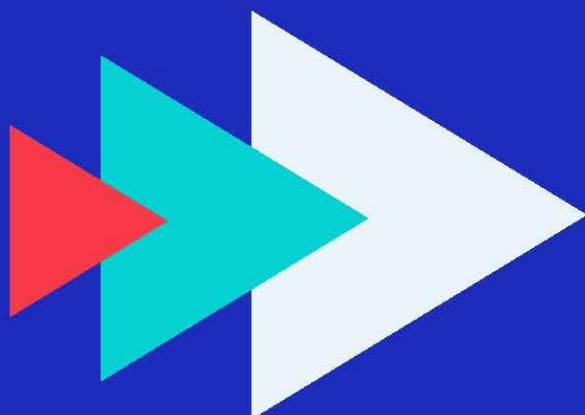




International
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Brazil-Lebanon Cooperation in Key Sectors in the World of Work: a South-South approach



BRAZIL-LEBANON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION IN KEY SECTORS: THE WAY FORWARD IN THE WORLD OF WORK

Edited by : Anita Amorim and Jose Manuel Medina Checa

Research elaborated by : Natalia Calfat

With inputs from : Andrea Villavicencio Morales, Amara Al-Adba, Fernanda Barreto, Daniel Alves Ferreira Costa, Geeda Haddad-Gregoire, Anastasiia Pavlova and Daniel Harczi Kabuya. Special thanks to the overall guidance of Peter Rademaker.

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ACRONYMS

ABC	Brazilian Cooperation Agency
ALI	Association of Lebanese Industrialists
CCAB	Arab-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce
CCBL	Brazil Lebanon Chamber of Commerce
CNC	National Confederation for Commerce of Goods, Services and Tourism
CNI	National Confederation of Industry
MSMEs	Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEBRAE	Brazilian Support Service for Micro and Small Businesses
SENAI	National Industrial Apprenticeship and Training Service
SSE	Social and Solidarity Economy
SSF	Social and Solidarity Finance
SSTC	South-South Triangular Cooperation
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is the result of an assessment¹ investigating the potential of South-South and Triangular Cooperation between Brazil and Lebanon. Historically, both countries have enjoyed strong bilateral relations, aided by the Lebanese diaspora in Brazil and shared cultural ties. Agreements and collaborations have mainly focused on agriculture, education, culture, tourism, health, defence, and humanitarian aid. Still, as this report shows, most cooperation efforts have been bilateral, focused on trade or humanitarian aid, sectorial and often discontinued. The report prioritizes sectors and topics for South-South and Triangular Cooperation, aiming to promote equitable, inclusive, decent work opportunities and growth. Despite the dire economic situation in Lebanon, the current scenario presents an opportunity to strengthen cooperation in a multi-crisis situation and support sustainable recovery. The report summarizes past and current collaborative initiatives among the two countries and recommends expanding the cooperation in the construction and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure as well as in the agri-food and tourism sectors as sectors with the potential to grow and generate sustainable and decent jobs in the future. The reports also point out other sectors such as financial and banking intelligence, technology, renewable energy, as well as urban development and social housing policies areas where Brazil has shown clear comparative advantage in the recent years.

The report also recommends South-South cooperation efforts between Brazil and Lebanon to be a continuous, steady, and long-term endeavour, multi-sectoral and promoting diaspora engagement and investment. Finally, the report suggests specific actions to promote highly productive sectors and value chains, strengthen collaboration among tripartite constituents (governments, workers, and employers) and peer exchanges in areas related to the world of work such as the development of sustainable and inclusive enterprises, gender equality, social and solidarity economy, and green and just transition policies.

¹Assessment elaborated by Natalia Calfat between September and November 2023 for the International Labour Organization under the supervision of Anita Amorim, Head of the Emerging and Special Partnerships Unit. We thank the support and comments from José Manuel Medina Checa, Nathalie Bavitch, Peter Rademaker, Fernanda Barreto, Anita Amorim, Andrea Villavicencio Morales, Adrianova Carrion, Amera Al-Adba, Vinicius Pinheiro, Geeda Haddad-Gregoire Anastasiia Pavlova and Daniel Harczy Kabuya. The current assessment is linked to a South-South project, pre-approved by PARTNERSHIPS and the Arab States Region, under the realm of Regular Budget for Technical Cooperation (RBTC) for the Arab States region supporting South-South Triangular Cooperation (SSTC).

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Lebanon is currently facing a severe and complex crisis that is impacting its political, economic, financial, fiscal, and social stability. According to the World Bank, for nearly three years, Lebanon has been assailed by the most devastating, multi-pronged crisis in its modern history. GDP per capita dropped by 36.5% between 2019 and 2021, and Lebanon was reclassified by the organization as a lower-middle income country, down from upper middle-income status in July 2022 (World Bank, 2022). Hosting a large number of Syrian refugees since 2011 has strained social services and related institutions. The national economy, infrastructure, and public services have deteriorated further, and worsened by a 90% currency devaluation, a debt crisis, the Beirut blast, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the 2023 Hamas attack on Israel and the ensuing conflict have increased concerns about a broader escalation with Israel.

A wide segment of the Lebanese and non-Lebanese population has fallen below the poverty line, with livelihoods of those already living in poverty worsened due to inflation, a decline in employment opportunities, and a reduction in basic social service provision. These factors have the potential to undermine development, peace, and social cohesion. According to ILO, the multiple crises in Lebanon have exacerbated existing labour market challenges such as unemployment, informal labour, and vulnerability to workplace exploitation. The political standstill in the country has contributed to the lack of labour governance reform. Despite some progress to improve the policy framework for human rights protection, women's rights, refugees' rights and the rights of migrant workers, Lebanon continues to fall short of international benchmarks.

In this dire context, diaspora remittances have also been crucial for Lebanon, serving as a social safety net and compensating for the deficiency in essential public goods, thereby alleviating poverty. Despite losing more than 50% of its GDP in 2021 due to the deep financial and economic crisis, Lebanon's remittances inflows have been relatively stable over the past decade, varying between \$6 billion and \$7 billion per year between 2011 and 2021, with an average of around \$6.5 billion per year. Lebanon's remittances relative to GDP consisted of 37.8% in 2022, having the highest remittances to GDP ratio in the MENA region and one of the top world destinations of remittances to GDP. The Gulf Cooperation Countries (GCC) are considered the leading source of these remittances, with 48% of remittances originating from these countries. North America comes second (16%), followed by Western Europe (14%), Africa (14%), Australia (3%), Latin America (3%), and lastly Eastern Europe (2%) (Atallah/UNDP, 2023, p. 7-9)².

Diplomatically, Lebanon and Brazil enjoy an excellent state of bilateral relations and cooperation, and such a positive agenda is marked by a history of friendship and reciprocal support (Ribeiro, 2022). During the 2006 Lebanon War, Brazil acted not only organizing the evacuation of its citizens, but also donating funds for reconstruction and assisted the Lebanese government through cooperation projects. Brazil also engaged in humanitarian cooperation and aid following the 2020 blast at the Beirut port.

Technical cooperation is pivotal, and both Lebanon and Brazil have significant expertise to share in different economic sectors and areas of mutual interest (Sousa, 2023). Among the Arab countries, Lebanon is considered a priority by Brazil in expanding extra-regional negotiations and trade agreements. The [Brazil-Lebanon Chamber of Commerce](#) (CCBL), the [Lebanon-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of the State of Rio de Janeiro](#) (CCLB), as well as the [Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce](#) (CCAB) have been fostering bilateral relations and encounters, such as the [Brazil & Arab Countries Economic Forum](#).

² Grants and loans constituted 40% (US\$ 8.964 billion) and 60% (US\$ 13.678 billion) of the aid, respectively, with major developmental partners including Saudi Arabia (the Gulf Cooperation Council represented 62% of the support, or US\$ 5.50 billions), the European Union (16% or US\$ 1.4 billion), and the United States (9% or US\$ 0.8 billion). Loans were mostly funded by the World Bank (US\$ 3.5 billion), the Islamic Development Bank (US\$ 2.4 billion), The Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (US\$ 2.3 billion) and the European Union (US\$ 1.7 billion) (THE POLICY INITIATIVE, 2023).

They have also been instrumental in promoting new investments and greater trade integration in partnership with the [Union of Arab Chambers](#) and the League of Arab States, CCAB and CCBL have advocated for the ratification of a commercial agreement between Lebanon and Mercosur, aiming to diversify Lebanon's dependence on Ukrainian and Russian cereals. Strengthening cooperation among Employers and business membership organizations, to ease access to information and markets and promote sustainable investments by Lebanese diaspora in Brazil in Lebanon is definitively a key of South-South Cooperation.

Priority domains for current investment opportunities, considering its feasibility and impact in social-economic growth, are agricultural, agroindustry, industry, IT, media, technology, telecommunication, and tourism sectors. Initiatives may include the expansion of the trade agenda, introducing new goods into the current Brazil-Lebanon bilateral trade, including value-added goods, increasing imports of Lebanese products through a special taxation regime, promote cooperation in areas such as energy and agribusiness, business training of the Lebanese, and agreement mechanism to facilitate investments (Seminário – Unidos pelo Libano, 2021).

In that spirit, the International Labour Organization (ILO) aims to play a significant role in facilitating partnerships and exchanges around decent work objectives, promoting peer learning between Lebanese and Brazilian talents and promoting cooperation between workers and employers' organizations. The ILO, with its presence in both countries, can contribute to creating a network of support that may lead to new partnerships and development initiatives. This document was elaborated to map previous initiatives and explore this collaboration, assessing the potential for South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) between Lebanon and Brazil.

With that purpose, it is central to identify key sectors for potential collaboration, areas of mutual interest, peer learning and promoting partnerships that will contribute to the economic growth and development of both countries, particularly in sectors which show opportunity for inclusive and equitable growth. The result of the assessment will guide the discussions with the Brazilian embassy, the ILO office in Lebanon and Brazil, and employers and workers' representatives from both countries.

Lebanon has a significant community of well-established immigrants in Brazil, home to the world's largest Lebanese diaspora. Arabs and descendants make up 6% of Brazil's population, a total of 11.61 million people, with 27% of them being from Lebanon (YAZIGI, 2020). The McKinsey & Company report indicates 5,98 million Lebanese diaspora in Brazil alone (MCKINSEY, LEBANON ECONOMIC VISION, 2018, p. 568). For over 140 years now, the Lebanese-Brazilian community has been contributing to build Brazil's very history, adding decisively to the growth of the largest metropolis in South America. The Brazilian community living in Lebanon is estimated at more than 21,000 people. About a third of them live in the Bekaa Valley. This is one of the largest communities of foreign nationals in Lebanon (RIBEIRO, 2022).

In 2021, the Lebanese community in Brazil, supported by the Lebanese Embassy and the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched 'United for Lebanon' (UPL), a fundraising initiative to support Lebanon's reconstruction efforts. In August 2022 the Embassy announced the creation of a Humanitarian Aid Trust Fund for the People of Lebanon. The initiative will supervise, collect, and allocate funds, as well as manage projects towards the economic recovery of the country. The fund aims at attracting private and public resources to support Lebanese communities or companies towards creating new employment and job opportunities, generating sustainable income, assisting in the development of segments, increasing the foreign currency influx and Lebanese exports.

I) METHODOLOGY: PRIORITIZING SECTORS

According to [Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation \(2023-2027\)](#), South-South cooperation via partnerships responds to a country's interest in diversifying its strategies, associating itself with international organizations as well as potentiating bilateral cooperation by identifying comparative advantages. Through South-South triangular cooperation, resources can be mobilized and help achieve a greater scale for technical exchanges between countries of the Global South, promoting complementarity and optimizing technical, human, and financial contributions from the cooperating parties. By underpinning Triangular Cooperation, ILO facilitates partnerships and strategic alliances, documents and disseminates a wide range of knowledge on good development practices, supports the adaptation of different experiences to the specific contexts of partner countries, as well as monitors the main intergovernmental decisions on SSTC to inform the actions of its members (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023, p. 6, 7).

As presented, several bilateral agreements and cooperation initiatives have been celebrated between Lebanon and Brazil, particularly in the domains of agriculture, education and culture, tourism, health, transportation, defence, legal matters, and humanitarian cooperation. Still, there is a great deal of potential economic cooperation yet to be explored. Which are the existing collaboration initiatives and good practices that can form the basis for future cooperation? Which domains can be mutually beneficial for Brazil and Lebanon to collaborate in a sustainable and responsible manner, creating the conditions for decent work? What policies or actions would increment South-South investments and collaboration between countries, targeting vulnerable populations such as women, refugees, and the youth in particular? What are the successful stories involving horizontal capacity building, peer-learning and technical knowledge exchange towards the promotion of entrepreneurship and the formalization of the informal economy? To answer those questions, we must first delve into the selection of priority sectors and cross it with the convergence of interests between both nations.

In order to identify which sectors should be promoted and further support, the ILO proposes to use a simplified version of the sector selection criteria, based on the value chain's development approach to identify high-potential markets, meaning those best positioned to contribute to change via the creation of more and better jobs. There are three overarching criteria for the sector selection strategy: relevance to the target group; opportunity for positive impact and for the sector to grow inclusively; and feasibility for the project intervention to drive change. Relevance speaks to the potential for the target group in the sector and decent work challenges they are facing; opportunity for inclusive growth is related to opportunities to create more and better jobs in the core value chain; and feasibility to intervene has to do with the extent to which a project will be able to facilitate change given the sector and country context (VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT FOR DECENT WORK, 2021, p. 23).

Considering sectorial feasibility and impact in social-economic growth, the United for Lebanon seminar, organized by the [Lebanese Embassy](#) in 2021 in Brazil, presented the following as priority domains for current investment opportunities: agricultural, agroindustry, industry, media, information technology, telecommunication and tourism (SEMINÁRIO – UNIDOS PELO LÍBANO, 2021). In a similar fashion, the McKinsey & Company Lebanon Economic Vision report listed 6 sectoral engines for the country's economic growth: agriculture, industry, tourism, knowledge economy, financial services, and diaspora (MCKINSEY, LEBANON ECONOMIC VISION, 2018).

To verify those initial sector selections, and after reviewing all previous and current cooperation agreements between Brazil and Lebanon, we now first conduct an initial review of data, of strategic government interests and existing South-South cooperation initiatives between Brazil and Lebanon. A long list of sectors of

interest consists of ten potential markets and domains (please refer to the appendix). Integrating principles of social responsibility, sustainability and inclusivity, the longlist is followed by 4 approaches particularly important for ILO: ensuring social protection; supporting green jobs and economy; training and encouraging the formalization of small businesses and micro entrepreneurs and promoting gender equality in the world of labour.

The longlist of sectors

- Agri-food and Agrobusiness
- Tourism
- Construction and infrastructure
- Health
- Technology and Financial Services
- Oil and Gas, Energy and Water - Renewable Energy Sources
- Humanitarian and Financial Aid
- Education and Culture
- Academic and Scientific Cooperation
- Defence, Security and Peacekeeping cooperation

The approaches

- Social Protection
- Vocational training and supporting Small Business and Micro Entrepreneurs
- Green jobs, green and circular economy
- Promoting gender equality in the labour market

This longlist is the basis for engaging in further in-depth sector research. Each sector will be reviewed in terms of its contribution to South-South triangular and bilateral cooperation. This research will enable the elaboration of a shortlist of sectors, which will be further prioritized. Data collection and analysis will consist of gathering and analysing data on the priority domains, including market size, growth potential, investment opportunities, and potential risks. Sector analysis includes the assessment of the economic and market trends of different sectors, including consumer preferences, regulatory frameworks, and potential barriers to cooperation. This analysis will focus on identifying areas of mutual interest and potential for South-South cooperation and will inform the development of eventual partnership strategies.

For each shortlisted sector, desk research will be conducted to highlight how the sector “performs” relative to each selection criteria (i.e., relevance to the target group, opportunity for inclusive growth and feasibility to drive change). The research will be complemented by desk research and literature review related to the economic landscape, economic situation analysis of both countries, as well as interviews with members of Employers and Business Memberships Organizations (EBMOs), Cooperation Agencies and Diplomatic representations.

Sectors where cooperation has taken place and is possible are detailed in the following sections. Each domain holds constraints and opportunities, and the market systems analyses will provide the foundation for identifying and designing potential project interventions and key partners to work within the selected segments. By identifying areas of convergence of interests between Lebanon and Brazil in the targeted sectors, recognizing sectors of mutual interest with the potential for effective South-South triangular cooperation in labour related areas, the assessment contributes to future development of partnership strategies. They include the formalization of the informal economy, supporting small and medium enterprises (SMEs), the targeting of particularly vulnerable populations such as migrant workers, women,

and the youth, and include potential cooperation between governments, Employers and Business memberships organizations, non-governmental institutions, and International Organizations.

Ultimately, the South-South cooperation projects in both countries must ideally represent good practices of SSTC interventions. As such, they must abide by the SSTC principles: horizontal; triangular; innovative; adaptability/replicability; and sustainability cooperation. According to A. Amorim et. al. (2013), the horizontal dimensions of SSTC refers to principles of equality and international solidarity, non-conditionality and non-discrimination. The triangular dimension of cooperation consists of the cooperation of one 'North' country and two or more 'South' countries, with northern assistance in the form of financial contribution or technical expertise. An innovative practice need not be new, but proven effective, making it of potential interest to others. Additionally, the project must be proven to be successful, with demonstrable results able to be adapted into similar situations or settings. Finally, a model South-South Cooperation practice must be sustainable and must continue to be effective in the medium-long term – either with the continuation of the project or the creation of new habits, attitudes, and practices in the field of decent work as legacies deriving from the cooperation developed (AMORIM et. at., 2013, p. 69-70). As experts move forward with actual SSTC between Brazil and Lebanon in the identified domains, such elements of good practice must be targeted.

II) MULTILATERALISM AND SOUTH-SOUTH IN BRAZIL AND LEBANON

Historically, Brazil has embraced multilateralism, participating in the process of developing global governance standards and the democratization of International Relations, respecting national autonomy and sovereignty (MELLO, 2012). The increased contacts between Brazil and the countries of the Middle East and the Arab region have helped forge a solid partnership. Brazil has the potential to play a constructive role in promoting peace and dialogue in the region, especially with Lebanon.

In the Arab region, Lebanon is currently among the most prominent partners in South-South triangular cooperation practices with the [Development Assistance Committee \(DAC\)](#) members at the Organization for [Economic Cooperation and Development](#) (OECD), acting as official development assistance beneficiary. Still, there is potential for expanding joint action and triangular cooperation efforts between OECD DAC members and the Arab states (HAUG, 2023). As a key and strategic partner of OECD, Brazil can help fostering practices and policies that promote socio-economic well-being around the world, and in Lebanon in particular. In the ILO, however, concrete Lebanon- Brazil cooperation only started in the format of diplomatic dialogue.

The aspiration to participate more directly in Middle Eastern security issues and in United Nations peacekeeping efforts was also reflected by Brazil's engagement with [UNIFIL, United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon](#), leading its [Maritime Task Force](#) from 2011 until 2021 (ABDENUR, 2016). Brazil and Lebanon signed a Defence Cooperation Agreement on December 14th, 2018, focusing amongst others on research and development, logistical support, joint military training, and purchase of defence services and products³.

Fostering relations with the developing world was one of the cornerstones of President Lula's foreign policy (2003-2011), bringing the Middle East into Brazil's diplomatic focus. Renewed dialogue and cooperation with Middle Eastern and Arab countries was part of this larger diplomatic effort to strengthen South-South cooperation (AMORIM, 2011, p. 48), and shall be continued by the current government (2023-). One of the Brazilian Government's development cooperation priorities is the promotion of South-South cooperation to find short- and medium-term solutions to combat hunger and poverty and to foster decent work and the conditions necessary to improve human development indexes worldwide. Brazilian South-South cooperation responds to such foreign policy guidelines and is driven by the principles enshrined in the [Buenos Aires Plan of Action +40 \(BAPA+40\)](#), adopted in 2019, which promote national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs, and mutual benefits (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023, p. 6).

³ Legislative decree nbr. 136/2022, dou 13/10/22; Presidential decree nbr. 11.620/2023, dou 26/07/2023)



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Figure 1. Buenos Aires Plan of Action +40 (BAPA+40), Buenos Aires, 2019

Brazil was able to reduce regional and social inequality through sustainable economic growth, political stability, and effective public policies. The expertise, knowledge and technology of such successful and effective development experiences can be exchanged with and adapted to the realities of other developing nations, ultimately materializing reciprocal solidarity among peoples, promoting social peace, economic progress, and social development. The [Brazilian Agency for Cooperation \(ABC\)](#) has the mandate to negotiate, coordinate, implement and monitor technical cooperation projects and programmes that stem from agreements signed between Brazil and other countries and international organizations.

Brazil, as a founding member State of the International Labour Organization, has supported and promoted SSTC development initiatives which have strengthened constituents' capacity to promote access to decent work. Brazil's successes in a range of public policy areas – such as combating child and forced labour – opens the way to explore collaboration under ILO four strategic objectives, namely the promotion of rights at work, the encouragement of decent employment opportunities, enhancement of social protection, and strengthening social dialogue, with gender as a cross-cutting theme (BRAZIL ILO COOPERATION, 2023; AMORIM et. al., 2015, p. IX). Since 2005, Brazil and the ILO have jointly promoted South-South and triangular cooperation projects, responding to the growing interest of other developing countries in the Brazilian experience with the advancement of the [Decent Work Agenda](#), particularly in combating child and forced labour - areas with consolidated experience of technical cooperation between the ILO and Brazil (South-South Cooperation Programme: Social Justice for the Global South (2023).

Under the spirit of strengthened global solidarity in the promotion of partnerships, the 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (A/RES/70/1, 2015) reaffirms the role of South-South Cooperation under Goal 17, "Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development". Triangular Cooperation is a modality of development cooperation paramount to achieving the 2030 Agenda, in particular Goal 8, which seeks to promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023, p. 6; A/RES/70/1, 2015, p. 14). In that sense, South-South and triangular cooperation has become a key modality in international development cooperation and an essential tool for the United Nations Development System (AMORIM et. al., 2016, p. VII).

Since 2009 the Brazilian Government and the ILO have established a Partnership Programme for strategic collaboration to promote sustainable development, decent work, and social justice through South-South Cooperation (SSC) (Complementary agreement, 2009). The general objective of promoting decent work and

social justice in developing countries through South-South Cooperation is aimed via four axes: eradication of child labour and forced labour; gender, racial, generational equity, and promotion of equality in the world of work; occupational safety and health and labour inspection; and employment and social protection.

To this day, the [Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme](#) has promoted a total of 21 initiatives with more than 40 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia, having mobilized approximately USD 27 million of Brazilian financial resources. Projects were mainly focused on the eradication of child labour, the promotion of social security, the enhancement of decent work and trade union organization, and the elimination of forced labour and promotion of green jobs. The endeavours to combat child labour and promote decent work constituted approximately 75% of the mobilized financial resources (ILO, 2023).

Anchored in regional and global issues of collective interest, the programme is based on the strategic priorities of both parties, supporting capacity-building in developing country partners through the production, sharing, and appropriation of knowledge in mutual learning processes. By bringing together [tripartite constituents](#) (governments, workers, and employers), the ILO acts as a facilitator of cooperation strategies by promoting and expanding capacity-building and peer-to-peer exchanges for the promotion of decent work. Such capacity building is based on equity, solidarity, demand-driven principles and is not tied to conditionalities (ILO, 2023, p. 5, 7).



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Figure 2. Brazilian President, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and ILO Director-General, Gilbert F. Hougbo at the Inaugural Forum of the Global Coalition for Social Justice, Geneva, June 2024.

