YY ReGen reports and related result chain documents.
- IYAB/SIYB training and institutional anchoring documents.
- Fadel Trading Company 2025 - Enhancing Cherry Production and Export Readiness in Lebanon
- PlantLab / recruitment pathway documents.

E. ILO and Sida strategic / reference documents

- ILO Programme and Budget relevant outcomes.
- Lebanon Country Programme Outcomes.
- UNSDCF Lebanon 2023–2026.
- Sida strategy / relevant cooperation framework documents.
- ILO AIMS guidance and related technical references.
- ILO evaluation policy, templates and quality checklist.

F. External contextual sources

- Lebanon economic and labour market context sources.
- UNHCR Syrian refugee movement and return intention data.
- Agriculture, agri-food, climate and energy sector references.
- Relevant legal, labour and social protection references.

10.6. Annex 6: Lessons learned template

Project DC/SYMBOL: LBN/23/01/SWE

Name of Evaluator: Nikola Babić, International Evaluation Consultant / Team Leader;
Mounia Barakat, National Evaluation Consultant

Date: 19 June 2026

Access to finance and visible business returns are critical for sustainability

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Access to finance and visible business returns are critical for sustainability. Market systems interventions gain stronger traction where actors can see a clear and relatively quick link between investment, expected return and risk.
Context and any related preconditions	BOUZOUR operated in a crisis-affected agricultural market where farmers, cooperatives, service providers and agri-businesses faced liquidity constraints, high investment risk and limited access to finance. The lesson is most relevant for interventions that require farmers or market actors to invest, co-invest or continue a service after project support ends.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO, Sida, future AIMS/MSD project teams, financial institutions, cooperatives, buyers, agri-businesses, service providers, farmers and small agricultural enterprises.
Challenges / negative lessons - Causal factors	Models requiring higher upfront investment, longer payback periods or more complex coordination generated more conditional motivation. This was visible in solar installation, cold-chain infrastructure, YY ReGen rental scale-up and cherry post-harvest investment. Where finance remained unresolved, technical relevance and stakeholder interest did not necessarily translate into adoption or scale.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Stronger traction was found where the link between investment and return was clearer and more visible, such as greenhouse upgrades and selected climate-smart agriculture services. In these cases, farmers and service providers could more easily understand practical benefits, including improved production conditions, resource savings, productivity gains or a more affordable commercial offer.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Future project design should test whether finance is a binding constraint early in the intervention cycle. Where it is, support should be linked to concrete investment decisions, realistic business returns, repayment capacity and risk-sharing options. This requires design time, market actor consultation, financial feasibility analysis and MRM indicators that track conversion from interest to investment and continued use.

Complex value-chain transformation requires sufficient time and repeated market cycles.

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Complex value-chain transformation requires sufficient time and repeated market cycles. One-off pilots or a single season are not enough to assess sustainability, resilience or systemic transformation.
Context and any related preconditions	The cherry pathway illustrates this lesson. It involved more than linking farmers to buyers. It required changes in sourcing arrangements, cooperative roles, certification, quality consistency, post-harvest handling, phytosanitary compliance, buyer relationships and decent work practices. These functions need to be tested under changing seasonal and market conditions.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO, Sida, future AIMS/MSD project teams, value-chain programmes, exporters, cooperatives, chambers, ministries, buyers, farmers and workers involved in seasonal agricultural value chains.
Challenges / negative lessons - Causal factors	Complex transformation is not linear. In one season, actors may test sourcing, certification and buyer relationships; in the next season, rainfall, quality variation, logistics constraints or changing buyer expectations may reveal new weaknesses. Short projects can generate proof of concept, but should not claim completed systemic transformation unless practices continue across seasons and actor roles are consolidated.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	BOUZOUR helped clarify constraints and initiate structured relationships in the cherry pathway. This created useful learning and early foundations for higher-value market access. The positive lesson is that each season can generate new information that allows farmers, cooperatives, exporters, buyers and institutions to adapt and strengthen the system over time.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Future programming should match intervention ambition to project duration and management expectations. Complex value-chain pathways should either be designed as multi-season interventions or explicitly framed as proof-of-concept / early consolidation work. MRM should track repeated performance, adaptation and consolidation across seasons, not only initial export or certification results.