The Brazil-ILO Partnership to promote South-South Cooperation falls under the Triangular Cooperation modality, a horizontal partnership with the presence of International Organizations. The Triangular Cooperation is a modality of development cooperation used by governments, international organizations, academia, civil society, and the private sector to collaborate, share knowledge as well as good practices on decent work (ILO, 2023, p. 6, 7).

Triangular cooperation can be defined as an endeavour by two or more developing countries, supported by a developed country or multilateral organization, to enforce southern-driven partnerships, projects and programmes on development cooperation by sharing financial resources, knowledge, and expertise (HAUG, 2023, p. 6). Cooperation between two or more 'South' countries can be in the form of sharing knowledge, training manpower or replicating proven strategies in similar settings. Guided by principles of solidarity and non-conditionality, South-South and triangular cooperation is considered an approach compatible with the promotion of the Decent Work Agenda in regard to the exchange of knowledge, experiences and best practices and in

supporting the development capacity building, technology transfer, resource mobilization, training of international chains and networks of social innovation (Amorim et. al., 2016, p. 2).

Lebanon has been an ILO member state since 1948, five years after the country declared its independence. Lebanon has ratified 50 ILO Conventions, including 7 of the 8 fundamental conventions which address key human rights issues including: forced labour, child labour, freedom of association, and equal opportunity and treatment at work. Since 1976 the country has hosted the [ILO Regional Office for the Arab States \(ROAS\)](#). Lebanon currently hosts a significant amount of both Syrian and Palestinian refugee populations, estimated around 1 million, influx which has caused a large increase in labour supply and continues to promote substantial effects and challenges on labour market dynamics in the country (THE ILO IN LEBANON, n/d). In 2012, ILO began discussions with Lebanon on the implementation of a Decent Work Country Programme (DWCP) because of a Decent Work Country Policy Analysis prepared by the Lebanese Ministry of Labour and the ILO Regional Office for the Arab States (ROAS). The Decent Work Country Programme is currently being developed by ILO with tripartite constituents aiming to establish a sound legislative environment; improve decent work conditions; governance and social dialogue; enhance productive employment opportunities and the provision of social security.

ILO developed a series of interventions as an integral part of its response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon. The interventions aim to enhance the resilience of both producers (individual and groups) as well as workers affected by the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon's rural areas, focusing on the livelihoods, host communities, resilience and social protection. As far as the Palestinian Refugees are concerned, ILO develops the elements required to promote the right for employment and decent work, develop practical policy options for health care coverage among Palestinian refugees and their families, as well as the economic empowerment of Palestinian women in camps. The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour and the Lebanese government have been active in combatting child labour since 2000. In November 2013 the President of Lebanon launched [The National Action Plan to Eliminate the Worst Forms of Child Labour](#) by 2016 in accordance Lebanon's commitment at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference.



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Figure 3. ILO's study tour to discuss the promotion of decent work for Syrian refugees and host communities in the region, with representatives from Lebanon, Iraq, Jordan, and Turkey. Jordan, 2019.

As part of efforts to establish a national social protection floor (SPF) in the country, the ILO has launched a self-funded initiative to assist tripartite stakeholders to move towards SPF establishment and provide minimum social security benefits to those not covered by the NSSF. Since 2011, the ILO has supported tripartite stakeholders in their efforts to establish a universal health care system in Lebanon as part of its role to support the [UN Social Protection Floor \(SPF\) Initiative](#). As part of its efforts in this regard, the ILO has launched a self-funded initiative to assist tripartite stakeholders to establish a national SPF which will provide minimum social security benefits to those not covered by the NSSF. Additionally, since 2009, the ILO

ROAS has been engaged in upgrading the skill profiles among target labour market segments such as youth, women and refugees.

As will be detailed below, Lebanon has engaged in many initiatives to promote decent and sustainable work conditions, including in the fields of construction and infra-structure, agriculture, and cooperatives, as well as training, capacity building, business acceleration and support for small and medium entrepreneurship. Those bilateral or triangulated projects, mostly with the support of international organizations, government organizations and domestic non-governmental organizations, have been focusing particularly on vulnerable populations, such as women, refugees, and youth.

On April 2019, the ILO Regional Office for the Arab States and its [International Training Centre \(ITC\)](#) have held a workshop in Beirut bringing together tripartite constituents from Jordan, Lebanon, the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT), Iraq, Kuwait, and Oman to exchange country experiences to integrate sustainable development objectives from the 2030 United Nations Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals⁶. The workshop also aimed at incorporating decent work standards and employment into their respective national policy, government planning processes, as well by workers' and employers' organizations. The [Knowledge Sharing Workshop on Mainstreaming Decent Work in the Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\) in the Arab Region](#) workshop also included the participation of [Arab NGO Network for Development](#) (ANND) and [United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia](#) (ESCWA), collaborating with ILO efforts to build the capacity of its social partners to implement the SDGs by 2030 (ILO FOSTERS..., 2019).

Fostering South-South cooperation on decent work and sustainable development in Lebanon and the Arab region, the workshop focused on the 2030 Agenda Goal 1, for the elimination of poverty via inclusive, sustainable and equitable growth; Goal 8, for decent work and economic growth, creating conditions that allow people to have quality jobs; Goal 10, for reducing inequalities, with particular attention to disadvantaged and marginalized populations; and Goal 17, promoting partnerships, revitalizing the global partnership for sustainable development. Using the South-South and triangular cooperation (SSTC) framework for coordination, around 35 domestic and regional representatives of government, employers', and workers' organizations engaged in peer-to-peer exchanges, identifying and exchanging best practices and lessons learned in the promotion of decent work in their respective countries. The dialogue inclusive workshop addressed key challenges such as unemployment, gender inequality, informal employment, and working poverty.

Several key findings and messages on decent work contributed to the [2019 Arab Forum for Sustainable Development \(AFSD\)](#), which also took place in Beirut. The Forum, organized annually by ESCWA and in collaboration with the League of Arab States and other United Nations entities operating in Arab countries, brings together Arab Governments and a broad range of stakeholders to address sustainable development priorities from a regional perspective, discuss progress, review national experiences, and enhance the region's voice at the [High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) (HLPF) (ILO FOSTERS..., 2019).

Taking those domestic and regional efforts of experiences and knowledge exchange into consideration, the current assessment has a focus on the technical South-South cooperation between Lebanon and Brazil. With the support of governmental agencies, Chambers of Commerce, business and civil society associations and non-governmental organizations, this study focuses on promoting small and medium enterprises, the formalization of the informal economy, and the promotion of [Social and Solidarity Economy](#) (SSE). This effort is in line with ILO principles of eliminating forced labour, fighting child labour, promoting social protection,

green jobs, and fundamental rights at work, as well as promoting gender equality and protecting the rights of migrant workers.

II.1) IMMIGRATION AND HISTORY: LEBANON & BRAZIL RELATIONS

In November 1876, Brazilian Emperor Dom Pedro II visited what would eventually be the State of Lebanon. Inspired by the visit, four years later, in 1880, the first ship sailed from the port of Beirut with hundreds of Lebanese migrants. Even though many travellers expected to have Amrika (The United States of America) as destination, this represented the first large wave of Christian Lebanese to Brazil, fleeing the Ottoman Empire. The states that received the most Lebanese migrants were São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais, Pará and Goiás⁴.

Lebanese rapidly accommodated into the Brazilian society, politics and economy, funding companies, industries, schools, banks, cultural and charitable associations, clubs, clinics, and hospitals. The Lebanese community in Brazil is extremely active, maintaining highly prominent institutions - such as the [Hospital Sírio Libanês](#) in São Paulo, having established many industrial and economic enterprises, well-known physicians, and scholars, as well as politicians (for the later see BERCITO, 2021). Lebanese migration history in the country is much entangled with the very political, social, economic, and cultural history of Brazil (TRUZZI, 2009; MEIHY, 2017).

The Arab influence in Brazil, nevertheless, transcends the arrival of these migrants in the 19th century. Its presence was mediated by the Iberian and African presence since early colonial times (ORLANDI, 2022). There are records of Arabs already in Pedro Álvares Cabral's crew, and Arab characters marked their presence during colonial and imperial times. The Malês (Muslims from African tribes who arrived in Brazil as slaves) are probably the most well-known Arabs during the colonial period (YAZIGI, 2020, p. 136). Still during the colonial period, mostly Levantine Arabs arrived in the country to work as peddlers. They have innovated by offering instalment door to door sales, bringing merchandise from the urban centrals to the countryside. They went from retail to wholesale and from wholesale to industry, thriving especially in the sectors of weaving and clothing, including silk from the 1920s onwards. After the Great Depression, capital-rich immigrant merchants became the natural partners of the nascent Latin American "developmental states", financing industrial enterprises (BAEZA, 2014, p. 60-61).

With the beginning of the Civil War in Lebanon, in 1975, a new wave of Lebanese migrants arrived in Brazil. The migration continues to take place still today, as a continuous flux of population movement crossing the Mediterranean and the Atlantic in both directions. The current economic crisis in Lebanon is causing a new wave of exodus of the Lebanese population abroad. In particular, a brain-drain of highly specialized and skilled labour force such as physicians and engineers are finding home abroad.

II.2) DIPLOMATIC TIES AND BILATERAL COOPERATION AGREEMENTS

Until 2003, the relations between Latin America and the Arab countries mostly took the form of bilateral trade agreements and negotiations. After that year, Brazil launched a series of summits promoting political, economic, technological, cultural, and educational cooperation with Arab states, inaugurating a bi-regional

⁴ It is estimated that Arab immigrants, especially Syrians and Lebanese, began arriving in Brazil as early as in the 1870s. The peak occurred in the 1910s and the largest community was formed in São Paulo State—between 1908 and 1941 the country received just over 100,000 Arabs; 48,000 of whom settled in São Paulo State. Besides the Southeast, others settled in states in the South, Midwest, and Northeast, not to mention the Amazon because of the rubber cycle (ORLANDI, 2022, n/p).

approach of South-South exchange. Within a South-South perspective of solidarity, the Summit of South American-Arab Countries (ASPA) is one of the first bi-regional mechanisms to promote cultural and educational cooperation. After 2005, commercial, diplomatic, and cultural relations between both regions strengthened considerably (FARAH, 2017). APSA comprises 34 countries, 22 of them from the Arab League (and its Secretary General) and 12 from the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR). It was created in 2005 to bring together the political leaders from both regions on political, economic, historical, and cultural issues, with a strong emphasis on South-South cooperation towards exploring the vast potential in the field of bilateral relations. The South American-Arab Countries Summit cooperation is organized through five sectoral committees in the fields of science and technology, the environment, culture and education affairs, economy, and social issues. Members have also agreed to prioritize joint cooperation in the energy sector, particularly in renewable energy as a key component of sustainable development. Efforts have also been made to stimulate cross-regional investment, peer learning and sharing of best practices, improving energy efficiency in the energy industry, supporting investments in domestic energy-efficiency initiatives; and identifying opportunities for joint investments in power projects (UNOSSC, UNDP, IDB, 2014, p. 41).

Still, as shown by this report, most Brazil-Lebanon relations have been bilateral, focused on trade however not continuous. Even though Brazil and Lebanon enjoy diplomatic relations in great terms, have significant historical and cultural ties and have been engaging in many cooperation initiatives, they have been mostly bilateral, sectorial, and momentary. In that sense, important foundations have already been established to enable a fruitful and mutually beneficial engagement in South-South triangular cooperation as a modality of development cooperation. However, proper engagement, investment incentives and decent work-oriented policies are still needed to enable South-South cooperation to reach its full capacity.

Brazil established a Consulate in Beirut as early as in 1920, and formal diplomatic relations were established in 1945, two years after Lebanon's independence. In 1954, after the visit to Brazil from the Lebanese President of the Republic, Camille Chamoun, the Brazilian Embassy was inaugurated in Beirut and the Lebanese Embassy opened in Brazil. The Lebanese Embassy was one of the first Missions to be transferred from Rio de Janeiro to Brasilia, in 1961 (Ministry of foreign affairs, Lebanese republic, n/d). Many diplomatic visits followed, as it is demonstrated in the table below.

Year of visit	Lebanese representative in the visit to Brazil	Year of visit	Brazilian representative in the visit to Lebanon
1995	Lebanese Prime-Minister Rafiq Hariri	1997	1997 Minister of Foreign Affairs Luis Felipe Lampreia
1997	President Elias Hrawi	2003	President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva
2003	Premier Elias Hrawi	2005	Minister of Foreign Affairs Celso Amorim
2005	Prime-Minister Najib Mikati	2006	Minister of Foreign Affairs Celso Amorim
2010	President Michel Sleiman	2006	Minister for Education Fernando Haddad

2014	Minister of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of Lebanon, Gebran Bassil	2011	Vice-President Michel Temer
2022	Director-General of the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture, Louis Lahoud	2012	Minister of Defence Celso Amorim

The Brazilian Chamber of Deputies has a Brazil-Lebanon Parliamentary group, created in 1979, and chaired in its 56th Legislature by deputy Ary Kffuri (PDS-PR). Created in 2008, the Brazil-Arab Countries Parliamentary Group is also active. The Conference on the Potential of the Diaspora, organized annually in Beirut by the Lebanese government, has been attended by significant Brazilian delegations, and in 2017 the Brazilian delegation was the largest at the conference, with approximately 320 members (SF/20254.73944-36, 2020).

In September 2023 the Brazilian Senate's Foreign Relations Committee approved the legislative proposition PRS 65/2023, to create a [Senate's Brazil-Lebanon Parliamentary Group](#) as an interparliamentary cooperation service, with the purpose of encouraging and developing bilateral relations between its Legislative Powers. The Parliamentary Group may maintain cultural and exchange relations, as well as engage in technical cooperation with national and foreign entities. Planned activities include parliamentary visits, holding congresses, seminars, symposiums and meetings of political, legal, social, technological, scientific, environmental, or cultural nature amongst others. In the global setting, both countries can work together to promote peace and stability, facing global challenges such as climate change and security issues (CARTA AO LÍBANO, ANO 28, N. 197, p. 24-34, 2023).

In August 2023, the [Brazil Lebanon Parliamentary Front](#) was created. It brings together 190 MPs, from several parties and states of the country, as is also supported by Lebanese Ambassador Carla Jazzar. The Chamber of Deputies' Front aims at strengthening bilateral relations; support and encourage the creation of bilateral projects aimed at reducing bureaucracy, free enterprise and the establishment of bilateral trade agreements; speed up and facilitate the shipment of goods, funds and financial aid; to promote exchanges between parliamentarians with a view to the mutual improvement of governmental activities; to monitor proposals that may arise during the course of the work and to monitor the progress of matters in the national congress that deal with the relationship between the countries. According to the Lebanese Ambassador, the cultural, social, political, and commercial exchange enabled by both the Senate Group and the Parliamentary Front will promote cooperation, dialogue and harmonic collaboration, strengthening bonds and mutual solidarity – with the friendship groups assuming an even larger dimension during challenging times for Lebanon. In parallel, the Federation of Muslim Associations of Brazil (FAMBRAS), together with the Lebanese Embassy, are working with the National Congress towards the approval of an exemption project for financial humanitarian aid to Lebanon, aimed at providing support, development and sustainability actions (CARTA AO LÍBANO, ANO 28, N. 197, 2023, p. 24-34, 54)⁵.

Shortly after Lebanon's independence, treaties and joint declarations were issued between 1951 and 1954. Brazil and Lebanon celebrated an Agreement on Air Transport Establishing Regular International Air

⁵In operation since 1979, FAMBRAS Halal is the first Halal certifying institution in Brazil. The company is a market leader and carries out audits, slaughtering, inspection, product supervision and implementation of the Halal Guarantee System in industries and meat-packing plants.

Services. On the 11th of January 1951, considering the reciprocal desire to develop international cooperation in the field of international air routes and services, and to place its economic relations on solid grounds, Brazil and Lebanon firmed the agreement. The treaty was celebrated based on avoiding discriminatory practices and respecting the principle of equal treatment. It was further substituted by a May 1997 agreement, detailing the regulation of the grant of rights, applications of laws, regulations, designations and authorizations, security, certificates and licenses, tariffs, and customs duties.

On the 10th of May 1954, while meeting at Rio de Janeiro, Presidents Getúlio Vargas and Camille Chamoun formed a Joint Declaration Reassuring and Strengthening the Ties of Friendship Between Both Countries. The declaration stated there were no political issues between both countries; reaffirmed the mutual respect for international law and the United Nations Charter when mediating conflicts affecting friendly nations; reinforced the contribution of the Lebanese to the spiritual and material development of Brazil; and the intention to intensify economic relations between both countries. Two days later, on the 12th of May 1954, the Republic of Lebanon and Brazil signed a Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation. The treaty established the terms for facilitation of cross-border trade.

In order to develop and strengthen the friendship and trust bonds between Brazil and Lebanon, as well as aiming to promote bilateral cooperation in the domains of culture, education and sports, on the 4th of February 1997 a Cultural and Educational Cooperation Agreement between both Republics was signed. Under the principle of reciprocity, the countries agreed to encourage and expand cooperation between institutions offering university education; the exchange of staff and professors between both countries; support the teaching of Language, History, Literature and Culture; encourage conferences, congresses and events; facilitate the exchange of information; favour the mutual admission of teaching systems, diplomas and titles; support postgraduate research projects; promote the exchange of artworks, literature, cinema, paintings, plays and music; and encourage international sport events.

On the 3rd of September 1997, during President Elias Hraoui's visit to Brazil, both countries issued a Joint Statement expressing satisfaction with the reinvigoration of bilateral ties over the past years, evidenced by many diplomatic visits such as in 1992, 1995, 1996 and 1997. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso reinforced Brazil's commitment towards promoting peace in the region and the need for the enforcement of United Nations Security Council Resolutions, particularly 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), as well as the need to secure Lebanon's sovereignty and independence. Brazil's plea for a seat in the UNSC was supported by the Presidency of Lebanon⁶.

In October 2002, Brazil and Lebanon signed a Judicial Cooperation Agreements on Criminal and Civil Matters, as well as for cooperation in certain consular matters of humanitarian character. All the agreements are still in force or under counterpart ratification. The latter was signed to collaborate on the combat of illegal displacement and illegal non-return of children abroad. Also, on December 4th, 2003, a Technical

⁶ In the document, the Brazilian government offers technical support and consulting services to infrastructural projects related to the post-civil war reconstruction of Lebanon, having attended the "Friends of Lebanon" conference in Washington in 1996. Increasing business opportunities and economic confidence between both countries were mentioned, and both nations agreed to stimulate their respective business communities to catalyse and expand mutual economic relations. The parties also celebrated the Agreement on Air Transport Regulating MEA (Air Liban) Flights to Brazil, promoting increased trade and tourist exchange. Given the increase of goods and individuals over the past years, protection from double taxation and mutual protection of investments were mentioned, as well as the harmonization of judicial procedures and judicial cooperation in different issues. Brazil-Lebanon cultural initiatives in Beirut, such as Art Brésil 97, Maison du Brésil and the inauguration of the chair of Brazilian Social Studies at the Lebanese University were celebrated, as well as the offering of seats by Rio Branco Institute on the training and improvement course for diplomats (JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ..., 1997).

Cooperation Agreement was proposed considering mutual interest in the social and economic sustainable development of both countries⁷.

A 5-year renewable Memorandum of Understanding Establishing a High-Level Bilateral Cooperation Commission was also signed on the 4th of December 2003. Currently expired, the document wished to develop political, economic, scientific, technological, and cultural cooperation on a stable and enduring basis in accordance with the principles of equity and mutual benefit. The Brazil-Lebanon High-Level Bilateral Commission was tasked with: developing appropriate measures to strengthen the relations between both countries in areas of mutual interest, establishing sectoral working groups or sub-commissions when needed; recommend means and ways to implement initiatives in priority areas; encourage entrepreneurial relations, promoting financial and economic cooperation, as well as the trade exchange of goods and services; consider means of promoting technology transfer within the framework of existing bilateral agreements; and stimulate mutual market access for products and facilitate reciprocal investments. The Commission was set to meet on an annual basis in Brasilia and Beirut, alternately, and to be attended by experts and advisers from both sides. Decisions were set to be adopted by consensus, with final minutes done in Portuguese, Arabic and English (MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING..., 2003).

Also in December 2003, both countries signed a Cooperation Agreement in the Field of Tourism. Currently expired, the document supported the investment in the tourism sector, the simplification of visa procedures, encouraged information and personal exchange, capacity building and training, and reinforced mutual efforts in the combat of child sex tourism exploitation. Since 2014 an agreement on multiple-entries visa regulates such visits between both countries. Also in December 2003, and still in force, the nations signed a Cooperation Agreement on Combating the Production, Consumption and Illicit Trafficking of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and on Combating Money Laundering Activities and other Related Fraudulent Financial Transactions.

In 2003 Brazilian President Lula da Silva and Lebanese President Emile Lahoud signed five cooperation agreements during a Brazilian diplomatic visit to Beirut. The agreements, signed at the Presidential Palace in Beirut, seek to intensify the commercial and political relationship between Brazil and Lebanon. In addition to cooperation agreements in the areas of tourism, combating drug trafficking, environment, and trade, both countries agreed to create a high-level bilateral commission. The 2006 Agreement aims to expand friendly relations maintained between the two peoples, based on equality and reciprocal benefit, and to recognize the importance of tourism as an economic factor of well-being for nations and also as a way of further developing the connection between both populations. The parties committed to encourage the development of cooperation between tourism authorities, organizations and companies, as well as promote private and legal investment in the tourism sector. Efforts would be made towards simplifying visa issuance procedures⁸ and other formalities to increase tourist exchange, and the parties committed to exchange legal, regulative, legislative, marketing and managing statistics and information in the field of tourism. Both

⁷ The 5-year agreement (which could be automatically extended for another 5 years via diplomatic notes) established a working group formed by experts from both countries to meet on an annual basis to identify policies and strategies, assess working plans, evaluate results and issue recommendations. Priority sectors were industry; environment and natural resources; mineral extraction; small and medium companies; health; transportation and communications. The agreement indicated the importance of gathering private and public institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations from both countries in the sectoral programmes and projects (TECHNICAL COOPERATION..., 2003). Signed in Beirut on the 4th of December 2004, in 2011 the text was withdrawn from the Brazilian National Congress, according to DOU Nbr. 164, p. 46, 25/08/2011.

⁸ The multiple-entry visas were authorized for a duration of the stay no longer than 90 days and which can be renovated, if needed, for a stay no longer than 180 days per year, as of the first entry date. Due to the special bilateral diplomatic relations between both countries, under the principle of reciprocity of international law and to facilitate the circulation of nationals between both countries, Lebanon has accepted to extend the same multiple-visas arrangement for Brazilian nationals traveling to Lebanon on business or tourist purposes.

Brazil and Lebanon would promote the development of tourist exchanges and specialized group excursions for sports, musical events, theatre festivals, exhibitions, symposiums and congresses held in the field of tourism (PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NBR. 5888/2006, DOU 08/09/2006)⁹.

Currently expired, on February 17th, 2004, Lebanon and Brazil celebrated a Protocol of Intentions on Technical Cooperation in the Realm of Electric Energy. The parties committed to the mutual provision of technical cooperation in the field of electricity, to be developed mainly, but not limited to, the following areas: generation, transmission and distribution of electrical energy, in all phases of feasibility studies, planning, design, constructing, commissioning, operation and maintenance; material and spare parts control systems; environmental preservation methods; solutions to specific equipment operation and maintenance problems. Activities were to be coordinated by ABC Brazil and executed by the Brazilian Ministry of Energy and Mines via Eletrobras, and the Brazilian Ministry of Energy and Water, according to DOU Nr. 41, 2/3/2004, p. 55-56.