Decent work is more likely to be sustained when embedded in economic and institutional incentives.

LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)	Decent work is more likely to be sustained when embedded in economic and institutional incentives, rather than treated as a stand-alone awareness or training activity.
Context and any related preconditions	BOUZOUR worked in an informal agricultural labour market where Syrian seasonal workers, including women, face weak representation, limited bargaining power and uneven labour protection. Decent work entry points were strongest where they were linked to productivity, OSH, quality, buyer requirements, certification, worker reliability or service quality.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	ILO, Sida, future AIMS/MSD project teams, ILO decent work, OSH, gender and workers' specialists, employers, buyers, cooperatives, service providers, farmers and agricultural workers, including Syrian women workers.
Challenges / negative lessons - Causal factors	Stand-alone decent work activities may improve awareness but are less likely to change practice sustainably if employers, buyers, cooperatives or service providers do not have practical reasons to maintain them. In cherry and other seasonal labour pathways, decent work entry points remained more fragile because they depended on buyer requirements, cooperative practices, monitoring and repeated seasonal enforcement.
Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors	Greenhouse upgrades provided the clearest example of decent work being embedded in an economic incentive. Improvements in ventilation, heat exposure, movement and working conditions were linked to a productivity-oriented upgrade model that also made commercial sense for farmers and manufacturers. This increased the likelihood that working-condition benefits would continue beyond direct project support.
ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)	Future ILO programming should involve decent work, OSH, gender and workers' specialists early in intervention design. Labour safeguards should be built into market relationships, buyer requirements, certification systems, service models and monitoring mechanisms. This requires practical facilitation and follow-up, not only awareness-raising or training.

10.7. Annex 7: Emerging good practice templates

Project DC/SYMBOL: LBN/23/01/SWE

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Date: 19 June 2026

Locally sourced affordable greenhouse upgrades

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	Locally sourced affordable greenhouse upgrades emerged as a good practice because they addressed an access-to-technology constraint through local market actors rather than imported or project-delivered equipment. BOUZOUR tested whether local manufacturers and workshops could produce lower-cost greenhouse upgrades that responded to farmers' productivity needs and workers' working-condition constraints.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	This practice is most relevant where standard or imported technologies are too expensive, but local workshops or manufacturers have the capacity to adapt or produce affordable alternatives. Replication should be preceded by local feasibility testing, including technical quality, affordability, farmer willingness to pay, manufacturer incentives and worker-safety benefits. The practice remains emerging because scale is still limited and continued uptake depends on finance, quality and demand without project facilitation.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	BOUZOUR helped local manufacturers test a more affordable upgrade offer. This gave farmers a more realistic investment option and manufacturers a potential commercial service line. The upgraded structures contributed to better production conditions and improved working environments, including ventilation, reduced heat stress and easier movement. Farmers also began discussing manufacturer quality and design improvements, suggesting movement from one-off technology delivery toward a more interactive local service function.
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	Targeted beneficiaries included Lebanese smallholder farmers, local manufacturers and agricultural workers, including Syrian women workers. Reported results included productivity-related benefits, improved working conditions and approximately 20 post-support farmer orders. These should be interpreted as early outcome and market-function signals, not evidence of mature systemic transformation.
Potential for replication and by whom	The transferable element is not the specific greenhouse design, but the problem-solving approach: identify the missing market function, test whether it can be supplied locally, and align the interests of farmers, manufacturers and workers. It could be replicated by ILO, Sida, other market-systems programmes, chambers, cooperatives, manufacturers or technical service providers where local supply capacity and commercial incentives exist.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	The practice links to ILO objectives on sustainable enterprises, productive employment, decent work and improved working conditions. It connects productivity upgrading with OSH and worker welfare benefits in a crisis-affected agricultural market system.
Other documents or relevant comments	This should be presented as an emerging good practice, not a fully proven model. Further monitoring is needed to assess continued farmer demand, manufacturer quality, affordability, after-sales support and sustained worker benefits.