Still in force, a Memorandum of Understanding for the Expansion and Diversification of Bilateral Relations was also signed on February 17th, 2004. Published at DOU Nr. 41, 2/3/2004, p. 56, the document is inspired by the common desire to strengthen the bonds that unite the two countries and peoples; imbued with the spirit of independence and solidarity, driven by their unwavering commitment to promoting peace and economic and social development; desirous of promoting and diversifying economic relations and trade in a reciprocally beneficial way; devoted to the relentless fight against hunger, poverty, inequalities, exclusion and social injustice. In Brasilia, the parties committed to the encouragement of the mutual exchange of goods and services, cooperation in production, joint investments and other forms of economic cooperation, as well as facilitate the exchange of information to stimulate contacts between Brazilian and Lebanese businessmen and women, entrepreneurs and other agents and interested entities, as well as supporting participation in fairs and international exhibitions in both countries. The Parties decided to establish the Joint Brazilian-Lebanese Economic-Business Forum to facilitate the implementation of relevant initiatives as to present common suggestions to both governments in favour of the continuity, expansion, and diversification of bilateral relations; bringing together representatives and leaders of the interested productive sectors as well as any other representative or government observer relevant to fostering cooperation. The memorandum is a renewable 5-year agreement and instructs the parties to meet annually and alternately in Brazil and Lebanon (MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING..., 2004).

On February 27th 2006, Brazil and Lebanon signed an Executive Programme of Educational Cooperation between both countries for a 3-year period. Based on the 1997 agreement, bilateral education efforts were understood as priority for the following areas: development of Brazilian Studies in Lebanon and of Lebanese Studies in Brazil, including Portuguese and Arab language teaching; higher education and postgraduate studies; technical and vocational education and training; social inclusion in education, particularly adult education, and eradication of illiteracy; rural, environmental and educational innovations. The parties agreed to promote joint events and

⁹ Additionally, parties aimed to provide professional training in the field, encourage the exchange of professionals and journalists related to tourism and travel and promote contact and joint activities between tourism research institutions in Lebanon and Brazil. Lebanon and Brazil would also coordinate cooperation between their national tourism administrations within the framework of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and other international tourism bodies. A Coordination Joint Working Group was established to ensure this implementation. Brazilian and Lebanese governments also committed to exchange information and results from research and projects carried out within the scope of "Combating the Exploitation of Child and Youth Sexual Tourism", in accordance with the recommendations from the World Tourism Organization, based on the 1995 Saint-Vincent Declaration for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism (PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NBR. 5888/2006, DOU 08/09/2006)

activities in the above-mentioned fields, as well as stimulate and facilitate closer links between their respective educational agencies, including schools and universities. Partnerships between Higher Education Institutions, Research Centres and Government Agencies were encouraged, promoting exchange opportunities, joint seminars, information and technology exchange and mutual recognition.

Following the 34-day War between Lebanon and Israel, Brazil sent a Multidisciplinary Mission to Lebanon in October 2006 carried out to offer solidarity to the Lebanese government and people and to identify areas in which Brazil could contribute to the country's reconstruction effort. In the country between the 16 and 18th of October 2006, the mission was headed by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency. The mission concentrated on technical cooperation and trade promotion. At the occasion, Lebanese authorities highlighted the visit from the Brazilian Foreign Minister to Beirut, one day after the ceasefire and carrying 2,5 tons of medicine, the significant presence of Brazilian-origin Lebanese in the country and demonstrated great appreciation for the support offered towards the reconstruction of Lebanon¹⁰.

The technical cooperation to be provided by Brazil was established to promote the development of the following domains: health, agriculture, urban development, professional training, and education. Promising results were presented: in the field of agriculture, EMBRAPA would be able to contribute with its experience in the development of tropical and semi-arid fruit agriculture. The agency would soon send technicians to identify immediate actions and offer training and capacitation in the areas of irrigation applied to fruit growing, with emphasis on drip, dairy farming, and horticulture. In the health area, training would be carried out in Brazil to capacitate Lebanese specialists in water treatment, control and monitoring of water quality, as well as rapid response to control outbreaks and epidemics. Regarding professional training, SENAI should receive a visit from a Lebanese technician to discuss the application of the entity's capacitation programmes in areas such as carpentry, woodwork, and hydraulics, through its Mobile Actions Programme (PAM), which aroused great interest from local Lebanese authorities. The programme was mentioned to potentially be of great use in workforce and labour training in regions affected by the 2006 conflict with Israel. The Ministry of Health offered support in the area of epidemiological surveillance, to prevent outbreaks of diseases transmitted through air and water.

¹⁰ Technically, the mission it integrated diplomats, members of the Department of Commercial Promotion, members from Business Missions, Portuguese Language Promotion Division, the Brazilian Ministries of Education, Health and Mines and Energy, the [Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation - EMBRAPA](#), [Caixa Econômica Federal](#) and the [National Industrial Apprenticeship and Training Service - SENAI](#). The business segment was made up of representatives from the civil construction sector and businesspeople from the Arab-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce and the Brazil-Lebanon Chamber of Commerce. Meetings were held with Lebanese diplomats, the Ministers of Education and Economy and Commerce, the Ministries of Health, Agriculture and Energy, as well as with the Industrial Association and the Council for Development and Reconstruction¹⁰.



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In sport related areas, on April 22, 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Sports was signed between Lebanon and Brazil to stimulate the exchange of athletes, sports teams, staff, trainers, researchers, and specialists; as well as promoting conferences, seminars and training courses. Via the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), eight South-South Cooperation Initiatives, missions and mapping visits between Lebanon and Brazil mainly in agricultural and health sectors can be mentioned: As a result of this cooperation, for instance, in 2006, the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation – Embrapa, offered training to Lebanese technicians in agricultural activities and conduct a mission to Lebanon to identify a cooperation project in the field of science, technology and agriculture, including infrastructure reconstruction, in collaboration with the National Industrial Apprenticeship Service - SENAI, A similar mission was organized by the Ministry of Health also in 2006.

III) MARKET OUTLOOK AND BRAZIL-LEBANON COMMERCIAL TRADE: IMPACT ON EMPLOYMENT

According to the [Observatory of Economic Complexity](#) database (OEC) and the [Brazilian Ministry of Economy](#), in 2021 Brazil exported US\$ 156,8 million to Lebanon. The main products exported to the country were raw sugar (US\$ 46 million, responding to 28.8% of exports), coffee (US\$ 35.1 million, 22%), and bovine meat¹¹ (US\$ 16.4 million, 10.3%). Bovine represented 5.92% of exports, corn 5.1%, poultry meat 4.57%, raw tobacco 4.08%, frozen bovine meat other 3.02%, sulphate chemical and wood pulp 1.25% each, dissolving grades chemicals 1.14%, coffee and tea extracts 1.07%, uncoated paper 0.93%, pig meat 0.87%, kraft paper 0.76%, and hard liquor 0.7% (Observatory of Economic Complexity, n/d; SIMÕES; HIDALGO, 2011). During the last 26 years, the exports from Brazil to Lebanon have increased at an annualized rate of 2.31%, from US\$ 88.3 million in 1995 to US\$ 160 million in 2021. In 2021, Brazil did not export any services to Lebanon (Observatory of Economic Complexity, n/d/ SIMÕES; HIDALGO, 2011).

In 2021, Lebanon exported US\$20.6 million to Brazil. The main products that Lebanon exported to Brazil are phosphatic fertilizers (US\$ 18 million, representing 87.2% of exports), frozen bovine meat¹² (US\$ 278,000, 1.34%), scrap copper (US\$272,000, 1.32%), other processed foods and nuts 1.05%, plastic lids 1.02% and pure olive oil 0.65%. During the last 26 years, Lebanon exports to Brazil have increased at an annualized rate of 10.3%, from US\$ 1.6 million in 1995 to US\$ 20.6 million in 2021. In 2021, Lebanon did not export any services to Brazil (Observatory of Economic Complexity, n/d; SIMÕES; HIDALGO, 2011).

Figure 5 - Exports, Imports and Trade Balance: Brazil- Lebanon 2022/2023



Source of the data: adapted from COMEX STAT, Brazilian Federal Government, Ministry of Industry, Foreign Trade and Services, 2023.

According to the Trade and Investment Promotion sector of the Brazilian Embassy in Lebanon (SECOM Beirut), the agency has engaged in commercial intelligence efforts to produce technical subsidies highlighting the opportunities in the Lebanese market for Brazilian exporters and identify sectoral untapped export potential. According to data from SECOM Beirut, of the ten groups of products with the greatest untapped export potential, the percentage of Brazilian products supplying the Lebanese market is less than

¹¹ In 2015, Brazil exported to Lebanon meat (US\$ 90 million or 31.4%), coffee (US\$ 57 million or 19.9%), livestock (US\$ 43 million, 15%), sugar (US\$ 36 million, 12.6%), airplanes (US\$ 18 million, 6.3%), automobiles (US\$ 14 million, 4.9%), food preparations (US\$ 3 million, 1%), plastic (US\$ 3 million, 1%), tobacco and substitutes (US\$ 2 million, 0.7%), and shoes (US\$ 2 million, 0.7%) (GOULART, 2017, p. 271-272).

¹² In 2015, Lebanon exported to Brazil fertilizers (US\$ 21.7 million or 91.2%), lead (US\$ 0.9 million or 3.6%), horticultural preparations (US\$ 0.3 million, 1.4%), aluminium (US\$ 0.2 million, 0.7%), fats and oils (US\$ 0.2 million, 0.7%), beverages (US\$ 0.1 million, 0.6%), mechanical machines (US\$ 0.1 million, 0.4%), vegetables (US\$ 0.1 million, 0.2%), coffee (0.2%) and cereals (0.1%) (GOULART, 2017, p. 272)

or equal to 2%. Many of these products are currently supplied by countries such as China and the USA, which, like Brazil, are far from Lebanon and have no special tariff treatment (CUNHA; WARDINI, 2022)¹³.

The 2022 SECOM report concludes that the time and cost of freight as well as the absence of a free trade agreement are not insurmountable obstacles to the entry of the Brazilian equivalent into the Lebanese market (CUNHA; WARDINI, 2022). With regards to Lebanon's broad foreign trade, 2019 data from the customs authorities showed a trade deficit of US\$ 14.8 billion in 2019, indicating a 13% decrease compared to the previous year. Imports totalled US\$ 19.64 billion (-1.8% compared to 2018) and mainly included mineral products (34.9%); chemical industry products (10.2%); electrical machinery and instruments (8.8%); transport equipment (6.3%); prepared food products; beverages and tobacco (6.2%); vegetable products (4.7%); pearls, precious stones, and metals (4.7%); basic metals and metal articles (4.4%); and live animals and animal products (4.3%). Imports originated mainly from the USA (8.7%), China (8.3%), Greece (7.1%), Italy (6.8%) and Russia (6.8%). (CUNHA; WARDINI, 2020, p. 3).

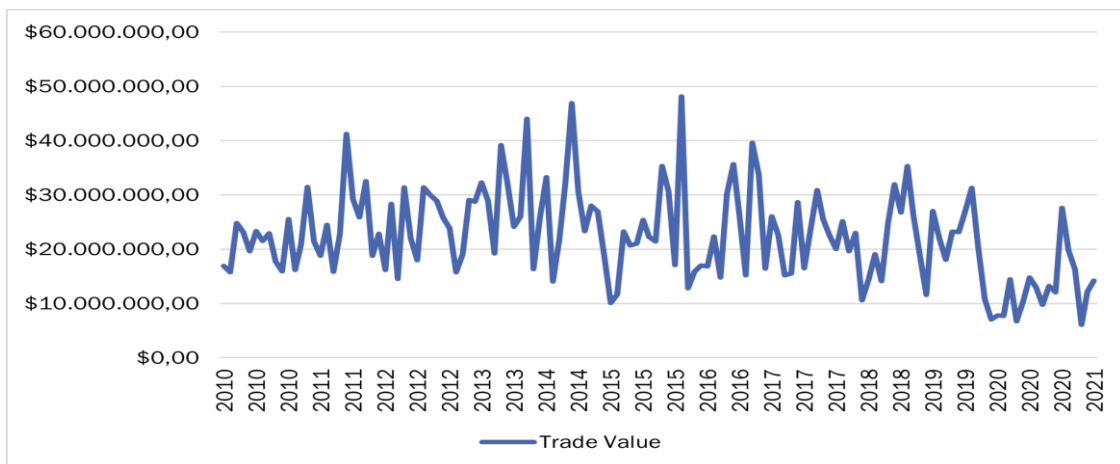
As reported by SECOM Beirut, Lebanese 2019 Exports amounted to US\$ 4.83 billion (+26.11%). The main exports were precious and semi-precious stones and precious metals (30.5% of the total); machinery; electrical instruments (11.5%); vehicles, aircraft, ships, transport equipment (10.4%); prepared food products; beverages, tobacco (8.2%); chemical industry products (7.9%); mineral products (7.6%); base metals and derivative products (6.3%); and vegetable products (3.8%). The main export destinations were Switzerland (22.2%); the United Arab Emirates (14.5%), Saudi Arabia (5.4%), Syria (4.7%) and Iraq (4.3%). The report also notes Lebanon is particularly strong in the processing of precious stones and metals, which are usually acquired in their raw state from African countries, hence explaining the weight of these products in the country's exports despite not having significant reserves on its territory (CUNHA; WARDINI, 2020, p. 3).

According to the Lebanese National Accounts, the manufacturing of food products accounts for 38% of the industry sub-sector contribution to total industrial GDP %. This is followed by metal products, machinery, and equipment, with 23%; chemicals, rubber, and plastics manufacturing (12%); non-metallic mineral manufacturing (9%); wood and paper manufacturing, printing (8%), other manufacturing (6%) and textile and leather manufacturing (AGRI-FOOD SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2020 FACTBOOK, p. 6).

According to the [World Bank](#), in 2021 Brazil's Gross domestic product (GDP) was US\$ 1.609 trillion, reaching US\$ 1.92 trillion in 2022. Per capita, the gross domestic product divided by midyear population, was US\$ 8,917.7 in 2022. Brazil's annual percentage growth rate of GDP was 2.9% in 2022. In 2021, Lebanon's GDP was US\$ 23.13 billion, with an annual percentage growth rate of GDP at -7% in 2021. Lebanon's gross domestic product per capita was US\$ 4,136.1 in 2021. The country's exports tend to be below 10% of total imports, and, structurally, the Lebanese economy would benefit from strengthening its capacity to generate internal wealth and promote industrialization.

¹³ These are: Mineral Fuels, Mineral Oils and Products of their Distillation; Bituminous Substances; Mineral Waxes; Natural or Cultured Pearls, Precious or Semi-Precious Stones and Similar Articles; Precious Metals, Metals Clad with Precious Metal, and Articles thereof of; Jewellery; Coins; Motor Vehicles, Tractors, Cycles and other Land Vehicles, their Parts, and Accessories; Pharmaceutical Products; Nuclear Reactors, Boilers, Machinery, Mechanical Apparatus, and Instruments and Parts; Plastics and Articles; Electrical Machinery, Appliances and Equipment and Parts Thereof; Sound Recording or Reproducing Apparatus; Television Image and Sound Recording or Reproducing Apparatus and Parts; Cast Iron, Iron and Steel; Cereals; Various Food Preparations.

Figure 6. Brazil Lebanon Trade: 2010-2021



Source of the data: Observatory of Economic Complexity, n/d; SIMÕES; HIDALGO, 2011¹⁴.

The [Investment Development Authority of Lebanon](#) (IDAL) was established in 1994, with the aim of promoting Lebanon as a key investment destination, attracting, facilitating, and retaining investments in the country. IDAL provides local and foreign investors alike with a range of incentives and business support services to help them establish their operations in Lebanon.

In addition, “Lebanon Connect”, or “Invest to Stay and Buy Lebanese” are initiatives from the [Lebanese Diaspora Energy initiative](#) aiming to connect the Lebanese living abroad to promote and foster economic and business opportunities between communities around the world. An innovative online and mobile platform, Lebanon Connect seeks to use digital technology to establish an active and effective international Lebanese lobby, while providing Lebanese professionals with the ability to promote and endorse their businesses, events, and products. The Invest to Stay programme is based on the support of Lebanese expatriates who invest in touristic, economic, construction, and social projects in their countries of residence¹⁵.

Resulting from a partnership between the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce and the Brazilian Federal Government via the [Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency \(ApexBrasil\)](#), the [Project Halal from Brazil](#) is an initiative to encourage companies to export to Muslim markets, with actions to improve, train

¹⁴ Brazil stands out as one of Lebanon's main suppliers of agricultural goods, especially bovine meat (frozen or not), sugar and coffee. Brazilian imports from Lebanon, in turn, are concentrated in chemical fertilizers (nearly 90%), most of which are manufactured in other countries (RIBEIRO, 2022). It is worth noting that the total of Brazilian exports in 2021 represents half of that recorded in 2019 (US\$ 293.21 million), a drop caused by the effects of the global pandemic and the Lebanese multidimensional crisis, which restricted importers' access to foreign currency. On the other hand, bilateral trade has been recovering progressively: in the first half of 2022, it increased by 90% compared to the same period in 2021, with Brazilian exports to Lebanon increasing by 60%, and imports by 2,160%, reaching the highest value in a first semester in 11 years (RIBEIRO, 2022). This is quite significant considering bilateral trade totalled US\$ 184 million in 2006, increasing 55% reaching US\$ 280 million in 2016 (GOULART, 2017). From 2003 to 2011 bilateral trade between the countries has increased fourfold. In 2011 Brazil was the 20th most important destination for Lebanese exports; and only the 46th provider of Lebanese imports (TEMER, 2011).

¹⁵ The involved entrepreneurs/developers would hire workers of Lebanese origin and import products or materials from Lebanon to the greatest possible extent, while channelling 20% of their profits to investments in Lebanon. The Buy Lebanese from the heart of Lebanon is an awareness initiative to effectively support local Lebanese products and preserves, thus transporting the authentic taste and heritage of Lebanon around the world. The initiative aims to strategically promote manufactured and agricultural products through local and global campaigns, while supporting related projects and programmes along the process (LDE, n/d).

and capacitate, certify, promote trade, matchmaking and exchange business experiences in the Halal segment. The halal products represent an untapped opportunity for both countries with an estimated market of US\$ 4.88 trillion that should reach US\$ 5.74 trillion until 2024 according to data from the State of the Global Islamic Economy, with 1.9 billion consumers worldwide (GLOBAL HALAL BRAZIL, 2023). In the coming years, the Islamic population will represent 25% of the global population, promoting significant growth in consumption. Brazil is on the rise in Halal production, particularly of those goods championing the trade balance with Lebanon, such as meat. In October 2022 Fambras Certifier and the Brazilian Association of Meat Exporters (ABIEC) signed a [Cooperation Agreement for Information Exchange Regarding the Halal Meat Market](#).



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Figure 7. Brazil's Ambassador to Lebanon, Tarcisio Costa, and the ABCC President, Osmar Chohfi, in a visit to the ABCC. São Paulo, January 2023.

Brazil is a strong certifier for meat, vegetable, grains, chicken and any other food and inputs. In addition, cosmetic and pharmaceutical products also have the potential to increase its exports from Brazil. There are opportunities as well in sectors such as tourism, clothing, and Islamic financial services (CARTA AO LÍBANO, ANO 28, N. 197, p. 54-57, 2023). According to [FAMBRAS](#)^[13], promoter of the [Global Halal Brazil Business Forum](#) together with the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, Brazil is a powerhouse in this market. The country is among the 5 main suppliers in the world of food and beverages for the [Organization for Islamic Cooperation](#) (OIC), made up of 57 countries, including Lebanon, a member since 1969^[14].

III. 1) Technology and Financial Services

In terms of the development of innovative industrial technologies, Brazilian National Confederation of Industry, via SENAI, plays a significant role in promoting industrial production, applied research and innovation, and the discovery of new technologies, whether associated with products or with processes.

According to data from the Brazilian CNI/SENAI in the area of innovation and technology, around 100,000 technical, technological and laboratory advisory services are provided each year, serving more than 20,000 industries. Through applied research, the 27 [SENAI Innovation Institutes](#) (ISI) promote the development of new products, processes and customized industrial solutions, contributing towards national development and the generation and dissemination of knowledge applied to industrial development. Such entities have engaged in previous and current efforts to cooperate with other Southern countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America in that realm.

Examples include [UpLab SENAI](#), SENAI-SP's Entrepreneurship and Innovation pillar, which offers a coworking space with an innovation method structured to promote intrapreneurship programmes, connections between startups, industries and companies through open innovation, residencies for startups, startups hunting and industry innovation teams.

FIESP, CIESP, SENAI-SP and SEBRAE-SP [Digital Transformation Journey](#), the largest digital transformation programme in the history of São Paulo, is another initiative to be mentioned. With the capacity to serve 40,000 micro, small and medium-sized industries, the Digital Transformation Journey aims at serving companies from all industrial segments, with different levels of technological maturity, in eight stages of consultancy and training. The stages of digital transformation are diagnosis, strategy, process optimization, mapping, automation and integration. Digital Transformation Journey offers the development of technical skills in management and of enabling technologies for Industry 4.0. The programme offers support for MSMEs in the current digital environment with advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence, robotics, the internet of things and cloud computing, which are changing production methods and business models in Brazil and around the world.

SENAI-SP's prototyping services offer support in rapid prototyping, recognized as an important technique for developing new products and processes. It enables the quick testing and validation of new ideas, enabling the anticipation of possible errors in functionality and production, saving time and money. SENAI-SP's prototyping services are not limited to 3D printing. The complete infrastructure with state-of-the-art equipment and experienced technicians allows for the development of functional prototypes, capable of reproducing all the product's functions.

South-South Cooperation can also take place with banking technology, considering Lebanon as a financial hub in the region and restoring trust in the banking system. Innovations in the Brazilian banking system facilitating trade and investments include [Pix Technology](#), an online and instant Central Bank payment system, and Open Banking, democratizing the banking information and making it more transparent. Innovative examples are the access to transactions via mobile devices, payments via apps, digital wallets and by approximation. More digital solutions are explored in the Training and Supporting Small Business and Micro Entrepreneurs' section. Additionally, South-South Cooperation can also be targeted at designing and developing banking technologies and financial services under the realm of income transfer programmes.

[ELLOS](#), an initiative of the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, offers innovation and technology to revolutionize international trade between Brazil and Arab countries, reducing costs, guaranteeing greater security, credibility, and agility to the process. Via Easy Trade platform, all the agents in the export process are connected within the system: exporter, halal certifier, certifier of origin, regulatory bodies, Brazilian authorities, logistics operators, Arab customs, and importers.

Another technological initiative from the Chamber, [CCAB LAB](#), aims at acting as a facilitator and reference in the approach connecting the Brazilian and Arab Innovation Ecosystems, disseminating knowledge about them, and expanding its activities. Getting actively involved in the technology and innovation sectors, CCAB LAB has many priority sectors of interest to South-South cooperation: commercially, logistics and transportation and well as e-commerce, not to mention AgTech and Software/SaaS, which could act as trade facilitators and enabling new business for micro and small entrepreneurs; in terms of capacity building and training, EdTech has a lot to contribute; Fintech, another priority for CCAB LAB, offers financial services improving its use and delivery to consumers; and HealthTech, which speaks to the improvement of another form of cooperation already taking place between Lebanon and Brazil. Finally, sustainability and renewable/clean energy are also innovation ecosystems which can be fostered and accelerated via LAB incubation.

Under the [City-to-City Cooperation](#) approach, an example is the effort from the Rio de Janeiro Consulate General of Lebanon to draw up pre-projects between the Rio de Janeiro Secretariat, the [Lebanese Ministry of Science and Technology and the Arts, Sciences, and Technology University in](#)

[Lebanon \(AUL\)](#). The exchange of professionals, workshops and missions are on the agenda for this cooperation. The pre-project is developed under the framework of the April 2019 Brotherhood Agreement between Rio de Janeiro and Beirut. Technology cooperation goes as far as the collaboration around post-disaster registering activities via satellite images and digital maps, such as the efforts exchanged between the [National Risk and Disaster Management Center](#) (Cenad) and the [National Space Research Institute](#) (Inpe) together with Lebanese authorities. According to Brazilian ABC, the new **CBERS-4A satellite**, with a high-resolution camera for Earth observation, was used to help Lebanon with its strategic planning actions following the Beirut Port Blast in August 2020.

Inspired by ethical finance and solidarity principles, [MEDSt@rts](#) by ENICBC MED in Lebanon allows many young and women's entrepreneurs to create, develop and run their own enterprises. Frequently encountering severe credit constraints, young and female entrepreneurs with promising early-stage business ideas can benefit from such innovative supporting model facilitating access to funding, scouting, and training. In Lebanon, the partnership is established with the [Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Sidon and South Lebanon](#). Also, digitalization of public records and public awareness raising on the importance of such for the access of information and promotion of transparency and accountability¹⁶.

In that respect, both Lebanon and Brazil could develop mutual cooperation efforts to implement and improve accountability and transparency when enforcing the Access to Information Law in both countries, strengthening the public administration and contributing towards effective public policies.

¹⁶ The Access to Information Law was passed by the Lebanese parliament in 2017. However, the access still faces many challenges, such as inefficiency, slowness in providing information and excessive bureaucracy. According to experts, the sector is not only short of technical and financial resources to digitalize public records but is also lacking human resources to do so. In Brazil, Law No. 12.527/2011 regulates the constitutional right of access to public information from government bodies and entities without having to provide a reason. However, as critics point out, some sectors of the public administration are still distrustful of the information usage, and as a result take longer to present information, requesting the consent from other authorities, or present it in an unsatisfactory fashion. Bureaucrats may even hold the information in personal "digital safes" making it unavailable even to peers (see DA SILVA CORREIA, 2017, p. 7-8).

IV) AGRICULTURE AND AGROBUSINESS- LEBANESE & BRAZILIAN COOPERATION

A 2018 study by McKinsey & Company reported the agricultural sector as one of 6 productive sectors for development in Lebanon, understood as sectoral engines for the country's economic growth. In addition to recommending support to agricultural cooperatives, the report advised focusing on the local food domain. Food plays a major role in Lebanon and the Lebanese cuisine is popular on a global scale (JALKH; DEDEIRE; REQUIER DESJARDINS, 2020, p. 20). This sector is particularly characterized by informality. Out of the 212,000 jobs in agriculture in 2016, 92% are informal, excluding seasonal workers (MCKINSEY, LEBANON ECONOMIC VISION, 2018, p. 24).

Lebanon stands out in the region as an ideal location for agricultural activity, given its moderate climate, rich soil, and abundant water resources. The country is endowed with the highest proportion of agricultural land in the Middle East. 67% of the country's territory is covered by agricultural areas and 14% of the total area of Lebanon is considered arable. Rainfall in the country remains relatively abundant at an average of 2.2 billion m³/yr, significantly higher than the regional average. The country is also rich with major rivers & water resources. In 2012, the sector employed roughly 10% of the Lebanese labour force, and is the fourth largest employer in the country, even though most recent figures show that the sector responds for 4% of total employment, with around 63,616 workers engaged in agricultural activities (AGRICULTURE, IDAL n/d). According to the fact book, major regions for crops, meadows and pastures include the Bekaa plain (where more than 40% of the land is cultivated), the North, especially in Koura and Akkar, and the South with the coastal region from Sidon to Tyre (where intensive agriculture is also present in greenhouses). Mount Lebanon and Nabatiyeh are also important agricultural zones, albeit with lower shares of cultivated land due to their rough landscape (AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2012 FACTBOOK, p. 4).

In 2010, Agricultural output by sub sector was the following: 47% fruits (being composed by citrus with 28%, apples 19%, grapes 15% and bananas 11%); 23% vegetables & other fi-eld crops; 11% livestock products; 10% livestock; 4% industrial crops; 3% fisheries products and 2% cereals, according to Lebanese National Accounts (AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2012 FACTBOOK, p. 5). Most recent figures show that the agriculture sector generated around USD 1.8 billion or 3.2% of Lebanon's GDP in 2018, with its contribution growing at a CAGR of 2% between 2010 and 2018 (AGRICULTURE, IDAL n/d). According to the report, agriculture in Lebanon has a strong potential for growth, for the country still has not attained its expansion limit. Investments in this sector are highly attractive given Lebanon's ideal climate and landscape, skilled labour, devoted research (8 agricultural colleges established across the territory as of 2012), and good export opportunities to the Middle East as well as abroad. However, the report recognizes the persistent dependence on imports signals that the market is far from being mature yet. Demand greatly exceeds local supply and domestic conditions favours agricultural activity. In that respect, Lebanon's diverse and rich agricultural sector makes it an eye-catching centre for future investment - with the country enlarging its fruit varieties and with organic agriculture gaining in popularity, with some 300 farmers working in this area as of 2012. (AGRICULTURAL SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2012 FACTBOOK, p. 10).

In 2018, top produced crops included potatoes (387,791 tons), followed by tomatoes (300,157 tons) and cucumbers and gherkins (151.558 tons). Exports of agricultural products have been on the rise over the last years reaching USD 193.1 million in 2019, mostly driven by increasing demand from Gulf countries for fresh products. Coffee grabbed the largest share of total crop exports with 11.7% of the total, followed by fresh or dried grapes (7.6%) and fresh or chilled potatoes (7.6%). Arab countries remain Lebanon's main export markets for agricultural products, accounting for 77.8% of total exports in 2019. Saudi Arabia responded for 22% of exports, Qatar 17%, and Syria 12% (AGRICULTURE, IDAL n/d).

The agricultural sector benefits from financial support, export promotion as well as technical assistance from the Lebanese government. This support is mostly provided by the [Ministry of Agriculture](#), the [Investment Development Authority of Lebanon](#), the Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute and [Kafalat](#). Top Lebanese universities are offering different degrees in the agriculture field, with 2% of total enrolled students (4,210) engaged in higher education programmes in agriculture, fishing and veterinary sciences.

Several business development services and development projects are working to support the sector. Amongst others, Agrytech, the first incubator and accelerator supporting innovation in the agriculture sector set-up in 2018 and providing business coaching, technical & financial assistance and promoting market linkages among companies operating in the agri-tech sector.



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The agri-food sector is a major contributor to Lebanon's industrial sector growth and is expected to continue to play a major role in the economy. According to IDAL, in 2018, the agri-food sector was the largest contributor to the industrial sector output accounting for 38% of industrial output and generating 2.9% of the country's GDP. The sector has an estimated size of 1.6 billion USD and has grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.5% over the 2010 and 2018 period. There are around 1,245 agri-food enterprises constituting 26% of the total industrial firms of Lebanon. The sector is mainly located in Mount Lebanon (48%) Bekka (18%) and in the North of Lebanon (9%). The Agri-food sector currently employs an estimated workforce of around 21,000 employees (25% of the industrial workforce) with companies employing around 28 persons (on average). (AGRI-FOOD SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2020 FACTBOOK).

Exports of agri-food products accounted for 11.7% of total exports and for 12.4% of industrial exports in 2019. Despite all external and internal challenges, Lebanese agri-food exports have been growing at a CAGR of 2% since 2010, highlighting the sector's potential and resilience. Agri-food production is diversified with a wide range of traditional and innovative products being exported to regional and international markets. Top 3 exported agri-food products in 2019 included dried fruits and nuts (10% of total), followed by processed chocolate (8%) and other vegetables and food preparations (7%). The major market of destination

are still Arab countries (48% of total agri-food exports in 2019). Saudi Arabia, UAE, Qatar, Iraq and Kuwait respond for more than 35%. More than 93% of Lebanese exports to Brazil in 2023 were from the fertilizer sector. (AGRI-FOOD SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2020 FACTBOOK).

Lebanese wine has achieved global reach with high penetration rates in countries with a large diaspora population: wine exports reached USD 21 million in 2019 with the UK (33%) and USA (17%) topping the destinations. Lebanon's olive oil exports performed well over the years, growing at a CAGR of 6% during the 2010-2019 period, leaving room for various investment opportunities in the production of extra virgin olive oil from new varieties of olive. Lebanon's dried fruits and nuts value chain can be reshaped to create higher value products and become a consistent supplier to untapped regional markets such as Brazil. Lebanon is a main supplier of chocolate for GCC countries offering premium chocolate pieces in sophisticated packages. Finally, the availability of livestock in the country paves the way for important investment opportunities in manufacturing high-quality dairy-based goods (AGRI-FOOD SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2020 FACTBOOK).

According to IDAL, current investment opportunities lie in pine nuts production in Jezzine, olive cluster in Hasbaya and Kura, meat processing in Halba, Akkar, dairy sector in Baalbeck, Livestock in Akkar, Agriculture and farming in the Ace River, Packaging House to preserve fresh agriculture in Taanayel-Bekaa, Forest products processing cluster, Dairy products cluster in Taanayel among others (SEMINÁRIO – UNIDOS PELO LÍBANO, 2021).

An existing initiative is Fair Trade Lebanon - A Tale of Hope, Heritage, and Resilience. A non-profit NGO aiming to improve the living conditions of Lebanese producers, cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Since 2006, this NGO provides access to markets, business development support and export opportunities to small producers, food processing cooperatives and dynamic agro-SMEs in rural regions. The initiative implements best practices in promoting gender equality and providing equal opportunities to build a culture of no discrimination, freedom of association, respect and fairness. Fair Trade Lebanon also promotes opportunities and capacity building for economically marginalized producers, fair payment, no child labour and no forced labour, and good working conditions. Fair Trade Lebanon (FAIR TRADE LEBANON, 2022, p. 3-4).

Fair Trade Lebanon also contributed to the launching of LEBTRADE, the first national trade portal that provides exporters in various productive sectors with the information they need to access international markets. The online platform provides all necessary means for the Lebanese exporters and producers to access reliable information on a variety of topics, including discovering promising markets for Lebanese products; legal requirements and standards; and quality support organizations and projects. LEBTRADE was developed by the Ministry of Economy and Trade (MoET) under the project Strengthening Exports of Fruits and Vegetables from Lebanon to European and Regional Markets funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and implemented by the René Moawad Foundation (FAIR TRADE LEBANON, 2022). As far as the technical cooperation between Lebanon and Brazil is concerned, from 2019 Lebanon and Brazil will co-develop a project in organic agriculture. With the support of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and the Lebanese Ministry of Agriculture, professionals from the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ) and the Association of Biological Farmers of the State of Rio de Janeiro (ABIO), the cooperation project transmits technical knowledge to Lebanese farmers in order to improve sustainable agriculture techniques and organic certification (RIBEIRO, 2022).

On October 2021, a technical cooperation agreement was signed between the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro UFRRJ and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency, the Association of Organic Farmers of the State of Rio de Janeiro, the Ministry of Agriculture of Lebanon and the American University of Beirut, aiming at the

development of the Project Strengthening agroecological practices and the establishment of a participatory guarantee system for Lebanon's organic sector (DELIBERAÇÃO N° 382 / 2021, UFRRJ, 2021)¹⁷.

In December 2006 Embrapa technicians returned from a visit to Lebanon, endorsed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) / the United Nations. Researchers raised problems and potentialities of the Lebanese regions most affected by the 2006 war and proposed alternatives for food production and utilization of resources, especially in horticulture and irrigation. The technicians visited the diverse production systems in South Lebanon (Bekaa Valley), the North region and Mount Lebanon. In the South, the production of bananas, citrus and olives is predominant¹⁸.

Since 2017 EMBRAPA has been developing research on variants of chickpeas for the domestic as well as the Asian market. Several Brazilian regions, enjoying favourable climate, dry periods, and medium altitudes, are suitable for producing chickpeas, a commodity highly valued in Asian and the Middle Eastern markets. According to EMBRAPA, agricultural research is being conducted to evaluate chickpea cultivars and develop new ones that are better adapted to Brazilian environmental conditions, testing the economic viability of the crop, and seeking solutions for controlling pests and diseases that affect productivity and quality. An example is BRS Aleppo cultivar originated from the selection of genetic materials introduced from the International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA), which used to be located in Syria but is now based in Lebanon due to the civil war. EMBRAPA accounts show that BRS Aleppo shows impressive high productivity, which varies between 2,500 and 3,500 kg/ha, and its high level of tolerance to a complex of soil fungus. The cultivar is also said to respond well to mechanized harvesting and irrigated cultivation at altitudes above 800 meters.

There are interesting market opportunities in the agritech, aquaculture and post-harvest infrastructure as farmers would benefit from new advanced and innovative techniques in the agriculture value-chain including robotic and digital applications with the aim to expand their production and exports. Additionally, the high dependence of Lebanon on the import of aquatic and fish products could serve as a key opportunity to move towards import substitution through the implementation of new farming systems for production efficiency. Finally, as for post-harvest infrastructure investment opportunities exist in packaging and cold

¹⁷ Brazilian Agricultural Research Company (Embrapa) has the potential to contribute with its experience in the development of tropical and semi-arid fruit agriculture. Earlier efforts have already been made to identify areas in which the Brazilian Government can contribute to Lebanon's reconstruction efforts via Embrapa (MISSÃO..., n/d). A public company, EMBRAPA strives to develop the technological basis of a genuinely tropical agriculture and livestock model. The initiative aims at guaranteeing food security and a prominent position for Brazil in the international food, fiber, and energy market. It is guided by principles of scientific excellence in agricultural research, quality and productive efficiency in crops and breeding, environmental sustainability, social aspects and partnerships with the production sector.

¹⁸ The report (HERTER; REISSER JR., Embrapa 2006) states Lebanon has excellent climate and soil conditions to produce fruits and vegetables of competitive quality. Lebanese technicians are very well trained, with specializations in countries such as France and the United States. There is, however, a deficiency in applied research, low rural extension activity and a lack of organization by producers. The report claims Brazil can contribute to several areas: integrated production (peach, apple, strawberry), new species, market, genetic material, seedling production, family farming, post-harvest technology, agricultural zoning, introduction of new species of tropical fruits, support for some species of vegetables (such as potatoes) and exchange of genetic material from wild fruits. The report anticipated a visit from Lebanese technicians to Brazil in 2007. Experts would visit the south, São Paulo and Bahia in order to observe in loco technologies of direct application in horticulture and irrigation - strengthening the exchange between the two countries. The report concludes that in many regions of Lebanon, such as those less affected by the 2006 bombings, it is possible to quickly requalify production, with simple and cheap measures within the reach of the Lebanese government and producers (HERTER; REISSER JR., Embrapa 2006).

storage houses with high technical standards, it leverages Lebanon's strategic location for regional distribution and access to new markets (AGRICULTURE, IDAL n/d).

IV.1) ORGANIC AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVE MANAGEMENT

For conflict and post-conflict Arab states, despite an array of barriers and limitations when engaging in reconstruction efforts, cooperatives have stood out, especially in their inclusion and empowerment of women. As such, cooperatives then appear as typical territorial actors whose characteristics make them an attractive focus for local development strategies - especially those under the [UN 2030 agenda's Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs). As a social model of businesses which focus on collective benefit, participation, solidarity and democracy, cooperatives fall well in line with the SDGs (see JALKH; DEDEIRE; REQUIER DESJARDINS, 2020). Additionally, the agri-food sector, particularly when engaged with eco-tourism, presents a significant potential for market growth, where cooperatives can play a central role.

However, the ILO's Regional Office for the Arab States reports that the Lebanese agricultural sector faces challenges like land fragmentation, high production costs for small and medium-scale farmers, and inadequate post-harvest facilities. Despite the success of cooperatives in sustaining rural livelihoods, their weakness hinders the growth and development of the sector. Four critical factors, as pointed out by the ILO, do not allow cooperatives to act as optimal drivers for development and growth in the agricultural and agri-food sector: Cooperatives' low attractiveness to farmers, lack of integration in value chains, and public aid dependency hinder sustainable development, exacerbated by a unified cooperative movement and common discourse. Finally, an outdated legal and regulatory framework is often cited as one of the major bottlenecks of the sector (THE COOPERATIVE SECTOR IN LEBANON, 2018, p. 28).



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The development of the agricultural sector is constrained by many challenges in Lebanon. According to Salem Darwich (2023), the include: high production costs, financing difficulties, supply chain issues, and

marketing risks. Farmers struggle with low bargaining power, weak cooperative work, and unfair trade practices. Poor agricultural infrastructure, inefficient public extension services, and inadequate food standards contribute to these issues. Additionally, climate change adaptation requires addressing inadequate environmental regulations and access to clean treated water. (DARWICH, 2023).

In terms of the challenges arising specifically from employment, according to Darwich (2023), farmers' capacity to adopt new technologies and good farming practices are hindered by the extensive use of hired labour. Low-skilled workers, often from abroad (mainly Syrians) are hired to perform seasonal manual operations and oversee day-to-day running of farms, while specialized work (such as operating agricultural machinery and pruning of trees) are usually performed by skilled Lebanese workers (DARWICH, 2023, p. 6)¹⁹.

According to Abdo and Kerbage (2012), entrepreneurship development programmes in Lebanon should address the challenges of gendered occupational segregation and not overlook middle-income female agricultural enterprises. Jalkh, Dedeire, and Requier Desjardins (2020) argue that despite the saturated agro sector in Lebanon, cooperatives are gaining recognition for their potential collective benefit in a country facing uncertainty, food import dependency, post-war reconstruction attempts, and emerging crises. Despite a challenging scenario, according to the ILO in Lebanon women have been active players in advocating for rural social changes, including women economic empowerment and access to financial and productive resources. After the 2006 war, rural women cooperatives played an active role in emergency relief and rehabilitation efforts. They also have been participating in several public campaigns advocating for women equal political and economic rights (THE COOPERATIVE SECTOR IN LEBANON, 2018, p. 10, 11).

In that sense, rural cooperatives play a key role in post-conflict scenarios, not only perpetuating traditional culinary heritage and artisanal practices, ensuring household nutrition and food security, but also promoting local social, economic, and sustainable development, ultimately improving the rural space. Jalkh, Dedeire, and Desjardins (2020) argue that cooperatives are natural social and gender inclusion vectors, job creators, and livelihood enhancers, operating under democratic governance, participatory approaches, and respecting cooperative principles. They align with the United Nations Agenda for promoting Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in democratic and solidarity principles of collective management and participation. Despite the centrality of the agri-food and agrobusiness sector in both Lebanon and Brazil, as well as the relevance of cooperative management post-crisis, [ILO PROSPECTS](#) REPORT from 2021 indicate that Lebanese farmers seemingly receive little support and guidance on ways to improve production practices and increase productivity. Ultimately, more needs to be done to provide effective support on agricultural development and integration so horticulture farmers can improve their productivity.

As an example, the introduction of new technology improves effective post-harvest processing, pioneer new species, integrate production, and introduce intercropping schemes, multi-span greenhouses, and drip irrigation. Partnerships with public agencies and private research institutes could develop technological solutions and applied agri-food research. One of the sustainable ways of promoting MSMEs in the sector is by offering training in family harvest, quality standards, legislation, added value, marketing, cooperativism and sustainable development. Additionally, for supporting post-conflict reconstruction and vulnerable

¹⁹ Despite significant direct investments in the sector, there is room for improvement and addressing challenges. Food cooperatives' capacity is underutilized, and promoting women and youth engagement, ensuring quality standards, and establishing national specifications are crucial for addressing these issues. Experts also point out the need for increasing the added value, facilitating access to markets, and considering the long-term disengagement from financial aid and foreign partners (JALKH; DEDEIRE; REQUIER DESJARDINS, 2020). Deficiencies in applied research, low rural extension activity and a lack of organization by producers should also be addressed. Diagnoses such as these were present during EMPRAPA's 2006 post-war technical visit to Lebanon, which reinforced local producers were well trained and stressed the good capacity of agricultural production in the country.

communities, post-war equipping of operational food-production infrastructures is central to safeguarding jobs of both Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees.

In that respect, it is crucial to learn from previous UN and domestic initiatives, such as [Fair Trade Lebanon](#), for the improvement of the agriculture sector productivity and for the enhancement of access to markets. Targeting farmers and micro, small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the agri-food sector may also benefit with the close engagement with Brazilian SEBRAE and SENAI capacities, to foster entrepreneurship and provide guidance to small businesses via technical support and training to expand businesses.

ILO PROSPECTS' actions to increase productivity and improve working conditions in the horticulture sector as well as [My.COOP's](#) training package and programme on the management of agricultural cooperatives can also play a role in the management of agricultural cooperatives. The My.COOP network of partners is extending the training package to other countries, despite the lack of materials in Arabic or Portuguese. Pilot training activities and country adaptations are already taking place in Spanish-speaking countries. The flexible training package can be targeted to Lebanese and Brazilian cooperatives through face-to-face and distance learning. (see AMORIM et. al., 2015, p.32). Both ILO initiatives can be expanded if in collaboration with Brazilian ABC, SESI/SENAI, EMBRAPA and Chambers of Commerce, promoting mutual synergy.

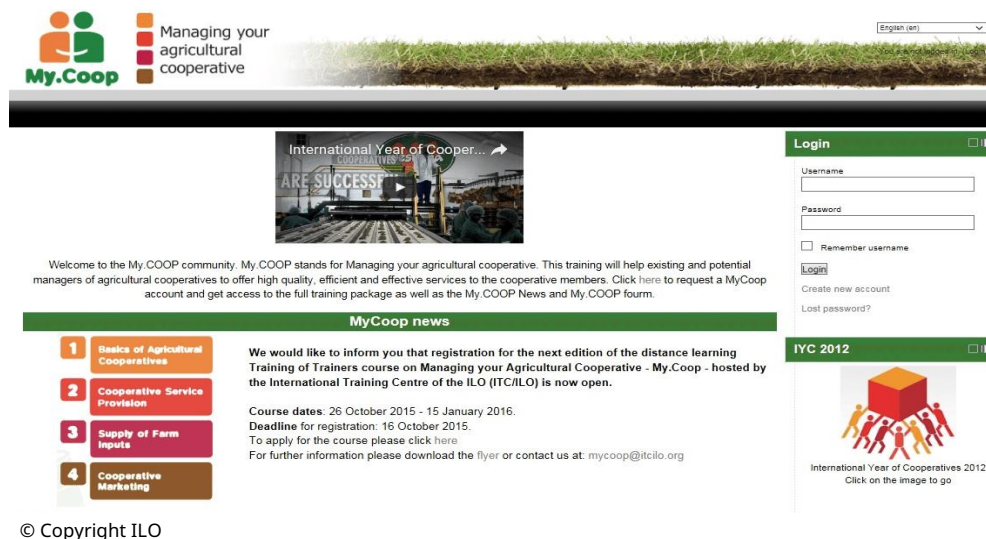


Figure 8.1 My.COOP training package and programme on the management of agricultural cooperatives

Additionally, one of the ways to further identify bottlenecks, challenges as well as develop innovative solutions can be via social dialogue and trans-regional knowledge-sharing workshops, which should be encouraged when advancing Brazil Lebanon SSTC.

The focus on such sustainable practices promotes rural development, increases agricultural productivity, and promotes inclusive growth. Accordingly, the promotion of South-South cooperation between Brazil and Lebanon in this segment is crucial for generating sustainable development, focusing not only on traditional cooperatives, but also Agrifoodtech solutions and innovations and Agrytech Accelerator Programme. Encouraging technological solutions via CCAB LAB, for example, incubating Agritech startups, and exploring CCAB Ellos Platform all play a role in facilitating trade and presenting innovative solutions for bringing ideas and companies together. [Apex's Brasil Exportação Platform](#), for example, is a new free digital community designed to boost Brazilian companies' exports with a particular focus on micro, small and medium-sized businesses. Traditional Rounds of Trade, Commercial Fairs and Missions with Middle Eastern and Latin

American markets must also continue to be encouraged, as [Projeto Comprador](#) promoted by CCAB in order to explore new markets.