Using cherry export upgrading to combine market access, certification and decent work entry points

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	BOUZOUR used cherry export upgrading as an entry point to connect market access, product quality, certification, traceability, post-harvest handling and decent work entry points within one value-chain pathway. The practice is emerging because it links commercial incentives with labour-related improvements: higher-value markets require more reliable sourcing, better quality, stronger compliance and clearer coordination, which can also create entry points for OSH, decent work and child labour safeguards.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	The practice is relevant in value chains where higher-value markets or buyers create incentives for farmers, cooperatives and exporters to improve quality, traceability, certification and sourcing practices. It is especially applicable where decent work risks are linked to seasonal production and where buyer expectations can be used to strengthen labour-related practices. Replication requires credible buyers or market channels, exporters or aggregators willing to improve sourcing, farmer or cooperative readiness to upgrade production and post-harvest practices, and practical mechanisms to integrate decent work, OSH and child labour monitoring. The practice should remain caveated. Cherry is a complex and seasonal pathway, and systemic transformation cannot be confirmed through one or two seasons or a limited number of exporter experiences. Replication would require repeated seasonal validation, sustained buyer relationships, quality consistency, functioning certification and phytosanitary systems, cold-chain solutions, farmer benefits and embedded decent work and child labour monitoring. It should therefore be treated as a promising emerging practice, not yet a proven scalable model.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	The practice is based on the assumption that access to higher-value markets creates incentives for farmers, cooperatives and exporters to improve product quality, certification, traceability, post-harvest handling and sourcing practices. These same requirements can create practical entry points for decent work and child labour safeguards, because buyers and exporters have an interest in reliable, compliant and reputationally safer supply chains. BOUZOUR contributed by supporting export readiness, certification-related pathways, farmer-exporter coordination and decent work entry points. The expected causal pathway is: higher-value market opportunity → stronger quality and certification requirements → improved coordination among farmers, cooperatives and exporters → stronger incentives to address labour-related risks linked to market access and compliance.
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	The practice targeted cherry farmers, cooperatives, exporters and seasonal workers, including women and Syrian workers involved in cherry production and harvesting. The evaluation found that the pathway generated important progress and credible potential in repositioning selected cherry actors toward higher-value markets. However, measurable impact remains early and should be interpreted cautiously. Evidence on farmer benefits, buyer continuity, certification use, product quality, worker conditions and child labour safeguards requires further seasonal validation.
Potential for replication and by whom	The practice can be replicated by ILO, Sida and other market-systems or value-chain programmes working in agricultural export pathways with clear market demand and compliance requirements. It is most relevant for programmes that aim to combine competitiveness, quality upgrading and decent work. Replication should be led through market actors and institutions with real roles in the value chain, including exporters, cooperatives, chambers, certification bodies, buyers, ministries and worker-related institutions. It should not be replicated as a stand-

	alone training or awareness activity; it requires a value-chain pathway where commercial incentives and decent work safeguards are deliberately connected.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	The practice contributes to ILO's Decent Work Agenda by linking market access and enterprise upgrading with decent work entry points in agriculture. It supports sustainable enterprises, productive employment, occupational safety and health, child labour prevention and just transition objectives where climate, quality and market requirements affect jobs and livelihoods. It also links to SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, with secondary relevance to poverty reduction and inclusive agricultural livelihoods.
Other documents or relevant comments	This practice should be read together with the evaluation findings on effectiveness, impact orientation and sustainability. The evaluation concluded that cherry export upgrading has strong systemic potential, but requires repeated market cycles and further consolidation before its full systemic and sustainability potential can be confirmed.