Notwithstanding enduring challenges, agricultural sectoral performance can be argued to have high relevance to women and post-crisis populations as target groups, opportunity for inclusive growth via cooperatives and feasibility to drive change via the support of small and medium agri-food enterprises. Good practices in rural areas include building capacity, facilitating funding access, improving infrastructure, post-war re-equipping, introducing innovation, market diversification, dialogue between governmental bodies and universities, and changes in policies, standards, and regulations, aiming to improve rural enterprises and infrastructure. Finally, the agri-food sector, particularly when engaged with eco and sustainable (blue) tourism, presents a significant potential for market growth, promoting local economic development and jobs.

As of 2017 there were 1,238 registered cooperatives in Lebanon. They are well distributed across the country: 21% in Mount Lebanon, 24% at the North and Akkar, 14% Baalbeck and Hermel, 18% Nabatiyeh and 12% South Líbano (THE COOPERATIVE SECTOR IN LEBANON, 2018, p. 9). Half of the registered cooperatives (51%) are agricultural cooperatives and around a quarter work in agri-food sector (including 12% food processing, 7% dairy, 5% in beekeeping and 3% fishery), of which 125 registered women cooperatives, most of them produce Lebanese traditional food products.

Lebanese rural food cooperatives, currently engaging in traditional cultural and artisanal practices, are historically used to ensure household nutrition and food security. As Rita Jalkh, Marc Dedeire and Melanie Requier Desjardins (2020) argue, rural food cooperatives remain attractive actors as their principles of collective benefit, participation and democracy form a strong link with sustainable development goals. Cooperatives are local in nature, as the majority of their activities are practiced at the local scale rather than national or regional.

For conflict and post-conflict Arab states, despite an array of barriers and limitations, cooperatives stepped up mainly in their inclusion and empowerment of women. With 75% women members and firm reputation in authenticity, artisanal practice and based in local farming, cooperatives are considered vectors of social and gender inclusion, creators of employment and enhancers of livelihoods operating under democratic governance, participatory approaches and respecting cooperative principles (SMITH 2014 apud JALKH; DEDEIRE; REQUIER DESJARDINS, 2020, p. 2)²⁰.

Another initiative in Lebanon, Atayeb Al Rif (Rural Delights Cooperative), is the first non-profit cooperative specialized in food products marketing with the aim of providing agricultural capacity-building for rural women in the country, particularly in the dry-land areas. With the support of the [United Nations Convention](#)

²⁰ In Lebanon, cooperatives remain less successful than other international achievements. Still, cooperatives are becoming increasingly recognized for their potential collective benefit to the country. In the actual multicrisis context, food processing cooperatives could specifically intervene not only socially, in alleviating poverty and enhancing livelihoods in Lebanon, but also in mitigating risks of food insecurity through the mobilization and shelf-life extension of local fresh produce (JALKH; DEDEIRE; REQUIER DESJARDINS, 2020, p. 15). Food cooperatives in the Bekaa valley remain small-scale with less than 20 members on average, and production size rarely surpasses 15 tons. However, full capacity of food cooperatives is underutilized, as argued. Some suggestions are made to fuel and strengthen the latent impact of such actors: higher engagement of women and youth, solid reputation as authentic producers, assuring quality of production and establishing national specifications, establishment of a system based on added value, reliance on local farmers, cooperatives reorganization in concrete networks to scale up production, important dispatch to the urban capital, increasing access to markets and tackling the evident financial support by partners. (JALKH; DEDEIRE; REQUIER DESJARDINS, 2020, p. 15).

[to Combat Desertification](#) (UNCCD), Atayeb Al Rif has provided over 200 training sessions to more than 40 cooperatives targeting over 2,000 women in locations across the Lebanese territory. The initiatives concentrated on agricultural training, food production and quality controls standards, and marketing. The purpose of Atayeb Al Rif is to enable women to own and run local farm cooperatives through awareness raising and capacity-building methods such as aid in farm rehabilitation, educational training sessions, and marketing development for their artisanal products.

Recent projects include a comprehensive training on food safety and quality control, good manufacturing and hygiene practices, and soft business skills provided to workers at [Ahlouna Association](#) in Saida, South Lebanon; the support of olive agricultural workers in Saida helping them with tools and cost reduction; and the support to cherry producers and farmers with training on fertilization techniques, improving the harvest quality, reducing the cost of labour and training and securing specialized work force in the Bekaa, Baalbeck-Hermel region. All projects are under the [United States Agency for International Development](#) (USAID)-funded Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods (PSL) activity and implemented by the René Moawad Foundation in collaboration with Rural Delights Cooperative.



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Sultan Yacoub, a village in the Bekaa Valey, is home to the largest gathering of Brazilians in Lebanon. Initiatives on cooperative support and improving work opportunities in this Portuguese-speaking community have been successful in Brazilian food products and culinary. [3 Chef High Quality Brazilian and Lebanese Food](#) is an example, a cooperative resulting from the partnership between 3 Brazilian women selling 'pastel' (deep-fried pastries), 'coxinhas' (chicken dough), 'pão de queijo' (cheese bread), 'brigadeiro' (chocolate sweet) and sun-dried tomatoes, as well as other Brazilian and Lebanese food to coffee shops, restaurants, supermarkets, parties, and fairs. They are the subject of training promoted by NGO's, which also consume the products.

In Sultan Yaboub and in Majdel Anjar, another village of Beqaa Governorate, the [Shabake project](#) helped rehabilitating the Sultan Yaboub Cooperative and Majdel Anjar Community Kitchen, helping to bring their business back to life and improving their production with clean, fully equipped and operational food-production infrastructure. The Shabake project – develop, support, empower - aims at supporting vulnerable communities and bettering lives, by strengthening the resilience of the Lebanese civil society in order to improve crisis prevention and management. It is an initiative promoted by Fair Trade Lebanon, supported by [Danida \(Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark\)](#) and [MINKA/AFD](#) (The Peace and Resilience Fund, Agence Française de Développement), and implemented by [Expertise France](#). The project operates in Beirut, Mount Lebanon, and Bekaa, with a focus on Zahle, Western Bekaa, Ferzol, Sultan Yacoub, Kfarzabab and Majdal Aanjar Municipalities.

As part of its employment pillar, [ILO PROSPECTS](#) in Lebanon is also taking action to increase productivity and improve working conditions in [Lebanon's horticulture sector](#) with a view to safeguarding jobs of both Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees in Lebanon's crisis-hit agricultural sector. As part of a larger intervention strategy, on-farm pilot trials with 12 selected farmers in Akkar and the Bekaa were launched to test the impact of modern multi-span greenhouses on productivity, working conditions and incomes. The pilot productivity trials in Akkar and the Bekaa have surpassed expectations and confirmed the immense benefits that multi-span greenhouses can hold for both farmers and workers through increased yields, better protection against pests, reduced production costs, and improved working conditions (PROSPECTS, ILO, 2022). Results have shown productivity benefits, improved quality of crops and optimization of land use for production. Prior research of the possible benefits has estimated the potential productivity increases that could be achieved through such modern greenhouses at 30-40%. Based on data collected on the 12 farms, revenues in the modern greenhouses in Akkar increased by an average of 60.5%, and an average of 36.3% in the Bekaa. As part of its upscaling strategy, ILO PROSPECTS in Lebanon is currently launching campaigns to better inform farmers about the benefits of multi-span greenhouses with information material as well as video testimonies of farmers, while also setting up financial support measures for farmers interested in purchasing multi-span greenhouses (PROSPECTS, ILO, 2022).



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Figure 92. Horticulture workers, ILO PROSPECTS

Lebanon has also already engaged in South-South cooperation on cooperatives with Palestine, from a gender perspective. In 2010 Lebanon hosted the [Sub-regional Knowledge-Sharing Workshop on Cooperatives in Arab States](#), an example of a South-South and triangular cooperation good practice in the realm of ILO's fourth strategic objective: social dialogue. The initiative was designed as an information-sharing participatory platform where participants and cooperative representation from Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Yemen, and the occupied Palestinian territory could share their national experience on

cooperatives from different approaches. The workshop reflected on the Arab cooperative movement in the context of the global experience and emphasized on the potential role of cooperatives to advance the [Decent Work Agenda in Arab States](#) (AMORIM et. al., 2013, p. 66-67). The initiative examined problems and prospects in national contexts, discussed regulatory policies and legislative framework and the promotion of women's cooperatives in conflict and rural settings. The workshop strengthened collaboration and created awareness between cooperatives and social partners in the context of the social and solidarity economy, allowing participants to study the issue of cooperatives with an integrated approach, taking into account the role of governments, workers, employers and civil society in cooperative development with a gender perspective. The participatory platform was sustainable given it was successful to share knowledge and exchange cooperative experience in the sub-region. Thematic groups were formed, and a follow-up plan was produced. In addition, after the workshop, a community of practice was agreed to be established and the ILO finalized a booklet on cooperatives in Arab States and adapted key [ILO resource material](#) on cooperatives and cooperative development to the Arab context (AMORIM et. al., 2013, p. 66-67).

In 2011 ILO published the [Managing your Agricultural Cooperative \(My.COOP\)](#) initiative, consisting of a training package and programme on the management of agricultural cooperatives. As My.COOP covers managerial challenges that many agricultural cooperatives face, the training is designed for existing and potential managers of agricultural cooperatives, for members involved in managerial tasks, as well as for organizations and individuals that train agricultural cooperatives. According to AMORIM et. al., (2015, p. 31-32), modules and topics can be used independently from each other and in any given order to address specific needs. They are illustrated by practical cases from various parts of the world which contain explanatory boxes on definitions and concepts. The format also enables self-learning and offers self-assignment opportunities. Lebanese and Brazilian cooperatives can be potentially targeted via face-to-face as well as distance learning (My.COOP resource platform) (see (AMORIM et. al., 2015).

V) TOURISM SECTOR & WORLD OF WORK BRAZIL-LEBANON

After the COVID-19 world pandemic, the summer of 2022 was the first to bring a strong flow of tourists to Lebanon. The tourism sector has eagerly waited for such a resurgence, hoping for the sector to contribute to the economic recovery of the country. According to the Lebanese Minister of Tourism and Byblos Bank, the first half of 2022 registered a 95,7% increase in the number of tourists visiting Lebanon. According to the figures, a total of 570,738 travellers visited Lebanon between January and June 2022, up from 291,570 in the same period of 2021 and 199,722 in 2020. Most tourists came from Europe, with a total of 38%, followed by Arab countries (28%), the Americas (21.2%), Asia (4.5%), Africa (4.2%) and Oceania (4.1%). Country wise, the highest rate of tourists was among Iraqis, (15.6%), North Americans (11.6%), French (8.7%) and Germans (6.9%). Brazilians responded to a limited 1.4%.

Prior to COVID-19, the tourism sector, data from the local Ministry of Tourism shows that the number of tourists in 2019 fell by 1.4% compared to 2018. Around 1.93 million foreigners visited the country (compared to 1.96 million in 2018), mainly from Europe (37.2%), Arab countries (29.7%), the Americas (18.8%), Asia (6.9%), Oceania (4.0%) and Africa (3.3%). The participation of Brazilians was 1.4% (27,109 visitors), a variation of +11.8% compared to 2018 (CUNHA; WARDINI, 2020, p. 2). The 2 million tourists were only achieved in 2010.

Total contribution of the tourism sector was estimated at USD 10.4 billion or 19.1% of GDP in 2018, the second highest ratio in the Middle East. Capital investments in the field were valued at USD 1.3 billion in 2018 (10.5% of total investments) and are expected to grow at a CAGR of 2.7% over the next ten years to USD 1.7 billion by 2028. Tourism is considered one of the largest employers in the country and generated 144,300 direct jobs (or 6.7% of total employment) in 2018, out of 394,300 total jobs in the sector (or 18.4% of total employment). Employment derived from the tourism sector is expected to grow at a CAGR of 2.3% to reach 494,600 jobs in 2028. ([TOURISM SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2019 FACTBOOK](#), p. 8).

In terms of competitive advantages, leisure tourism continues to take precedence over all other types of tourism, although business and health tourism are steadily on the rise. Lebanon has a wide range of cultural tourism choices, including [5 UNESCO World Heritage sites](#) and is currently listed at the Vatican's worldwide pilgrimage destinations. During the summer season, IDAL data indicates Lebanon hosts over 15 international music and entertainment festivals - such as the Baalbeck and Byblos International Festivals - featuring local and world-acclaimed artists. Lebanon has access to 225 kms of Mediterranean coastline, its beaches and favourable summer weather make it a perfect destination for 'sun and beach' gateways. Lebanon hosts six ski resorts for skiers and snowboarders of all skill levels, as well as other winter sports options such as backcountry, cross-country and snowshoe trails. Visitors can also enjoy breathtaking hiking trails throughout the country all year round (TOURISM SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2019 FACTBOOK)²¹.

²¹ As for market opportunities, Lebanon has over 190 hotels with a capacity of around 12,300 rooms. Most hotels are concentrated in Beirut and fall within the 4 to 5-star category, with many other varieties of accommodations and boutique hotels. Lebanon is also renowned for its world-class health services and has always been considered the Middle East's top destination for medical tourism. New investment opportunities exist in wellness and alternative medicine, elderly care centres, rehabilitation and sports and health centres (TOURISM SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2019 FACTBOOK). In terms of business and convention centres, Lebanon has only a handful of large exhibition centres, the majority of which are located within existing hotels. According to IDAL, this offers ample opportunities for landmark flagship developments in Beirut and beyond the capital. Opportunities exist in large-scale as well as small and medium-sized centres. Regarding food and beverage, Beirut was ranked best international food destination in 2016 by Travel and Leisure magazine, placing Lebanon as a food and beverage hub. Opportunities exist in casual diners, neighbourhood bars and high-end restaurants. (TOURISM SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2019 FACTBOOK).

The Brazilian Agency for the International Promotion of Tourism (Embratur) and the Arab-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce are currently negotiating a partnership to boost halal tourism in Brazil. The entities share a Memorandum of Understanding for the development of strategies for “Halal tourism” in Brazil. Halal tourism is focused on structuring the industry in a way that accommodates the habits of the Muslim population in different parts of the chain, including adapting accommodations and hospitality, staff training and food supply. In 2021, the halal tourism market generated US\$102 billion, and businesses in the segment are estimated to generate US\$ 189 billion by 2025. Muslim clients demand spacious family rooms, bathrooms adapted for ablution rituals and guaranteeing the privacy of tourists, specific menus during Ramadan, respecting the fast before the sun goes down; the presence of a Quran, prayer rugs and arrows pointing to Mecca in each room; training staff in the particularities of Islamic culture. To ensure halal practices like these, the Federation of Muslim Associations of Brazil (Fambras) has created a certification protocol for hotels and helps them apply good practices inspired by renowned hotel chains in Muslim countries.



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Foz do Iguaçu (PR) has the second largest Arab community in Brazil, with almost 10% of the population being of Arab descent. The city is on the halal tourism route due to the Falls (Cataratas do Iguaçu) and the Islamic community of the triple border. According to the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce, since 2021, hotels, restaurants and other establishments in the service sector linked to local tourism have received training in halal services, and the Chamber has focused its investments on the tourist attractions most visited by Muslims, Foz do Iguaçu. However, São Paulo is also a halal destination given it receives a significant number of Muslim business travelers every year. According to the Arab-Brazilian Chamber, in view of the wide purchasing power of Muslim tourists and the potential for investment in local services, there is an effort to develop halal tourism in Brazil (NAKAMURA, CNN 2023).

In parallel, the Consulate General of Lebanon in Rio de Janeiro is drawing up pre-projects for tourism cooperation between Rio de Janeiro and Lebanon. In collaboration with [RioTur](#) and the Lebanese Ministry of Tourism, the cooperation project involves the exchange of professionals, workshops and missions. The first initiative was the Beija-Flor parade for Carnival 2020, having Lebanon as its main theme. A second project is being designed to exchange cooperation considering touristic spaces in Rio de Janeiro. These initiatives fall under the framework of the 2019 Brotherhood Agreement between Rio de Janeiro and Beirut, following the Ordinary Municipal Law No. 5134 from December 22, 2009.

Believing in the potential of tourism to unlock additional benefits and improving trade, the Brazil Lebanon Chamber of Commerce has already engaged in partnerships with the [Lebanon Mountain Trail Association](#) (LMTA). Established in 2007, the LMTA aims to become a world-class destination for outdoor and responsible tourism, promoting the Lebanese Mountain Trail as a destination for rural tourism and well-being. The initiative aims at establishing side trails on the Lebanon Mountain Trail; protecting the natural, cultural and architectural heritage and landmarks near the trail; and enhancing economic opportunities by promoting responsible tourism. The Trail Association employs a local labour force, improves local services and installations in the deep interior of the country and promotes environmental awareness. Additionally, it also offers trails through the path taken by the Lebanese ancestors who migrated to Brazil, creating a unique diaspora experience. [ILO Has supported LMTA](#) to rehabilitate some of the tracks, heritage sites and improve signal by engaging in the process with local communities.



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Figure 103. Trail improvements in Lebanon - Lebanon Mountain Trail Association (LMTA)

Investment in eco-tourism and blue tourism can be a key driver to investment in sustainable and responsible tourism, impacting not only on rural development, empowering local women, small local business owners, as well as supporting the local economy and collaborating with the youth in finding local jobs. Both Lebanon and Brazil have the potential of offering a series of authentic experiences and ecotourism services. Inspired by an intercultural diaspora approach, tourism and agri-food can mingle into cross-sectoral initiatives quite easily, promoting local experiences, services, cultural heritage, and products but also offering inclusive work opportunities and growth.

According to the [United Nations World Tourism Organization](#) (UNWTO), sustainable tourism is firmly positioned in the 2030 Agenda. Tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to all of the 17 SDGs. However, the sector has been the particular target of goals towards the promotion of decent work, inclusive and sustainable economic growth; responsible and sustainable consumption and production (SCP); and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources (life below water), corresponding to Goals 8, 12 and 14.

Data provided by the UNWTO (2014) informs that international tourism (including travel and passenger transport) accounts for 29% of world service exports, 6% of the total exports of goods and services and ranking fifth as a global exports category (see GUIMARÃES; SILVA, 2016). According to the organization, international tourism receipts could reach USD 1.4 trillion in 2023, about 93% of the USD 1.5 trillion earned by destinations in 2019, showing that international tourism has almost completely recovered from the unprecedented crisis of COVID-19. The Middle East continues to lead the travel and receipt recovery by regions in relative terms, with arrivals 20% above pre-pandemic levels in the nine months through September 2023. The Middle East remains the only world region to surpass 2019 levels this period. Still according to UNWTO, visa facilitation measures, the development of new destinations, investments in new tourism-related projects and the hosting of large events, help underpin this remarkable performance. As for the Americas, it reached 88% of 2019 numbers during the same period, however, the region mostly benefited from strong US demand to Caribbean destinations (UNWTO, 2023).

Latin Americans, particularly Brazilians, are increasingly visiting Lebanon, despite initiatives like the Beirut Marathon boosting their visits. However, the promotion and publicity are needed to expand this exchange, highlighting the opportunities in Lebanon's food and beverage hubs.

Notwithstanding tourism is gradually becoming an economic motor of increasing relevance in generating growth, employment and rising incomes, additional challenges include the gender pay gap in the tourism industry of Brazil, for example. According to Carla Guimarães and Joaquim Silva (2016), gender pay discrimination exists in tourism in Brazil, demonstrating that women are less valued than men even when sharing the same job characteristics. Also, Lebanon Enterprise Development experts also recognize the lack of eco-tourism expertise as a limitation, especially in organizing thematic events and in handling and creating new activities in complete harmony with the domain atmosphere. As far as the cultural and heritage tourism is concerned, improvement, restoration, and conservation of heritage infrastructure in the country are central to promoting the sector's growth.

In order to address such concerns, eco-tourism consultants and training can be offered in order to improve tourism services and activities. Additionally, they can help design and develop promotional plans according to the setting's needs. Here lies an opportunity for offering expertise and leveraging MSMEs, tackling both the agrifood and the tourist sector promoting sustainable rural development, green jobs and decent work conditions.

Such initiatives can be inspired, for example, by [Cezar Projects of Rural Development in Lebanon's](#) engagement with the local community. With the support of Berytech, the initiative builds effective partnerships with schools, universities, and NGOs through awareness workshops and activities to ensure the involvement of the youth and locals in rural development. The project is oriented towards promoting sustainable and responsible tourism in the Chouf area through providing ecotourism services. It consists of guesthouses and farmhouses with an organic farm, providing authentic experience of culture and beauty exploration through green packages.

Lebanese MSMEs are being supported through initiatives focusing on eco-tourism facilities across all territories. Expanding specialized staff and boosting eco-tourist attractions like permaculture and pedagogical farms like The Domaine De Taanayel are believed to attract more tourists, inject foreign currencies into the economy, and promote local agri-food products and tourism. These lessons can be compared to the Brazilian scenario. Community development is at the heart of the Lebanon Mountain Trail Association (LMTA). The initiative, in collaboration with foreign entities and local governments, aims to promote conservation and economic development in villages and towns by developing action plans for trail sustainability, maintenance, and promotion as a touristic product. It includes workshops on responsible tourism, training sessions with local guides and guesthouses, and training sessions on guiding techniques

in nature, geology, fauna, flora, and meteorology, as well as improving communication techniques. LMTA encourages local residents' labour force and promotes activity with the youth and activists in the villages, building capacity alongside local authorities and NGOs to ensure long trail sustainability.

Collaborative exchanges and South-South Cooperation can also assist in the development of tailor fit programmes to tourist operators and venues which combine cultural, educational, religious, agritourism, nature and gastronomy experiences. Rural expertise can be developed in segments such as concept development, product strategy, itinerary design, pricing and promotion, besides training in responsible tourism and identification of new destinations and experiences.

[The Women and Youth: Active Actors in rural tourism towards sustainable development](#) (WaY to SD) aims at supporting [W.A.D.A. Women's Association](#) of Deir el Ahmar initiative to improve rural tourism in Deir El Ahmar. The project aims to enhance socio-economic development for women and youth in Deir El Ahmar and five rural Lebanese territories, empowering them to create jobs and expand economic opportunities in the rural tourism sector, and fostering experience exchange to improve rural tourism and establish a national network. Tourism for All Project in Lebanon: a New Approach Towards an Inclusive Socio-Economic Development for Person with Disabilities was launched is part of the [AFKAR 3 Programme](#), funded by the European Union and managed by the [Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform](#). The programme was launched by the [Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union-LPHU](#) and [The European Network for Accessible Tourism-ENAT](#). Targeting marginalized populations, the project aims to promote disability inclusion in Lebanon by leveraging the tourism sector as a key socio-economic development asset. It seeks to enhance national partnerships, create policies and regulations for inclusive tourism, and provide resources for pilot projects in relevant regions based on inclusion and accessibility. Finally, it aims at providing the necessary mechanisms for maintaining an inclusive touristic environment through the empowerment of disabled women and men, including youth, as active partners in the process of the socio-economic development in the country²².

For diaspora involvement, [Guimarães Rosa Institute](#) offers a unique space in the entire Arab region for Brazilian cultural promotion and the teaching of Portuguese as a heritage language. Apart from hosting presentations and cultural exhibitions, presenting Brazil's tourist and cultural riches, the Institute offers the opportunity for Lebanese to enjoy typical Brazilian regional cuisine. As such, it integrates tourism, culture and agri-food by products, perhaps the first and immediate diaspora bond with home.

Lebanon's tourist sector is well-structured, with Portuguese and Spanish-speaking guides and tourism operators. However, attention should be given to Portuguese and Spanish-speaking agents. The industry is affordable and offers a variety of services, including drivers, guides, roomkeepers, restaurants, and business and beauty centres. Brazil, on the other hand, has the potential to significantly invest in tourism,

²² In order to further engage the diaspora, Lebanon Enterprise Development also considered offering a "Strategies for Attracting the High-Spending Brazilian Market" seminar and dialogue sessions on the features and rich opportunities for growth vis a vis the Latin American market, focusing on Brazil expatriates as well as support sales missions and engagement with local partners such as tour operators, hotels, and airlines. In that sense, it is particularly important to encourage the dissemination of ideas and public policies, exchange of knowledge and experiences between market agents. Other actions include dialogue sessions and events promoting Brazilian and Lebanese destinations and the support of Sales Missions for igniting engagement between partners.

with Lebanon as an example of a country with multilingual tourist workers and a sustainable, inclusive tourism industry that could be beneficial for Brazil²³.

As for new types of tourism, Lebanon must explore not only leisure tourism, but also business, health and medical tourism. There is registered potential for investment in wellness and alternative medicine, elderly care centres, rehabilitation complexes and sports and health centres. Both countries also have a major [Blue Economy](#) potential, presenting an opportunity to jointly enhance sustainable coastal and maritime tourism development, creation of business and job opportunities in the field of ecosystem-oriented services, coastal and maritime tourism, coastal management and adaptation to climate change.

For promoting MSMEs, rural development, targeting vulnerable populations and encouraging sustainable and responsible tourism, a potential SSTC between Brazil and Lebanon must engage in partnerships with IDAL, Embratur, Fambras, Chambers of Commerce, SENAI, SEBRAE, NVTC in Lebanon, including under the Technical and Vocational Education and Training National Strategic Framework (TVET NSF), and the Brazilian CNC. A potential partnership with Mulheres do Brasil for female entrepreneurship in tourist as well as agricultural sectors may also be explored. Finally, the Ministry of Tourism aims at developing tourism as a sustainable activity, generating jobs and promoting social inclusion, and partnerships with [Brazilian Association of Ecotourism and Adventure Tourism Companies](#) (ABETA) and the Brazilian Association of Rural Tourism (ABTR) must be explored.

Albeit underexploited, the tourist sector in both Brazil and Lebanon offers a significant potential for growth, particularly once cultural, gastronomic, agritourism and educational experiences are designed. This particular approach to responsible and sustainable tourism offers many opportunities generating growth, employment and rising incomes, even though much capacitation and expertise may be yet developed. Despite the sector having enduring challenges in terms of inclusion of disabled populations and still struggles with gender pay gap, it can be argued that the tourist sectoral performance is highly relevant for rural population and the youth as target groups; offers opportunity for inclusive growth via sustainable and responsible eco and blue tourism; and feasibility to drive change via the support small and medium enterprises, empowering local women, improving its accessibility and inclusivity for people with disabilities and promoting the development of rural settings, boosting local jobs and economies.

²³ Additionally, Lebanon has extensive knowledge and capacity in Halal tourism, which offers Muslim-friendly hospitality, food, and services. Brazil's agrobusiness is well-versed in certification protocols and regulations, and Foz do Iguaçu and São Paulo are examples of Muslim traveller accommodations. However, much exchange of knowledge and experience is needed, particularly with Gulf tourists. Promoting exchanges of Lebanese travellers and training and expertise can help address this segment's needs. By promoting principles of inclusion and tolerance and by respecting cultural and religious diversity, halal tourism also promotes South-South dialogues between Brazil and Arab and Muslim countries. Halal tourism is a growing market, and it presents new opportunities for development and job creation.

VI) COOPERATION IN CONSTRUCTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

As far as the real estate and construction sector is concerned, the McKinsey & Company Lebanon Economic Vision report from 2018 informs that the segment made up 21% of Lebanon's GDP in 2016 and registered a negligible annual growth rate of 0.5% between 2011 and 2016 compared to an annual growth rate of 13% between 2006 and 2011. This sector generates 8% of government revenues with a total of USD 782 million in 2015. The sector is one of Lebanon's largest employers, with 244,000 permanent employees (12% as of 2016). (MCKINSEY, LEBANON ECONOMIC VISION, 2018, p. 460, 461). Construction loans also grew by approximately 21% p.a. from 2008 to 2010, during the real estate boom. According to the report, cumbersome real estate registration process, as well as excessive taxation has further deterred foreign investors post the real estate boom.

The sector can be divided into 3 segments: building, heavy, and industrial. High level of activity in construction is reflected by the booming real-estate industry. From 2004 until 2011, surface area in thousands of m² went from 9,014 to 17,625. The report informs construction is responsible for 5.6% of total employment (totalling 91,000 workers, as of a 2004 household survey) – a number highly underestimated due to irregularity and informality of the construction workforce. Increased awareness of the impacts caused by construction and demolition waste disposal, quarrying activities, excavation and loss of topsoil, green cover, and natural habitats, and increase use of construction material is encouraging stakeholders to consider green initiatives and green jobs. Going green will require new skills, will lead to the creation of new jobs as well as new platforms for training.

According to the report, three ongoing projects in Beirut at the time resulted in 1,125 to 2,250 new jobs over 2011-2014. In total, \$1 million of investment in green premiums creates 45 jobs per year. Additionally, solar heating market (manufacturing and supplying) can create 3,300 jobs to cover the demand projected for 2020. The report concludes by recommending actions: further investigation on the real extra cost of green construction in Lebanon; on a more accurate estimation on green jobs; recommending the introduction of green construction curricula; improving national technical vocational training; boosting skills and education; setting up a platform for coordination between green engineering firms, trade unions, employers' organizations, contractors, suppliers, and operators; setting and enforcing policies that encourage green construction; regulate the current informality in the employment situation in construction (decent work conditions, offering incentives for employers to register, encourage independent unions, and engage in a tripartite coordination); as well as efforts to improve government regulation on green standards and verification in the country (UNDP, INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, 2011). Additionally, housing affordability indicators reveal that Lebanon has the highest house price to income ratio among benchmark countries²⁴.

Several examples are emerging of breakthroughs in delivering housing impact, such as in Brazil via [Minha Casa Minha Vida](#). The MCKINSEY report exposes benefits from buyers, construction companies and material supplier companies (MCKINSEY, LEBANON ECONOMIC VISION, 2018, p. 474). Industrial

²⁴ Real estate sales transactions have been decreasing since 2010: 32,000 transactions in 2016 compared to 44,000 transactions in 2010. The drop in activity in this sector resulted in a stock of vacant apartments valued at around USD 9 billion mainly in luxury developments. The average value of real estate sales transactions more than doubled in the past decade going from around USD 48,000 in 2007 to USD 103,000 in 2017. On another level, the absence of strict enforcement of urban planning regulations has been detrimental to land availability and access especially in areas of high urban concentration, such as Beirut. This has aggravated the upward pressure on real estate prices. Key priorities for the government should be, according to the McKinsey report, public housing, urban planning, legislation and access to financing.

construction technologies have been successfully leveraged for housing across the world. For example, [AMBAR](#) in Brazil develops energy-efficient affordable prefabricated housing at high-scale in Brazil. Brazil provided financial incentives for developers to build low-income housing resulting 2.6m units delivered by 2016 (MCKINSEY, LEBANON ECONOMIC VISION, 2018, p. 135, 1229).

Under the Protocol of Intentions signed between the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) and Caixa Econômica Federal on July 2008, South-South cooperation can be offered to Lebanon in areas such as: development of housing policy for the low-income population; the training of and transfer to local professionals in non-conventional construction techniques, adapted to the local reality, and the reuse of solid construction waste; the support of the development of a methodology for implementing a system for monitoring civil construction costs and indexes; and develop pilot projects in the area of solid waste management and basic sanitation.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ABC/CAIXA Protocol of Intent demonstrates the importance of CAIXA's successful experiences in Brazil, especially in the area of social inclusion. Such exchange and capacity building falls within the scope of technical cooperation provided by Brazil to Southern developing countries and ratifies the fundamental role played by CAIXA executing cooperation projects.

Rio de Janeiro and Beirut have celebrated in April 2019 a Brotherhood Agreement between both cities, to promote cooperation and exchanges between both cities in areas such as urban planning, transportation, the environment, sustainability, technology and innovation, historical heritage, economics, commerce, sports, architecture, public spaces and tourism, education, student exchanges and specialists. The cooperation would take place in the form of meetings, workshops, conferences, lectures, events and activities.

Since 2019 a project presents the Lebanese community, their descendants, friends and the public of Rio de Janeiro with the opportunity to learn more about the commonalities and the potential for exchanging experiences between Lebanese and Brazilian institutions. For example, a workshop on urbanism was offered in May 2019, on Cultural Heritage Conservation and presentation of the Favela-Bairro Programme, integrating the tourist and infrastructure segments.

Another example is the Bus Map Project in Beirut, supported by [Rio Beirut](#), working to map bus and van routes through collective action. The project invests in facilitating public transportation, rethinks traditional approaches to transit advocacy and by widening the route comprehension by non-users, promotes the potential increase of public transport system use and reduces traffic and pollution. This collective on-line portal can be translated into a higher number of passengers and a virtuous cycle of more investment, catalysing improvements and attracting more public transport users²⁵.

²⁵ Another initiative is [Diverse Levant](#), an online mapping platform of the urban evolution of Beirut, in all its social, cultural and religious diversity. In partnership with several universities the Levant Carta/Beirut (Diverse Levant) presents primary sources, such as views of the city, historical maps, archaeological surveys, and architectural projects located in time and in space. Diverse Levant is in communication with iRio, a Node app facilitating Data management and conversion of the shapefiles used by the Rice team to collect data and PostGIS where the data is eventually stored. Additionally, rendering and block caching with options to select year and layer visibility; and an API to request metadata and vector data from the entire database. Technical and technological cooperation can be improved under the Brotherhood Agreement between Beirut and Rio de Janeiro.

Still in the urbanization sub-sector, a few projects have supported sustainable waste management practices and facilitate new governance models. In Lebanon, [Med4Waste](#) helps design local models for integrated and efficient urban waste management policies. It encompasses activities oriented at building skills, planning and decision-making capabilities for institutions from the public and private sector, based on the most successful practices previously implemented in the Mediterranean region.

In Lebanon, ILO has developed projects creating decent work opportunities through infrastructure development of the country. [Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme in Lebanon](#) (EIIP) is an example of that. Together with Lebanon's Ministries of Labour and Social Affairs as development partners, from 2017 until 2022 project has targeted Lebanese host community members and Syrian refugees in the most vulnerable areas of Lebanon who benefited from temporary employment opportunities through construction activities.

The project addressed vulnerable municipalities of Bekaa and Baalbeck, North Lebanon including Akkar and Mount Lebanon (EIIP, 2017-2022). The project falls under the livelihoods segment and [Government-led Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020](#) is aligned with the United Nations Strategic Framework for Lebanon 2017-2020 (EIIP, 2017-2022).



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Figure 114. Workers on the Beirut Port Explosion, 2023 (to the left); and workers on a construction site – EIIP, The Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme in Lebanon

[ENABLE \(Empowering Networks and Activation for Building Long-term Employment\)](#) an ILO programme funded by the European Union (EU), focuses on providing livelihoods opportunities to enhance the economic capacity of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities. From 2023 to 2026, the programme aims to provide integrated employment services and short-term employment opportunities in infrastructure construction/rehabilitation projects, while increasing linkages between social protection and employment activation, economic inclusion and contributing to infrastructure stability and development in Lebanon. The programme is implemented in close collaboration with Lebanese ministries, local authorities, the Employment Intensive Infrastructure programme (EIIP), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international agencies specializing in employment activation and social protection (ENABLE, 2023-2026).

ENABLE activities aim to provide alternative livelihoods to Lebanese vulnerable groups and Syrian refugees, focusing on women, through employment-related services, skills training, short-term local employment in local Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes (EIIP), and entrepreneurship and enterprise development. ILO collaborates with various stakeholders, including municipalities, UN agencies, trade unions, NGOs, and business organizations to implement the programme, in alignment with EU and UN cooperation frameworks (ENABLE, 2023-2026). The programme target is to employ unskilled or low-skilled labour to deliver quality infrastructure and local decent work creation, while also building the capacity of

public sector and private contractors to promote employment in the construction sector. ENABLE will also ensure the durability and sustainability of the constructed infrastructure.



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Figure 125. ILO ENABLE Official Launching event, Beirut, October 2023

Arab partners have been investing heavily in construction and infrastructure in Lebanon since the 2006 war between Israel and Lebanon. The Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development provided a \$300 million grant to rebuild 24 villages and construct schools, hospitals, and emergency centres. The Arab Coordination Group agencies collaborated on co-financing, mobilizing financing for large infrastructure projects like dams and water transfer. In 2008, the Coordination Group engaged in 184 South-South Cooperation projects worth \$5.5 billion, with cumulative contributions of \$90.5 billion since their founding. Effective aid coordination has successfully mobilized financing for these projects. By concentrating on infrastructure, Arab financial institutions have particularly fostered regional economic integration, enlarging domestic markets and making more efficient use of available resources through such projects (UNOSSC, UNDP, IDB, 2014, p. 26-27).

The ILO has also worked towards the social and economic recovery of South Lebanon via [Skills Development, Employment Services and Local Economic Recovery for the Construction Sector in South Lebanon](#) from 2008 to 2010. Reconstruction efforts were made offering employment-oriented accelerated modular skills training programmes for priority jobs in the construction sector. Additionally, the ILO also offered institutional capacity building measures and interventions to support small business development.

Lebanon is promoting sustainable construction, with green cement playing a significant role. Innovative startups are developing new technologies to minimize environmental destruction and provide a solution for waste disposal. [Berytech](#) supports Lebanese startups in developing green concrete from waste-based raw materials. The initiative Build for Beirut, through its Fab Lab, is creating a library of global open-source designs for furniture to aid Beirut's reconstruction after the Port blast²⁶.

In both Lebanon and Brazil many challenges are posed by a rapidly urbanizing world, demanding more energy and raw materials to feed an expanding population, infrastructure expansion, disposal of ever-

²⁶ These products can be easily and affordably produced using digital fabrication techniques on the ground in Beirut. Brazil's SEBRAE Inovação initiative supports green ventures and sustainable startups, offering solutions for solid waste management, waste reuse, recycling, and renewable energy sources. Startups like Methanum Engenharia Ambiental convert sanitation waste and biogas into electricity, while Agrosmart monitors crop cultivation to reduce electricity, fuel, and water consumption. Faex Soluções Ambientais advises on hazardous industrial waste collection and logistics for small companies. VG Resíduos creates software for business waste management. Kemia focuses on treating sewage, leachate, and waste generated in business activities, offering end-to-end solutions for proper reuse of materials. Engineer Gabriela Medero designed K-Briq, a sustainable brick that generates less than a tenth of carbon emissions and 90% of its composition is made from construction waste. The initiative is promoted with Kenoteq startup.

increasing volumes of waste, and development of adequate sewage systems. In an ever-changing urban environment, sustainable transportation, public spaces and innovative circular solutions are targets of concern. Additionally, Lebanon offers many opportunities for post-war reconstruction, which presents the infrastructure and construction sector as a growth and job-generating domain, particularly targeting vulnerable populations and the displaced.

Importantly, however, construction is a sector highly prone to workforce irregularity and informality. Even many workers who are eligible for the National Social Security Fund (NSSF) are not registered in the system by their employers. According to a country report, approximately half of the Lebanese respondents in a 2017 Oxfam's research with workers in the construction, food services and agro-industry sectors in the Bekaa Valley reported not being registered with NSSF. Workers were mostly (87%) unaware of the legal appeal mechanisms available, with only 17% of them having written contracts. Syrian refugees are restricted to agriculture, construction, and sanitation sectors, traditionally working in these fields. Palestinian refugees work largely in construction (24%) and commerce (26%). (LEADERS FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS, 2019, p. 1-2, 18).

Promoting decent and equitable conditions for work is a central concern for the construction sector, considering a significant number of migrant workers and refugees are concentrated in that domain. Despite numerous foreign-partnered initiatives targeting refugee workers in Lebanon, promoting new projects is challenging due to the convergence of interests. Local associations focus on women and youth, but migrant and refugee workers are the main vulnerable group in the construction and infrastructural sector, requiring further efforts to improve labour conditions. As far as the post-war reconstruction effort is concerned, even though many opportunities for economic growth and generation of jobs are presented, the endeavour is accompanied by many challenges. Gentrification, war displacement, and forced migration are often intertwined phenomena in Lebanon (KHECHEN, 2018), and for internal migrants housing informality has been the rule – albeit the arbitrariness of the debate (FAWAZ, 2016). Additionally, real estate development in many areas in Beirut is changing the local skyline, lifestyle and historic sites. According to experts, the lack of basic building regulations and city planning have made the city vulnerable to high costs of living, unusually rapid and uncontrolled transformations of neighbourhoods (KRIJNEN; DE BEUKELAER, 2015). Finally, post real estate boom, cumbersome real estate registration process and excessive taxation has further deterred foreign investors in the segment (MCKINSEY, LEBANON ECONOMIC VISION, 2018).

When engaging in reconstruction and restoration, increased awareness of the impacts caused by construction and demolition is encouraging stakeholders to consider green initiatives and green jobs. Instating laws and regulations for green and sustainable practices, including proper disposal and constraining irregular practices is one of the additional bottlenecks to be addressed by the construction and infrastructure sector. In both countries, not only approving legislation but also enforcing the adoption of standard protocols are important challenges to be tackled. Also, in both scenarios going green will help create new jobs, which will require new skills and training to be offered by qualified training centres and well as networking spaces for exchanging ideas and bringing together developers, consumers and companies. In that spirit, new training platforms opens a venue for cooperation and technical exchange in the sector.

In the two countries many initiatives support sustainable green construction initiatives already, in which green cement and sustainable bricks play an important role. Lebanon and Brazil are leading green ventures and sustainable startups in developing technologies such as recycling, waste management, software solutions, and electricity reuse. Both countries face challenges in implementing green practices in the construction and infrastructure sector, but their young startups demonstrate motivation and youthfulness, suggesting potential for South-South cooperation. The Association of Lebanese Industrialists is currently working in close association with Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Lebanon together with

Lebanese Ministries in curriculum development and skills training. The same can be said concerning Brazilian counterparts, such as National Confederation of Industry, the Brazilian Ministry of Labour and Employment and Vocational Centres such as National Industrial Apprenticeship and Training Service. Still, going green will demand many transitioned oriented actions, such as the introduction of green construction curricula; improvement of the national technical vocational training; boosting skills and education and setting up a platform for coordination between green engineering firms, trade unions, employers' organizations, contractors, suppliers, and operators (UNDP, INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, 2011).

Additionally, the green transition in the sector will demand the setting and enforcing of policies that encourage green construction. Not only it will demand specific policies to regulate the current informality of construction workers, promoting decent work conditions, offering incentives for employers to register, encourage independent unions, and engage in a tripartite coordination; as it will demand additional efforts to improve government regulation on green standards and in country verification (UNDP, INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, 2011).

An example of good practice in the construction sector targeting vulnerable populations, particularly refugees, is ILO initiative such as [Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme in Lebanon](#) (EIIP). The project is designed to create short- to mid-term decent work opportunities through sustainable infrastructure development of the country and environmental works. It mainly promotes employment for host community members and Syrian refugees. Additionally, it fosters capacity building of the public sector to facilitate implementation of employment intensive programmes building capacity of private companies to implement [Local Resource Based Technology](#) (LRBT) and decent work principles.

Another ILO initiative, [ENABLE \(Empowering Networks and Activation for Building Long-term Employment\)](#), provides short-term employment opportunities in infrastructure construction/rehabilitation projects, increasing linkages between social protection and employment activation, economic inclusion and contributing to infrastructure stability and development in Lebanon²⁷.

Good practices in green construction such as [Recon Crete, Eco-Friendly Concrete](#) are supported by BerytechBeat in Lebanon. The initiative incorporates nonrecyclable waste materials like green glass, plastics, and recycled concrete aggregates into new concrete mixtures, aiming to replace conventional raw materials like sand and gravel. In partnership with the ENI-CBC Med Programme, the [Green Impact MED Project Positive Investments for Positive Impacts](#) (GIMED programme) in Lebanon empowers green entrepreneurs at the idea and growth stage in addition to green experts. The project aims at supporting green entrepreneurs to better access finance and market in the Mediterranean. It provides trainings, coaching sessions, capacity building workshops and sub-grants to consolidate green business creation and green business development.

²⁷ Learning from previous and current good practices, the construction of green community assets should be promoted using labour-intensive methods to create jobs, focus on community development, infrastructure, and environmental protection, partnering with ministries, local authorities, business organizations, trade unions, private entities, NGOs, and international agencies for employment activation and social protection. Additionally, initiatives, as in previously analysed sectors, must offer employment-related services, skills and marketing training; entrepreneurship and enterprise development support, financial and not; career guidance and financial education. Partnerships with TVET, SENAI and SEBRAE shall be encouraged, providing long term solutions instead of short-mid-term ones.

The [Diverting Waste by Encouraging Reuse and Recycling Activity](#) (DAWERR), funded by the USAID, aims to improve the social, environmental, and economic well-being of Lebanese citizens by establishing sustainable and replicable integrated solid waste recovery and diversion programmes in collaboration with municipalities, implementing valorisation solutions throughout rural areas in Lebanon.

Other creative and inclusive urban solution is the [Beirut Urban Lab](#), a collaborative and interdisciplinary research space based in the American University of Beirut, AUB. The Lab produces scholarship on urbanization by documenting and analysing ongoing transformation processes in Lebanon and its region's natural and built environments. It contributes to academic debates on urbanization in the Global South, aiming to create an ecosystem of change driven by critical inquiry and engaged research, driven by committed urban citizens. In 2023, Terracota Ventures conducted a survey in Brazil, revealing that over 700 startups are transforming the construction industry by proposing sustainable solutions like solar water heating and rainwater reuse ²⁸.

Construction generates unnecessary material waste. According to [Ambar Tech](#), 25% of the materials used on construction sites in Brazil are wasted. Furthermore, according to a report published by McKinsey & Company, construction is the second worst sector in terms of digitalization and technology, ahead only of agriculture. The delivery of projects takes longer than it should: 61% of projects are delayed. According to Ambar Tech, excessive construction time and costs are the main bottlenecks in the sector. AMBAR develops energy-efficient, sustainable, and affordable low-income prefabricated housing at high-scale in Brazil.

As far as infrastructure and public policies are concerned, public housing, urban planning, legislation, and access to financing must be addressed in both countries. Such efforts are mutually beneficial for buyers, construction companies and material supplier companies, particularly when engaging in sustainable, inclusive, and just assets.

In this respect, partnerships and South-South Triangular Cooperation should consider involving Caixa Econômica Federal and its Housing Financing successful stories, such as [Minha Casa Minha Vida](#), [Casa Verde Amarela Programme](#) and [Habitação Popular](#); as well as considering public entities such as [Programa Moradia Digna](#) (Federal Budget) for social housing provision. Moving forward, initiatives should also consult the Protocol of Intentions between ABC and Caixa (2008) for South-South Cooperation, particularly the implementation of non-conventional construction techniques, adapted to the local reality; reuse of solid construction waste; develop pilot projects around solid waste management, recycling and basic sanitation. Finally, beyond knowledge and expertise exchange in housing policy development, infrastructural initiatives shall also consider large infrastructure projects, including dams and water transfer as well as wind and solar energy generation.

²⁸ These startups, known as constructechs, offer creative solutions from construction sites to consumer relations, including reducing material waste, online quotes, and enhancing control over the construction process. They also improve problem prediction and problem-solving through intelligent project mapping. According to SEBRAE, one initiative to speed up innovation in the area is [Hubic](#), a partnership between the Brazilian Portland Cement Association (ABCP) and the University of São Paulo (USP). The proposal envisages the conception, design, construction, and operation of the first cooperative space for innovation and digital construction. One of the proposals is to develop options for improving quality of life, increasing productivity, and helping workers to exert less physical effort and reduce exposure to the risks of accidents.