Using sector and value-chain selection as an inclusion strategy

GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT	TEXT
Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)	BOUZOUR used sector and value-chain selection as an inclusion strategy. The project selected agriculture and specific agricultural pathways where Lebanese farmers, Syrian refugees, women workers, agri-food SMEs, cooperatives and service providers were already economically present. This allowed the project to connect inclusion with real market functions, rather than treating inclusion as a separate add-on. The practice is emerging because it shows that inclusion can be strengthened when projects choose sectors and value-chain functions where target groups have realistic economic roles and where market actors have incentives to change.
Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability	This practice is relevant for AIMS and market-systems programmes working with vulnerable or under-represented groups. It is most applicable where the project can identify sectors in which target groups are already present as workers, producers, entrepreneurs, service users or market actors. Replication requires analysis of where target groups participate economically, what constraints limit their benefits, and which market functions can be improved in ways that also advance decent work, gender equality and inclusion. The practice should remain caveated. Sector selection alone does not guarantee inclusion. It must be followed by intervention designs that directly address target-group constraints, track differentiated results and include safeguards for groups whose voice and bargaining power remain weak, especially informal, seasonal and refugee workers.
Establish a clear cause-effect relationship	The causal logic is that selecting sectors and value-chain functions where target groups are already economically present increases the likelihood that market-system change will reach them in meaningful ways. In BOUZOUR, agriculture provided practical entry points because Lebanese farmers, Syrian workers, women workers, small agri-businesses and service providers were all present in the sector. Pathways such as greenhouse upgrades, cherry production, agribusiness skills and selected service models created opportunities to connect productivity, market access, decent work and inclusion. The expected causal pathway is: careful sector and value-chain selection → stronger fit with target-group roles → more relevant intervention design → greater likelihood that market change benefits women, refugees, workers, farmers and small agri-businesses.
Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	The practice targeted Lebanese host communities, Syrian refugees, women workers, small farmers, agri-entrepreneurs, agri-food SMEs and market actors. The evaluation found that BOUZOUR's relevance was strongest where interventions matched real economic roles and concrete constraints. Greenhouse upgrades created direct relevance for farmers and Syrian women workers. IYAB/SIYB created an agribusiness-skills pathway with strong women's participation. Cherry and other agricultural pathways created relevant entry points for seasonal workers and small producers, although some effects require further validation.
Potential for replication and by whom	This practice can be replicated by ILO, Sida and other programmes applying AIMS, MSD or value-chain approaches in fragile and crisis-affected contexts. It is particularly useful during project design, sector selection and inception. Replication should be led by programme teams, technical backstoppers and partners responsible for market analysis, gender and inclusion analysis, decent work integration and intervention design. It is transferable beyond agriculture, but only where sector selection is based on evidence of target-group presence, market potential and actor incentives.
Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country	The practice contributes to ILO's Decent Work Agenda by linking inclusion, gender equality, decent work and just transition objectives to real market systems and

Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)	livelihood pathways. It supports inclusive employment, sustainable enterprises, gender-responsive programming and improved working conditions in sectors where vulnerable groups are economically active. It also links to SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth and to wider objectives on poverty reduction and inclusive livelihoods.
Other documents or relevant comments	This practice should be read together with the evaluation findings on relevance, cross-cutting issues and impact orientation. The evaluation concluded that BOUZOUR's sector choice was highly relevant because agriculture is a livelihood system where Lebanese farmers, agri-food SMEs, cooperatives, service providers, Syrian agricultural workers and women workers are all present.

10.8. Annex 8: Data tables / result chains / additional evidence

This annex summarises selected project-reported results and the evaluator's interpretation of the strength and meaning of the evidence. The figures below are drawn from project monitoring data, project reports, intervention reports and evidence reviewed during the evaluation. Unless otherwise stated, figures are treated as project-reported results. The evaluation did not conduct an audit of the project MRM system or independently reconstruct all calculations. Figures are therefore interpreted together with qualitative evidence from KIIs, FGDs, documents and evaluator judgement.