Figure 136. Minha Casa Minha Vida program logo and participating family, Brazil, 2023

Construction and infrastructural sectoral performance can be argued to have high relevance post-crisis, with migrant, refugees, and youth populations as target groups. The sector offers opportunity for economic growth and the creation of jobs via reconstruction efforts; and feasibility to drive change via the encouragement of MSMEs, startups and innovative solutions in green construction, intelligent cities, circular economy, and waste management. Infra-structure is also particularly important in Just Transition Initiatives, presenting great potential to drive sustainable change.

VII) HEALTH, HUMANITARIAN AND FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION BRAZIL & LEBANON

Brazil and Lebanon have forged a robust partnership in health and sanitary cooperation since the signing of a technical cooperation agreement in 2003, formalized by Decree Nbr. 5744/2006. This agreement focuses on protecting human health and preventing the transmission of animal diseases and plant pests through rigorous sanitary and phytosanitary measures aligned with international standards set by the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) and the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC). Beyond governmental initiatives, the Brazilian-Lebanese Medical Association (AMLB) plays a pivotal role, collaborating with Lebanese authorities and institutions to provide humanitarian aid, medical supplies, and facilitate educational exchanges in healthcare. Supported by the Lebanese Embassy and Consulate in Brazil, these efforts highlight ongoing solidarity and capacity-building between the two nations. Recent events, including the First International Conference organized by AMLB in partnership with international medical associations, underscore efforts to enhance health education and recognize professional excellence. This collaborative framework is aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 3, focusing on universal health coverage, and addressing emerging health challenges such as noncommunicable diseases and antimicrobial resistance. Furthermore, initiatives like *Juntos por Todos*, supported by Fambras and other entities, exemplify Brazil's commitment to social well-being through comprehensive healthcare programmes, promoting sustainable development and health equity globally²⁹. Lebanese political stability affects Brazil directly, not only because of the large Lebanese community in Brazil, but also due to the increasing number of Brazilian nationals living in Lebanon. During the 2006 war, for example, the Brazilian government organized the evacuation of three thousand of its citizens—and some nationals of other countries as well. That was the largest operation of its kind ever carried out by Brazil. After the 2006 war, Brazil donated funds for reconstruction and assisted the Lebanese government through cooperation projects (AMORIM, 2011, p. 57).

From its side, the Lebanese Government conferred Brazil with its full support when the country needed to conduct an emergency evacuation of almost three thousand Brazilian citizens from conflict zones. It also allowed Brazil, on that same 2006, to reopen the Brazilian Consulate-General in Beirut, to provide services to the ten thousand or so Brazilians that reside in this country, as well as to the large number of Lebanese with interests and businesses in Brazil (TEMER, 2011).

In 2006 Brazil took part in the [International Donors' Conference in Stockholm](#), where the country pledged USD 500.000 for UN humanitarian assistance projects. In 2007, Brazil was the only Latin-American country to participate in the Paris III Conference, where it announced the donation of USD 1 million in favour of Lebanon (TEMER, 2011). [Paris III Conference of Donors](#) was held in January 2007, when the Lebanese Government presented a comprehensive plan for economic reform, for which it received some \$7.6 billion in financial aid and soft loans from the international community.

From 2014 to 2016, according to data from the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs and National Supply company](#) (CONAB), within the scope of the general coordination of humanitarian cooperation and combating hunger

²⁹ After decades without mutual agreements, Brazil's Foreign Minister Celso Amorim and Lebanon's Agricultural Minister Ali Hassan Khalil signed a Technical Cooperation Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Procedures for Animal and Plant Health on December 4, 2003, in Beirut, later promulgated by Decree No. 5744 (April 4, 2006). The agreement includes information exchange on controlling animal diseases and plant pests. Under South-South Cooperation, Brazil's ABC conducted missions in Lebanon between 2006 and 2009, addressing health challenges, including technical training on outbreak control and revising pathology protocols. A 2009 mission focused on generic medicines, with support from Brazil's Ministry of Health and Cooperation Agency. More recently, the Humanitarian Relief Fund for Lebanon, supported by the Lebanese community in Brazil, the Lebanese Embassy, and Brazil's Foreign Ministry, has provided essential supplies like food, water, and medicines. Campaigns led by the Lebanese-Brazilian Medical Association (AMLB) and Saha Brasil send antihypertensive and antidiabetic drugs to Lebanon, aiming to reduce hospitalizations.

The AMLB organized the First International Conference of the Lebanese-Brazilian Medical Association in September 2023 in collaboration with ILMA and the Lebanese Order of Physicians, fostering medical exchanges. A Gala in December 2023 in São Paulo honoured health professionals with the Hakim Medal. Additionally, "Juntos por Todos," a social initiative by Fambras and the Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Foundation, supports vulnerable populations in Brazil with health services, leisure, and sustainable development programmes.

(CGFome), the Federal Government donated 795,500 kgs of rice to Lebanon. Also, during the same period, in the context of emergency assistance to Syrian refugees in the country, 2 disaster kits were donated, containing medicines and basic supplies. In 2020 Brazil also collaborated with medical and hospital supplies to contain the spread of the new coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in Lebanon. The items were purchased with funds donated on a humanitarian basis by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and submitted via the World Food Program's (WFP) Centre of Excellence Against Hunger.

In August 2020, after the Beirut port blast, Brazil sent 6 tons of medicine, health care and food supply donated by the Health Ministry and by the Lebanese community in Brazil. Former President Michel Temer spearheaded the mission in the country, which also included the presence of the President of the São Paulo Industry Federation (Fiesp) Paulo Skaf. In addition, 4,000 tons of rice were shipped to mitigate the consequences of the blast, as grain stocks were destroyed in the explosion.



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In addition to the special humanitarian mission, the Brazilian government supported the country through the National Risk and Disaster Management Centre (Cenad) and the National Space Research Institute (Inpe), which continue to collaborate in the process of putting together maps with satellite images of Beirut for emergency post-disaster mapping activities (OCHA, 2020). Following the blast, apart from bringing medicines, food and emergency aid equipment, the multidisciplinary humanitarian mission also provided technical assistance, involving the work of a team of experts in disaster management and environmental damage.

From December 2020 to September 2022, the following humanitarian cooperation initiatives between Brazil and Lebanon were concluded: donation of US\$ 171 thousand in medicines, supplies and medical equipment to combat COVID-19; support for private donations of medicines to the Lebanese Army; donation of 4 thousand tons of rice by the Brazilian government to the High Relief Committee (HRC) of the Lebanese government, worth around US\$2 million; donation of USD 54,000 from the Brazilian government to the

Lebanese Ministry of Health in medical supplies and equipment to combat COVID-19, among other initiatives (RIBEIRO, 2022)³⁰.

Brazil's capacity and expertise in the response to social and natural disasters is considered a true example of international humanitarian assistance, and much knowhow can be exchanged between Lebanon's response to the Beirut blast in the aftermath of August 2020. This is significant particularly given the crucial role that social inclusion, economic development as well as strengthening institutions can play in shaping a sustainable post-crisis recovery and rehabilitation, reinforced after the 2023 Israeli War on Gaza and the military confrontation in southern Lebanon.

Under the realm of the [Brazil-ILO partnership](#) for South-South cooperation, Brazil and an Arab entity, the Occupied Palestinian Territories, have already engaged in humanitarian cooperation between 2011 and 2013 (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023). The [three-year joint programme](#), which also included Haiti, Nigeria, East Timor and PALOP countries, was developed by the [ILO Training Centre in Turin](#) and sought to enhance the capacity-building of countries in humanitarian assistance, train them on the prevention of natural and social disasters, and help them to respond to disasters and deal with post-crisis recoveries. The programme, the first in humanitarian assistance in the world of work, recognizes that protecting potentially affected populations and promoting sustainable development is as important as providing relief to victims of a natural or social disaster (ILO, 2010).

By reducing the level of vulnerability of local populations and communities, post-disaster reconstruction acts as a significant opportunity to progress towards sustainable development (AMORIM et. al., 2015, p.34-37). According to AMORIM et. al., 2015, p.34-37, the programme not only highlights the close linkages between the [Disaster Prevention and Reduction](#) course and [Fragile-to-Fragile Cooperation and decent work](#) (CRUCIANI, 2015) as a potential area for enhancing triangular cooperation practices, particularly in conflict affected states; but also the potential for [City-to-City cooperation](#) approach towards the promotion of resilient networks of cities with support of the [United Nations Office for the disaster Risk Reduction UNISDR](#). As cost-effective and sustainable solution to cooperate on issues of common interest, city-to-city cooperation is an approach that enables partners to work directly with local citizens in order to solve local problems with an impact on local economic and social development (LESD), exchanging knowledge on a peer group basis as well as transferring successful practices adapted to new contexts (CITY-TO-CITY AND SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION, 2013).

Under the Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme, the training initiative on [Humanitarian Cooperation and Prevention of Crises and Natural Disasters](#), implemented in collaboration with the ILO International Training Centre in Turin, has an impressive potential to be expanded, given it constitutes of only 4% of the mobilized resources through a project approved in 2023 (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023, p. 11). According to UN agencies, the number of Venezuelans who have left the country exceeds 5 million people and Brazil would be the fifth destination sought by them. To guarantee humanitarian assistance to

³⁰ At the request of the World Health Organization (WHO), the Brazilian government provided 40 thousand vials of NPH Human Insulin and 4 thousand vials of Regular Type Human Insulin to Lebanon, towards assisting Syrian refugees in that country, in addition to seven "Kits" of medicines and strategic health supplies. Each kit can serve up to 500 people for a period of three months (SF/20254.73944-36, 2020).

As of 2022, there were three pending projects for bilateral humanitarian cooperation approved by parliamentary amendment from the National Congress on the Beirut port explosion in August 2020, namely: (i) creating resilience to disasters in an urban environment; (ii) fire prevention and risk and disaster management; and (iii) bilateral cooperation in the medical specialties of traumatology and orthopedics. Stronger efforts with Lebanese partners and the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC) are needed to move forward with the projects. (RIBEIRO, 2022).

Venezuelan refugees and migrants in Roraima, Venezuela's main gateway to Brazil, the federal government created, in 2018, [Operation Acolhida](#).



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Figure 147. ILO Syria earthquake efforts, 2023 (to the left); and area affected by war in Gaza, Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2024 (to the right)

In order to provide an appropriate response to the Syrian refugee crisis in the Lebanese context, the ILO Regional Office for the Arab States implements a strategy that builds on existing programmes in Lebanon through three inter-related components which: assess the impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon on decent work; enhance access to employment opportunities and livelihoods in host communities; and combat the worst forms of child labour and unacceptable forms of work (ILO Response to Syrian Refugee Crisis in Lebanon, n/d). Much cooperation and exchange can be done concerning the refugees and migrant domestic workers in both countries, and more relevant information on such projects can be found in the referred section as well as in the convergence of interests' table.

VIII) DIASPORA ENTREPRENEURSHIP LEBANON-BRAZIL

Diasporas are increasingly acknowledged as pivotal stakeholders, active agents in both host and homeland settings. Diasporas can not only contribute commercially and culturally, fomenting bilateral development and investment, but also play a role in post-conflict peacebuilding and development, mediating between homeland actors and external entities, impacting transnational political agency and mobilization, media, technology, promoting advocacy and influencing policy, including exerting an effect on gender dynamics (TOIVANEN; BASER, 2020).

In order to promote that dialogue, the [Global Forums of Migration and Development](#) may be additional sources of triangular technical cooperation and expert exchanges via knowledge sharing and enhanced institutional dialogue. They may work as settings to encourage private sector-Government Partnerships to support migrant/diaspora entrepreneurship, enabling businesses and job creation, with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises. Such efforts may be advanced by investment promotion agencies, such as IDAL in Lebanon and Apex in Brazil.

As discussed in the [Global Forum on Migration and Development Roundtable](#) (2014-2015), migrant entrepreneurship refers to businesses owned and/or managed by migrants who do not necessarily assume any type of engagement with their country of origin, whereas diaspora entrepreneurship assumes a link between the country of origin and one or more countries of destination, adding a transnational element to the kind of entrepreneurship promoted. These diaspora entrepreneurs may be either migrants or of migrant origin. When the migrant business in the country of destination harvests business links to the country of origin, then we have the concept of diaspora entrepreneurship, and particular attention is turned towards SMEs, relatively small businesses in quantifiable terms (employees, turnover, etc.). (ICMPD, 2015)³¹.

According to a OECD study, while migrant entrepreneurs may be more inclined to start a new business - self-employed make up 12.7% of working age migrant population, due to a higher tolerance for taking risk but also because they face considerable hardships in accessing the labour market in the destination, country - , these migrant entrepreneurs' businesses are more likely to fail than the businesses of the native population, particularly the less educated and less integrated ones. (ICMPD, 2015, p. 2). According to the [International Centre for Migration Policy Development](#) report, the lack of legal status and laws, regulations and policies that are less favourable towards migrant entrepreneurship present disincentives to the creation of new businesses as well as contribute to business failure. This is particularly so because immigration policies do not take into consideration circular migration schemes, burdensome regulatory interventions and the unequal protection of migrant property rights when compared to local investors. The introduction of micro-credit schemes by policy makers, for example, as well as the removal of customs duties and the introduction of admission and tax policies can all help encouraging migrant/diaspora workers to upgrade their skills and to launch SMEs, improve their access to markets, facilitate migrant start-ups and entrepreneurial activities and favour the transfer of technologies and goods required for successful start-ups. Private sector and banks have a key role in facilitating access to credit and avoiding discrimination in

³¹ Diaspora entrepreneurship may be, therefore, particularly promoted via Private sector-Government Partnerships with a focus on small and medium-sized enterprises, under UNDP the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly [Goal 8](#): the promotion of "sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all" women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities. One of the Goal targets (2.3) being to "promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services" (A/RES/70/1, 2015, p. 14, 19).

applications, enabling access of financial services particularly to migrant/diaspora women, and establishing intra-bank networks and linkages on the sale of financial products (ICMPD, 2015, p. 2).

Often pioneering investments in frontier regions or markets in countries of residence, diasporas also contribute significantly to the economies of their countries of origin, offering new skills, technologies, and innovative business practices because of their experiences in their countries of residence. This can further catalyse foreign direct investments and generate business intelligence. Additionally, diaspora entrepreneurs can also act as brokers between different trading partners including in the country of origin. Investment Promotion Agencies may have a pivotal role in attracting diaspora investments for example through the issuance of diaspora bonds and treasury bills, or by installing policies to facilitate, secure and boost diaspora investments ³².

In regard to empowering women diaspora entrepreneurs, given women tend to shy away from entrepreneurial activities and to exit the domain at higher rates than men, women empowerment measures and gender-sensitive policies are key. Practices can be implemented to support diaspora and women-owned SMEs through the establishment of migrant women entrepreneurs' networks, such as online portals dedicated to the promotion of women's entrepreneurship or the establishment or expansion of business support service centres for women (with training, networking, and funding opportunities). In that sense, raising awareness, providing technical expertise, and ensuring inclusion and accessibility is conducive to economic growth and a functioning economy (ICMPD, 2015, p. 4).

As far as the support for diaspora and migrant entrepreneurship in the Global South is concerned, the report indicates that the lack of facilitative regulatory frameworks may be responsible for the number of SMEs operating informally. Suggestions are also included, such as policy coherence or coordination among different institutions involved in the investment infrastructure; facilitation of peer-to-peer exchanges, transfer of skills, and transfer of technologies; development of capital markets; government policies and programmes build on the migrant's/diaspora communities' resource, with migrants/diaspora communities in return bringing on board new business partnerships and develop markets in both countries of origin and destination. Facilitative policies on migration, integration, economy, and trade recognize diaspora communities and migrants as shapers of economies, empowering them as entrepreneurs.

These policies and programmes include the adoption of labour migration strategies that effectively match or develop skills in keeping with labour market demands and facilitate the recognition and transferability of skills and work experience; liberalize banking regulations by allowing the establishment of foreign-currency accounts and lower the costs of sending remittances; facilitate foreign direct investments via multilateral agreement on investment or bilateral investment treaties; remove unreasonable administrative barriers for SMEs, the establishment of one-stop-shops and provide tax incentives to facilitate the creation of SMEs; ease SMEs access to public procurement; facilitate access to financial products and promote financial literacy of migrants, in particular women and youth, accompanied by awareness-raising and sensitization targeting bank employees; facilitation of the recognition of migrant's foreign qualifications; facilitate permanent and temporary migration policies and facilitate the portability of benefits and rights; improving peer-to-peer South-South exchange of knowledge and technology; establishing partnerships between the private sector,

³² Recommendations from the report include, among others: supporting companies and start-ups with business-enabling incentives with the establishment of diaspora business centres, connecting markets and making remittances more effective; the set-up of diaspora ministries or institutions at sub-ministry level; partnerships with chambers of commerce; promotion of diaspora entrepreneurs as ambassadors for the development of countries of origin; the tying of remittances with other financial products, such as loans and insurances; community development initiatives or capacity-development programmes such as financial literacy programming; engaging these communities in policymaking and facilitating the creation of diaspora networks; impact investment platforms and crowdfunding; support low-cost technological solutions to connect project and development partners (ICMPD, 2015, p. 3).

governments, civil society and non-profit organizations; embedding innovative projects in national strategies and development policies; and systematically monitor the business environment for migrant and diaspora entrepreneurs. (ICMPD, 2015, p. 5-6).

According to the Lebanese Ministry of Industry, in 2017, enterprises distribution among industry sectors was led by the Food & Beverage segment, representing 26% of enterprises in the country. Construction materials responded to 12% of them, and chemical products 8%. Those were followed by furniture & wood (8%), metal & electrical products (7%) mining & quarrying (6%), rubber & plastics (5%), manufacturing of other equipment (5%), base metals (5%), printing & publishing industries (5%) (AGRI-FOOD SECTOR IN LEBANON, IDAL 2020 FACTBOOK, p. 7).

The development of vocational training and skills promoted by SENAI offer many examples of South-South Triangular cooperations aimed towards enabling entrepreneurs to access greater opportunities for decent work, particularly tackling the agri-food, construction, and tourist sectors relevant to this study. In Brazil, SENAI has jointly worked with the ILO to promote knowledge-sharing and experience-sharing to strengthen vocational training, in particular through the [Inter-American Centre for Knowledge Development in Vocational Training](#) (ILO-Cinterfor), which has been supporting triangular cooperation in vocational training in Latin America since the 1950s (AMORIM et. al., 2015, p. 27-28).

A triangular partnership between the [National Service for Industrial Apprenticeship of Brazil](#) (SENAI), the [Vocational Training Institute of Peru](#) (SENATI) and the [German Cooperation Agency](#) (GIZ) has resulted, in 2010, on the launch of [The Centre for Environmental Technologies](#). According to Amorim et. al (2015, p. 29) the project was aimed at training specialist staff on environmental technology and to develop the provision of relevant market services, such as laboratory testing, advisory services, or applied research (AMORIM et. al., 2015, p.28). The knowledge hub is sustainable and has proved to be an effective tool to enable technological transfer strategies between such countries.



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Figure 158. Peruvian ministers and students in a visit to the Centre for Environmental Technologies, Lima, 2017

This can be inspiring to Brazil-Lebanon cooperation given SENAI is one of the major Brazilian players in South-South Cooperation, currently a world reference in vocational training, technical and technological assistance, and in the production and dissemination of information. Together with the [Brazilian Ministry of External Relations](#), SENAI is responsible for the implementation of 15 technical and vocational training centres in Latin America, Africa and Asia, providing technical and vocational education and training in industrial areas of expertise and to promoting applied research and technology transfer for the benefit of Brazilian industry. SENAI has also been invited by the largest providers of development aid (Germany and Japan) to design and execute structural triangular projects in Latin America and Africa. SENAI trains 2.5

million professionals per year, with 55 million students enrolled since its creation, including via the use of distance learning platform (AMORIM et. al., 2013, p. 35).

According to AMORIM et. al. (2013, p. 36) SENAI's contribution to the world of work is consistent with the main public policies on technical education and vocational training. Methods of implementation involve expanding the skills certification programme nationwide, increasing the supply of courses in line with industrial trends through the use of prospective analysis, expanding SENAI's distance learning network, developing programmes to train teachers, technicians and managers, guaranteeing annual investments to keep facilities and technologies up to date, expanding the use of mobile technologies in distant regions, and consolidating a systematic evaluation of the educational process.

[SEBRAE, Brazilian Support Service for Micro and Small Businesses](#), is a non-profit entity engaged in the mission of promoting the sustainable and competitive development of small businesses. Small businesses generate 52% of employment in the country. With 700 on-site Service Centres promoting small business development throughout Brazil, SEBRAE fosters entrepreneurship, providing guidance to help small businesses to grow and generate more employment. The service serves more than 1,5 million companies each year throughout Brazil and 8,5 million small business, the equivalent to 99% of total Brazilian business.

For well established businesses in the search for new markets, SEBRAE may provide stronger technical support and training for micro businesses when entering the international trade, via courses, lectures, training, and consulting for companies to better understand the market challenges, to take advantage of the opportunities and expand their businesses. Instruments and programmes include: [Sebraetec](#): innovation and technological services that allow companies to access knowledge and to innovate; [Sebrae Mais](#): the programme for companies seeking to develop and expand their businesses; Bolsa de Negócios Sebrae: make good deals through an online marketplace; Empretec workshop, for increasing competitiveness in the market; Negócio Certo, for improvement of company's management; Micro and Small Business Internationalization Programme; and ALI - innovation agents. Free of charge specialized consultancy at your doorstep. (see SEBRAE, n/d).

Since 1999, SEBRAE supports the [Global Entrepreneurship Monitor](#) (GEM), a research project whose objective is to collect up to date data and understand the role of entrepreneurship in economic and social development in the world. According to the Monitor, Entrepreneurship is any attempt to create a new enterprise (formal or informal), whether an autonomous and individual activity, a new company, or the expansion of an existing enterprise. The entrepreneurial activity is considered to begin even before the business is created. Data shows that in Brazil close to 42.2 million individuals are involved in creating or maintaining their own business at any stage, with the level of total entrepreneurship remaining relatively stable, going from 31.6% in 2020 to 30.3% in 2022 (GEM/SEBRAE/ANAGEPE, 2022)³³.

³³ According to the report, in 2022, 45.4% of nascent entrepreneurs were female, more than 50% of them were between 25 and 44 years old and nearly 29% of them had not attended secondary school. Data shows that 13% of new entrepreneurship are related to restaurants, food, and beverage sector, 10.8% catering services, buffet and prepared food, hairdressing and beauty treatments responds to 5,5%, 5.4% to retail trade of articles clothing and accessories, and 3.9% to retail trade of goods in general, mostly food products and grocery stores. The proportion of the population that claims to have closed a business in the previous year is 9.8%, mainly because it was considered an unprofitable business, given the difficulty of obtaining resources (35.2%), or due to COVID related issues (26.6%) (GEM/SEBRAE/ANAGEPE, 2022). However, according to SEBRAE, in 2021 three in every 10 individual microentrepreneurs (MEIs) close their doors within five years of activity in Brazil. The mortality rate for businesses of this size is 29%. Micro-enterprises have a bankruptcy rate of 21.6%, while small businesses have a failure rate of 17%. In Brazil, 1,286,596 companies were closed from January to July 2023. However, 2,351,279 new National Register for Legal Entities (CNPJ) were created, and 1,064,683 companies opened, according to the Ministry of Development, Industry, Commerce and Services.