Table A7.1. Summary of formal outcome achievement and evaluator interpretation

Outcome / result area	Project target	Project-reported result	Evaluator interpretation
Outcome 1: Farms / production units with improved productivity or working conditions	60	274 farms / production units	Strong delivery result. Evidence is strongest for greenhouse upgrades, where productivity and working-condition improvements were triangulated through documents, partners, manufacturers, farmers and worker FGDs. Some overlap across outcome areas may exist and figures should be interpreted as monitoring aggregates.
Outcome 2: Farmers and agri-businesses connected to new market opportunities	50	146 farmers / agri-businesses	Strong formal achievement. Most meaningful where structured relationships between farmers, cooperatives and exporters were created or strengthened. Evidence is promising but seasonal and requires repeated validation, especially in cherry.
Outcome 3: Farmers enabled to use solar energy	100	490 farmers	Requires careful interpretation. The figure should be read as farmers benefiting from shared solar-powered productive infrastructure, not as 490 individual farmers purchasing, renting or operating solar systems. Verified deployment was concentrated in four YY ReGen rental sites/facilities.
Outcome 4: Farmers and small agri-businesses capacitated to better manage their operations	200	303 farmers / small agri-businesses	Strong delivery result. Evidence is strongest for institutional delivery capacity and self-reported application of business tools. Longer-term business performance effects require follow-up.
Solar pre-investment assessments	N/A	156 farmers / agri-businesses assessed	Useful enabling infrastructure. The LSES pathway reduced information asymmetry, but evidence of conversion from assessment to purchase or installation was limited.
Private-sector co-investment	N/A	Approx. USD 534,000 project-reported co-investment	Important leverage signal. The evaluation did not audit or reconstruct this figure. KIIs partially confirmed that market actors contributed time, resources, networks, equipment, technical capacity or capital where incentives were credible.
Cherry farmer income gains	N/A	Approx. USD 688,000 project-reported income gains in 2025	Monitoring signal, not independently audited. Should be interpreted cautiously given seasonality, market volatility and 2025 production shocks.
Cherry wage increase	N/A	74.4% cumulative project-reported wage increase	Monitoring signal. Direction of change was partially triangulated through stakeholder evidence, but the figure was not independently reconstructed and may be affected by seasonality and labour-demand changes.
Cherry workers with improved working conditions	N/A	1,046 project-reported workers	Reported reach/result indicator. The evaluation found evidence of decent work entry points, but the quality and sustainability of improvements vary and were not independently verified for all workers.
Child labour monitoring in cherry	N/A	Share of tracked farmers hiring children under 18 reportedly fell from 34% in 2023 to 20% in 2024 and 10.5% in 2025	Important but highly caveated monitoring signal. The measure is project-reported/self-reported for a small tracked group, not a sector-wide rate. 2025 frost sharply reduced production and labour demand, so part of the decline may reflect reduced hiring overall. Data are reported at pathway level due to do-no-harm considerations.

Table A7.2. Evidence confidence by intervention pathway

Intervention / pathway	Delivery evidence	Behaviour-change evidence	Systemic-change signal	Evidence confidence	Main caveat
Greenhouse upgrades	High	High	Medium-high (early)	Strong	Scale still modest; continuation depends on manufacturer quality, farmer finance and sustained demand.
SmartLand climate-smart irrigation and fertigation	High	High	Medium	Strong, contribution caveat	SmartLand was already commercially active. BOUZOUR likely strengthened evidence, demonstration, outreach and farmer confidence, but should not be presented as the sole driver of SmartLand's growth.
QOOT / contract farming	High	Medium-high	Medium	Mixed	Evidence is stronger for improved sourcing relationships than for wider replication of contract farming as a market function.
Cherry export / certification	High	Medium	Medium / early	Mixed / early	Promising but seasonal; systemic transformation requires repeated validation across additional harvest seasons.
PlantLab / recruitment pathway	Medium	Medium	Medium / early	Mixed; model still maturing	Model addresses a real labour-market constraint but remains early; sustainability depends on demand, trust, business viability and conflict recovery.
LSES solar assessment pathway	High	Low	Low	Weak conversion to investment	Strong relevance and information function, but limited evidence that assessments converted into solar purchase or installation.
YY ReGen solar rental model	Medium-high	Medium	Medium	Mixed; finance-dependent	Benefits were generated through shared facilities rather than individual farmer adoption; scale depends on access to capital and viable payment models.
IYAB/SIYB institutional anchoring	High	High	Medium - high institutional	Strong	Stronger evidence at institutional delivery level than at participant business-performance level; long-term outcomes require follow-up.

Table A7.3. Interpretation of the solar result

Solar pathway	Reported result	What the result means	What it does not mean	Evaluator judgement
LSES information-and-trust pathway	156 farmers / agri-businesses assessed	Farmers and agri-businesses received pre-investment technical assessment and information on system sizing, suppliers, return on investment and payback.	It does not demonstrate that assessed farmers purchased or installed solar systems.	Relevant and useful enabling infrastructure, but weak conversion to investment.
YY ReGen shared infrastructure / rental pathway	490 farmers reported as enabled to use solar energy	Farmers benefited indirectly through four solar-powered shared productive facilities: cold storage in Deir el Ahmar and Ainata, a nursery in Ras Baalbek, and carob processing through Agro Cedrus.	It does not mean 490 individual farmers purchased, rented or operated solar systems.	Credible demonstration of shared productive solar infrastructure, but not evidence of broad farmer-level solar adoption.
Facility-level continuation	Ras Baalbek transitioned to permanent installation; Deir el Ahmar planned to follow	Some facility-level continuation signals were visible after the pilots.	It does not yet demonstrate broad market transformation or scale.	Promising but finance-dependent.

Table A7.4. Result-chain interpretation by major pathway

Pathway	Main constraint addressed	Project-supported function	Actor expected to continue	Early result / signal	Continuation condition
Greenhouse upgrades	High cost of modern greenhouse improvements; poor working conditions	Affordable upgrade model, manufacturer capacity, OSH-oriented design features	Local manufacturers and farmers	Post-support farmer orders; improved working conditions reported by workers	Manufacturer quality assurance, farmer finance, marketing beyond initial areas
SmartLand climate-smart services	Water scarcity, inefficient irrigation/fertigation, high input and energy costs	Field-tested climate-smart irrigation/fertigation business case	SmartLand, advisory channels, agro-pharmacies, cooperatives	Technical evidence on water, fertiliser, energy and productivity benefits; commercial growth signal	Farmer willingness to pay, finance, connectivity, advisory support
QOOT / contract farming	Weak buyer–farmer coordination and unstable sourcing	Structured sourcing relationships and SME–farmer linkages	SMEs, farmers, QOOT / cluster actors	Improved sourcing predictability and selected continuation into following season	Mutual incentives, price-risk management, trust and viable buyer markets
Cherry export and certification	Fragmented sourcing, weak quality consistency, limited export readiness and decent work risks	Farmer–cooperative–exporter coordination, certification readiness, post-harvest improvement, decent work entry points	Exporters, cooperatives, chambers, MoA and service providers	Structured sourcing and selected export results; stronger attention to quality and decent work	Repeated seasons, buyer continuity, quality consistency, cold chain, phytosanitary compliance, finance
Solar assessment	Lack of trusted information on solar sizing, suppliers and payback	Technical assessment tool and village-agent model	LSES, solar companies, agents	156 assessments and enabling infrastructure	Fee model, farmer finance, supplier trust, conversion to investment
YY ReGen solar rental	High upfront cost of solar systems and agricultural energy constraints	Shared/rental solar-powered productive infrastructure	YY ReGen, cooperatives, SMEs, facility users	Four shared solar facilities; energy-cost savings in selected sites	Access to capital, payment models, customer ability to pay
IYAB/SIYB	Weak farm and agri-business management capacity	Training ecosystem, trainers, institutional delivery, coaching and women-led networking	MoET, trained institutions, trainers and partners	303 farmers/agri-businesses reached; women majority of participants; self-reported business practice changes	Trainer quality, funding model, coaching follow-up, demand-driven delivery
PlantLab recruitment pathway	Informal and unreliable agricultural labour matching	Labour intermediation and technical farm support model	PlantLab, farmers, workers and service users	Promising model for more transparent labour services	Employer demand, worker trust, fair recruitment principles, commercial viability

Table A7.5. Key cross-cutting evidence and caveats

Cross-cutting theme	Strongest evidence	Main limitation / caveat	Evaluator interpretation
Gender equality	Greenhouse improvements affected Syrian women workers directly; IYAB/SIYB women participants reported stronger confidence, business practices and household/business voice.	Evidence is strongest in selected pathways; not all interventions had gender-specific outcome tracking.	Gender-responsive, with early signals toward greater agency, but not evidence of structural gender transformation across the portfolio.
Decent work	Strongest in greenhouse upgrades; selected entry points in cherry, OSH, recruitment and certification-related pathways.	Worker-side evidence is uneven; cherry labour evidence is seasonal and partly out-of-season; social dialogue remains structurally constrained.	Decent work is most credible where embedded in productivity, OSH, quality, buyer requirements or service incentives.
Child labour	Project monitoring reports declining hiring of children under 18 in a small tracked cherry group.	Self-reported, project-reported, not sector-wide; affected by 2025 frost and reduced labour demand; sensitive and anonymised.	Promising monitoring signal, not verified evidence of sector-wide reduction.
Environmental sustainability	SmartLand climate-smart services; water/fertiliser/energy efficiency evidence; solar assessment and rental models.	Wider adoption depends on finance, willingness to pay, service delivery and scale.	Strong cross-cutting relevance where environmental solutions have a business case.
Disability inclusion	Limited evidence.	Disability was not systematically integrated into targeting, monitoring or result analysis.	Weakest cross-cutting dimension; future programming should integrate practical disability inclusion measures.
Tripartism and worker voice	Government and private-sector engagement were strong; worker organisations were consulted; decent work entry points were included.	Worker-side engagement was less structurally embedded due to informality, weak representation and vulnerability of Syrian agricultural workers.	Future programming should combine formal social partner engagement with practical worker-voice mechanisms.

Table A7.6. Data-quality interpretation

Evidence type	Use in the evaluation	Strength	Limitation
Project monitoring data	Used to assess formal target achievement, reported reach and project-reported results.	Provides systematic project-level figures across outcomes.	Not independently audited; possible overlap across indicators; quality varies by pathway.
Partner and intervention reports	Used to reconstruct intervention pathways, results and implementation experience.	Provides detailed pathway-specific evidence.	May reflect partner reporting incentives; not always independently verified.
KIIs	Used to triangulate project logic, behaviour change, continuation prospects, constraints and alternative explanations.	Strong for understanding mechanisms and actor incentives.	Respondent bias possible; not all planned KIIs were completed.
FGDs	Used to capture beneficiary and worker perspectives, especially on working conditions, gender and business practice changes.	Strong qualitative evidence for lived experience and relevance.	Not statistically representative; some seasonal findings, especially cherry labour, were limited by timing.
Technical studies / assessments	Used for climate-smart agriculture, greenhouse and solar evidence.	Strong where based on field measurement or technical comparison.	Attribution to BOUZOUR varies; technical results do not automatically imply commercial adoption.
Evaluator judgement	Used to interpret delivery, adoption, behaviour change, systemic signals and sustainability.	Allows synthesis across evidence sources and caveats.	Depends on available evidence and transparency of assumptions.