SIELBRA - International Society for Lebanese-Brazilian Education, based in São Paulo, is a group of professors with the purpose of involving society in relevant topics aimed at professional improvement, capacitation and updating in a practical, fast, and accessible way for all. Its values and vision seek to develop human potential based on an ethical and civic attitude, respecting individualities, diversity, and bringing nations and cultures together. One of the courses offered is oriented towards entrepreneurship and business, focused on administrative management for entrepreneurs of small and medium companies. In partnership with FJJI – Business consultancy and management, the entrepreneurship and business course offers classes on topics such as strategy and business modelling; financial intelligence; marketing, sales; and management of essential operations. Experts have experience with start-ups and in the food, fish, agrochemicals, and animal health segment, with a focus on development; turnaround; financial management; implementation of new businesses and administrative strategy. Additional courses are also offered in the field of technology and communication, as well as on professional development, such as the one presenting the basics of residential electrical installation projects, which can quickly open a new source of personal income (SIELBRA, n/d).

In the agri-food business, the leading sector of new enterprises, a recent example promoting formalization and capacitation is Academia Assaí Bons Negócios (Assai Academy Good Businesses) through the GPA Institute³⁴.

³⁴ The [Assai Academy](#) is a programme to develop and strengthen the entrepreneurial and management skills of micro and small businesses all over Brazil. It involves face-to-face training, thematic workshops and a free online platform with content developed based on the needs identified by small entrepreneurs and focused on the specificities of each type of business in the food sector. Micro and small entrepreneurs, whether formal or not, often have difficulties managing their enterprises. The Programme, therefore, provides skills development and shares specific solutions, training and knowledge with practical guidance, targeted examples and which are easy to learn and apply to the businesses of cakes and small savoury snacks, hotdog food trucks, owners of grocery stores/mini markets, pizzerias, fried pastry shops, among others. The content tracks include, among others: partnerships to sell more; implement new payment methods; how to price products correctly; how to formalize a business; good hygiene practices in food production and business; financial management and task management; and prioritization of activities (ACADEMIA ASSAÍ BONS NEGÓCIOS, n/d).

IX) SOCIAL PROTECTION COOPERATION OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN LEBANON & BRAZIL

Brazil has made significant advances in terms of reducing poverty and inequality since its return to democracy in the late 1980s. The expansion of social protection policies played an important role in increasing inclusion, getting closer to universal access to education, and intensifying the use of preventive health service (THE WORLD BANK /UNDP, 2022). Brazil has an advanced social protection system that includes universal health protection and the ratification of [ILO Convention C102](#) in 2009, establishing minimum standards of social security (see BRAZIL ILO COOPERATION, 2023).

This provides an opportunity for Lebanon to learn more about good practices on social protection policies and strategies enforced in Brazil, especially in the topic of income redistribution through public financing mechanisms, as Brazil has one of the largest conditional cash transfer programme in the world. The Auxílio Brasil programme, for example, is a permanent benefit that serves more than 20 million socially vulnerable families. According to official data, monthly, over R\$ 12 billion are injected directly into the economy, in the form of direct or indirect income transfer. Auxílio Brasil integrates several public policies for social assistance, health, education, employment and income into a single programme aimed at families in poverty and extreme poverty throughout the country. Besides granting a basic income for the families, the programme simplifies the benefit basket, prioritizes the well-being and development of children and adolescents, and encourages these families to become self-sufficient, overcoming their current state of social vulnerability.

In addition to cash transfer programmes, Brazil's Caixa Econômica Federal may also provide training in the areas of social housing policies, urban development, solid waste management, basic sanitation and banking technology. Such capacity, for example, has already been exposed during the Brazilian Technical Cooperation Mission to Lebanon in 2006 (MISSÃO BRASILEIRA..., ABC 2006).

According to ILO, Brazil also offers good practices in social security, which actions have increasingly contributed to the reduction of poverty in the country. The initiatives and guarantees have contributed towards social inclusion and the promotion of social justice, including child labour reduction, and generating positive effects on the protection of workers and their families, protecting their rights and level of income. [General Social Security Scheme in Brazil](#) is contribution-based and aims at compensating a worker's or his family's income (partial or total) loss due to social hazards listed in ILO Convention C102. In addition to the regular social security regimes for formal sector workers, Brazil also offers coverage for the social risk of unemployment via an unemployment insurance.

Public health care is guaranteed to the whole population through the [Unified Health System](#) (SUS). Large scale and effective assistance are provided in the form of one of the most comprehensive health care systems in the developing world. Despite facing issues in terms of scarce funds, inefficient management and hospitals overcrowding, the vaccination national coverage, the [Family Health Strategy](#) (ESF), access to free medicines and medical care in rural areas are examples of good practices which can be inspiring – both regionally and transregionally.

X) PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS AND MICRO ENTREPRENEURS

Given human capital is one of the main assets in Lebanon, with a highly educated middle class - and with many holding a strong entrepreneurship spirit - capacitation and training of small and medium producers as well as small business and micro entrepreneurs is key to promote professionalization and build capacity.

In order to address the skills mismatch between education, training and the job market in Lebanon, since 2009 the ILO ROAS has been engaged in upgrading the skill profiles among target labour market segments such as youth, women and refugees. [SKILL-UP Lebanon](#) (I, II, III) was a project first implemented in 2018, having the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) as development partner, in order to improve access to employment opportunities for Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugees in Lebanon. The project contributes to upgrading the agricultural technical education system in Lebanon, improving access to employment opportunities and livelihoods in rural areas. The project, however, is limited in terms of Syrian refugees to focus on the three sectors that have been deemed open to them for employment and skills training (environment, agriculture, and construction).



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Figure 169. Participants of the SKILL UP during an On-the-job training, Lebanon, 2021

According to ILO, the core challenge facing skills training systems in Lebanon is the need to better align skills supply with market demand. The programmes, curricula, and assessment methods at skills training centres have not been updated to meet new skills demands; this is, in part, due to the absence of mechanisms for regular engagement between skills training centres with employers and the private sector and communication of competencies in demand.

The [Technical and Vocational Education and Training National Strategic Framework](#) (TVET NSF), launched in 2018-2022 by Ministry of Education and Higher Education with the support of UNICEF and ILO, acknowledged this core challenge and identified a range of measures to be implemented to support a closer alignment between TVET and employers. TVET system that provides youth and workers with the competencies and skills required to access decent work and allows businesses to recruit well trained workforce (See NATIONAL STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN LEBANON, 2020).

The Lebanon SKILL-UP component builds on ILO Lebanon's strategy for skills interventions, which aims to improve the match between skills supply and market demand with a complete package of support: from labour market analysis, a competency-based approach to training, upgrading of skills through training,

career orientation and post-training employment support; to greater participation of employers in the governance, the management, and the evaluation of training programmes.

According to ILO data, between 42% and 67% of workers in the so-called Southern Neighbourhood countries of Europe are in the informal economy. In that spirit, the [Social Dialogue for Formalization and Employment in the Arab States](#) – SOLIFEM strives towards promoting formal and decent work. Cofounded by the European Union, SOLIFEM support the transition from the informal to the formal economy through tripartite social dialogue in Lebanon and other countries in the region, including Algeria, Egypt, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT). The initiative encourages and promotes formal and permanent mechanisms for social dialogue that address the concerns of all employers' and workers', including those in the informal economy. The programme also advances integrated strategies on formalization and the development of skills training and recognition systems, with a particular focus on women and youth in the informal economy.

In 2011 Lebanon has hosted the [First Arab International Forum for Young Entrepreneurs and Businesspersons](#) (YEB), attracting 500 participants from 52 countries (UNOSSC, UNDP, IDB, 2014). The Forum aimed at establishing strong collaborations with the associations of young entrepreneurs and facilitate channel of communication and networking among participants from different sectors and countries³⁵.

[L.I.B.A.N.](#) - The Lebanese International Businessmen Associations' Network is the sole national and international association representing Leading Lebanese Young Entrepreneurs & Businesspersons in Lebanon and abroad. One of the missions of L.I.B.A.N. is to reinforce economic and commercial relations between Lebanon and countries of Lebanese emigration contributing to create the first ever Lebanese international business lobby, attracting investments to Lebanon and to those countries in return.

In Brazil, the National Industrial Apprenticeship Service (SENAI) was created in 1942 and is now one of the largest centres of professional and technological education in the world. The organization currently has 529 fixed units and 525 mobile units dedicated to professional education. It is responsible for more than 2.5 million enrolments per year in Brazil. As such it is considered as a model institution, being not only responsible for consolidating the Vocational Training System in Brazil, but also for transferring the model and collaborating with other Southern countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia with the support of the [Brazilian Cooperation Agency](#) (ABC). According to information provided by CNI/SENAI, Vocational training represents one of the main areas for which South-South cooperation efforts direct its resources. In that spirit, Professional Training Centres were set up by SENAI, via its partnership with ABC, in countries such as Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, East Timor, Haiti, Guatemala, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique, Paraguay and Jamaica³⁶.

³⁵ It also hosted business to business meetings and aimed at contributing to socio-economic development and Corporate Social Responsibility, providing opportunities for young entrepreneurs to be mentored and learning from success stories. The event was co-organized by UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organization), the Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon and General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in the Arab countries, with the active partnership of ESA (Ecole Supérieure des Affaires), and IDAL (Investment & Development Authority of Lebanon).³⁵

³⁶ In Angola, for example, according to information provided by ABC, the Cazenga Vocational Training Centre is in Luanda. Resulting from three years planning and technical coordination between the Brazilian Cooperation Agency and the National Industrial Apprenticeship Service, since 2000 the Brazil-Angola training centre aims to contribute to Angola's social reintegration and national reconstruction post-conflict by training, qualifying, and retraining demobilized manpower. To this end, the Centre transferred its training and operational methodology to the local government in 2005, the Angolan National Institute for Employment and Vocational Training (INEFOP). The centre

According to The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Germany and Brazil have been jointly implementing projects in African and Latin American countries since 2010, as both countries are considered international leaders in the provision of trilateral cooperation, collaborating in innovative developmental solutions in infrastructural and environmental sectors. So far three trilateral projects were fully implemented and five were planned during the execution of the programme and began implementation by the Regional Fund for Trilateral Cooperation in Latin America and the Caribbean, in partnership with Brazilian institutions.

According to GIZ, projects implemented include the institutional strengthening of the National Institute of Metrology of Mozambique; risk management and prevention of natural disasters in Mozambique; environmental Technology Centre in Peru. Projects in force include: improved cashew planting material and by-product processing technologies for Ghana; knowledge management in Research, Technology Transfer and Innovation in Biodiversity; Energy Efficiency (industrial sector and labelling) and Distributed Generation in Bolivia; innovation of drought resistant forage systems in the mesothermic valleys of Cochabamba in Bolivia; strengthening Technical and Institutional Capacities for Integral Fire Management in Ecuador's Natural Heritage.

In 2017 and 2018, under the [Trilateral Cooperation Brazil-Germany](#), five courses with eleven different institutions from developing countries were offered: photovoltaic systems; environmental impact evaluation; environmental education in the context of family farming; management for results in protected areas; management of contaminated areas. Five new projects were developed based on the trilateral cooperation manual, jointly developed by ABC and GIZ. The courses have participants from twelve public institutions of Angola, Argentina, Dominican Republic, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe and Brazil.

In 2023, under the Brazil-Germany Trilateral Cooperation Programme, the Brazil-EU-Germany partnership approved three proposals for trilateral cooperation with the Dominican Republic, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Honduras. According to CNI/SENAI, the initiatives cover the sharing of good practices on issues such as public policies for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the agro-industrial and cosmetics sectors with the Dominican Republic as well as the digitalization of education and technical-vocational training with Caribbean countries. Additionally, it includes the distribution of energy and light in isolated communities in Honduras through the "Yu Raya: Energy and Light for Life" project, partnered with the Brazilian National Electric Energy Agency (ANEEL), Energisa Group, the European Union, and the Honduran Energy Secretariat.

As seen, trilateral cooperation can also take the form of more regionalized or city-wise engagement. That is the case of the GIZ-ABC-SENAI Cooperation with the Dominican Republic. With the technical support of SENAI Paraná, the aim is to promote the institutional strengthening of local entities, particularly focusing on enhancing the competitiveness of industrial and agro-industrial SMEs in the cosmetics sector. As for SENAI Goiás, will share technical knowledge as part of the project to digitize education and technical-vocational training (TVET) with CARICOM countries, via a digital platform to be available to all the bloc's member states.

International Labour Organization and the National Industrial Apprenticeship Service in São Paulo since 2023 are engaging in a series of [training courses](#) and in-factory consultancies for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the textile and clothing sector in São Paulo. The initiative is part of the [SCORE project](#)

currently offers 12 courses: mechanics, electrical, IT (hardware), English, bricklaying, electronics, handicrafts, sewing, plumbing, carpentry, civil locksmithing and refrigeration. In the coming years, according to ABC, there are plans to open courses in AUTOCAD, communication networks, programming, foreman builder, electromechanical estimator, and mechatronics.

(BRA/20/51/BRA), implemented by the ILO to help increase productivity and improve working conditions in SMEs.

According to the ILO, the SCORE methodology is a global ILO initiative that brings together successful experiences in more than 20 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and aims to increase productivity and improve working conditions in SMEs. Through practical training and in-factory consultancy, the methodology encourages the adoption of workplace cooperation tools and decent work. The SCORE methodology is structured in modules and explores topics such as workforce management, clean production, quality control, health and safety at work and promoting gender equality. The approach incentivizes cooperation between employers and workers in obtaining shared gains in productivity and competitiveness, improving working conditions and promoting responsible business conduct in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the textile sector in the São Paulo metropolitan region. In 2023, fifteen SMEs that serve large retail companies in the domestic clothing sector took part in training at SENAI Francisco Mattarazzo School and received in-factory consultancies, resulting from the partnership between the ILO, SENAI, the Brazilian Textile and Apparel Industry Association (ABIT) and the Brazilian Textile Retail Association (ABVTEX).

Promoting the exchange of knowledge and the strengthening of institutional capacities within the framework of South-South cooperation, the ILO and SENAI promoted the online course Transfer of Educational Methodologies - SENAI Model of Professional Education aimed at managers from the government of Peru. Investing in skills development, training and professional (re)qualification as key elements for the future of work in post-pandemic reconstruction, the course aimed at building bridges between the worlds of education and work. The methodology promoted knowledge and matching between the results of technological and market prospecting studies and the processes of updating and creating professional profiles, designing curricula and teaching practices aimed at professional training for the future of work in industry. The course is promoted by the Cotton with Decent Work Project, implemented by the ILO, the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), and the Brazilian Cotton Institute (IBA).

SENAI Mobile Actions are mobile training workshop units designed to meet immediate and specific human resource needs through a previously organized schedule. Its main characteristics are its ease of transportation and the flexibility of its schedules. The wheel units can work with the productive sectors of industries and the community. They are equipped with hardware, tools, furniture and all the instructional and human resources needed to carry out activities in the sectors of electrical and electronics, bakery and confectionery, construction, carpentry, and automotive mechanics.

According to reports from ILO and SEBRAE, the partnership was formalized in 1996 with a general cooperation agreement under which activities were carried out to strengthen the [Employment and Income Programme](#) (PROGER). In 2009, Sebrae representatives took part in the [ILO Technical Commission Meeting](#) held in Brasilia, with the support of the "S" System, and visited the ILO headquarters during the meeting of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). In 2010, the entities presented digital marketing tools and strategies for small businesses at the ILO Seminar, held the Dominican Republic. In 2011, the ILO delegation presented the Employment Intensive Investment Programme and established partnerships.

The partnership between Sebrae and the ILO was strengthened in 2013 under the Memorandum of Understanding, towards developing a technical cooperation programme for the generation and exchange of knowledge in particular involving the formalization of informal enterprises, productivity and working

conditions in micro and small enterprises, environmental sustainability in micro and small enterprises, and labour-intensive investments and local development.

SEBRAE currently offers many digital solutions for SMEs, such as UpDigital, boosting social networks sales and networking; PNBOX advising and tools for developing a digital business plan and market insertion; as well as payment facilities and issuance of e-invoices.

[LEBANON ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT \(LED\) PROJECT](#) is a three-year, \$14-million activity aimed at increasing employment opportunities for Lebanese citizens by employing a Buyer-Led Approach (BLA). It offers customized technical assistance to local businesses to help them identify and solve the problems preventing them from increasing sales and creating local jobs. Activities include providing access to credit and finance, enhance quality control systems and production techniques, improve and upgrade product design, packaging, and branding, upgrade technological innovation, improve management practices and knowledge management, identify new buyers/markets, improve sales and marketing, improve transport, logistics and distribution and identify and organize new suppliers. Funded by USAID and partnered with the Business Incubation Association in Tripoli (BIAT) for North Lebanon and Berytech Foundation for Beirut/Mount Lebanon, Bekaa and South Lebanon, LED Projects mostly benefit agri-foods sector, followed by hospitality, tourism, and other manufacturing.

ENI CBC Med Cooperating Across Borders of the Mediterranean engage in many projects for supporting SMEs and business enterprises, such as Promoting Innovative Clusters and Value Chains for SMEs for sustainable development, [CLUSTER4GREEN](#). The initiative focuses on the creation of economic opportunities through the promotion and development of the Mediterranean circular economy in green sectors. CLUSTER4GREEN adopt sustainable models of development in industries like textile, building or smart cities, supporting both the green entrepreneurs and the local authorities engaged in the creation of an adequate green business environment.

[EMPHASIS](#), a Euro-Mediterranean Network Facilitating Market Uptake of Innovations from SMEs, tackles the co-creation of a Mediterranean Open Innovation (OI) ecosystem, focused on marketable innovations across borders. According to the project, it will co-design, deploy and validate a Mediterranean OI service platform, facilitating knowledge flows, empowering SMEs with the skill sets and help them identifying sectors which can reverse sustainability challenges into business opportunities, such as agri-food, energy, and materials.

As for Berytech, in 2023 it has launched the [Global Entrepreneurship week \(GEW\) in Lebanon](#), showcasing its NEX-LABS and CLUSTER4GREEN projects. The event was organized in collaboration with Asher Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (ACIE), highlighting the impact on the Water Food Energy (WEF) Nexus sector. The GEW week offers an environment where players in the entrepreneurship ecosystem take part in a number of activities, competitions, and events that inspire entrepreneurs to act and provide them with the knowledge, experience, and connections.

In 2017, Berytech and Michel Issa Foundation for Local Development (MIF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish Berytech Amchit, the First Business & Innovation Center outside greater Beirut. The Berytech Amchit Center was designed to serve the regions of Jbeil, Kesserwan and Ftouh, Batroun, and Koura, possibly attracting people from Tripoli, Zgharta, and Becharri and other northern regions of Lebanon. The project aims at meeting the economic development strategies towards reducing the migration of young professionals to Beirut, enhancing innovation and boosting local development. It also aims to work as an incubator of new companies, especially for students and young graduates.

XI) JUST TRANSITION, GREEN JOBS, GREEN AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY

In 2022, the International Labour Organization launched the first [Green Jobs Pact for Youth](#) at the Climate Change Conference in Egypt - COP27. During the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28), ILO worked to advance ambitious climate action with decent work and a just transition for all, when it co-hosted the [Just Transition Pavilion](#) and supported the Just Transition Work Programme. Under the Brazil-ILO Partnership on South-South Cooperation Promotion, from 2014 until 2017 green jobs and sustainable development initiatives were promoted in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023).



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Figure 1710. High-Level Opening: Just Transition Pathway – This Way to Social Justice; ILO-EU Just Transition Pavilion at the COP 28, Dubai, 2023

According to ILO, the Brazilian Government has embraced green jobs as a core element in its national development policy. Since 2009 the ILO provides permanent technical support to the conceptual development and practical implementation of the Green Jobs Strategy, both at federal and state level. The ILO-Brazil agreement on "[Programa empregos verdes](#)" was renewed in August 2010 (SKILLS FOR GREEN JOBS IN BRAZIL, 2018). With ILO support, country results have been achieved in biofuels and ethanol chains (dialogue forums and skills training), green enterprise practices in the Amazon region, awareness-raising of labour inspectors on environmental issues in the workplaces, Solar Thermal Task Force promoting the use of solar energy hitting systems in housing programme, green jobs in social housing and sustainable construction (GREEN JOBS COUNTRY BRIEF, 2011).

ILO data shows that the most important strategy for training in "green job skills" in Brazil is to generate an overall capacity for general understanding and mainstreaming knowledge of the basic concepts and principles of sustainability and how such activities might affect the environment and the quality of life. This awareness raising and understanding of why green economy is relevant is as important as providing technically oriented capacity – green skills (SKILLS FOR GREEN JOBS IN BRAZIL, 2018, p. vi). In that spirit, there are existing courses associated with Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Brazil, at various levels and in various areas, offered in partnership between Brazilian Ministries of the Environment and of Science and Technology and the "S System", mostly SENAI (National Industrial Training Service) and SENAC (National Commercial Training Service).

Additionally, Brazil has intensified TVET provision in the 2010s, driven by the creation of the [National Programme of Access to Technical Education and Employment](#) (PRONATEC). According to 2014 data, 15 of the offered courses were characterized with a focus on Sustainable Development; 11 courses identified

with an Environmental Impact Assessment approach; 8 courses including Environmental Management and Control in their coverage; and 4 courses were identified as presenting Environmental Legislation issues. (SKILLS FOR GREEN JOBS IN BRAZIL, 2018, p. 21-25).

Brazilian Ministry for the Environment created in 2005 the National Programme of Training of Environmental Managers (PNC – [Programa Nacional de Capacitação de Gestores Ambientais](#)). The objective was to train professionals capable of planning and implementing local policies aimed at environmental conservation via a Municipal Environmental System, strengthening Sisnama, the National Environmental System (SKILLS FOR GREEN JOBS IN BRAZIL, 2018, p. 32). The PNC Programme has a national focus and is based on a shared logic of environmental management between municipalities, states and the Union, always considering local and regional specificities. In 2010 Brazil implemented the National Solid Waste Policy (PNRS) (under Law 12.305/10) allowing the country to tackle the main environmental, social and economic problems arising from the inadequate management of solid waste. The policy provides for the prevention and reduction of waste generation, encourage sustainable consumption habits and a set of instruments to enforce increased recycling and reuse of solid waste - or the environmentally appropriate disposal of waste when the case.

Finally, programmes such as Caixa Econômica Federal's Blue House Seal, Brazilian Housing Quality and Productivity Programme (PBQP-H), and Energy Efficiency in Buildings Label shall be further encouraged (GREEN JOBS COUNTRY BRIEF, 2011). According to ILO, although most new jobs are now generated in the service sector in Brazil, training for skills for the green transition in manufacturing and construction activities remains important, as these are large employment-generating sectors (SKILLS FOR GREEN JOBS IN BRAZIL, 2018, p. 33).

In Lebanon, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) in partnership with the Lebanese Ministries of Industry, Economy & Trade, Environment, and Finance and in cooperation with the Association of the Lebanese Industrialists (ALI) and the Federation of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture (FCCIAL) launched [2CIRCULAR](#), a project to boost circular and green production in Lebanon. In June 2023, The European Union (EU) has allocated 3.7 million euros to fund the project, which aims to partner with over 50 food and beverage companies to create momentum for green and circular production in the country (UNITED NATIONS LEBANON, 2023).

The project, 2CIRCULAR, builds on the successful experiences of 15 Lebanese companies already supported by UNIDO under the EU-funded MED TEST programme thus advancing investment into resource efficiency and cleaner production techniques as a cost cutting measure. Focusing on the food and beverage industry, 2Circular will go a step further and support the development of 5 innovative circular business models and facilitate access to finance for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). (UNITED NATIONS LEBANON, 2023).

UNIDO proven methodology supports the adoption of sustainable business practices and encourages circular models that prioritize cutting costs, higher competitiveness, environmental footprint resource efficiency and waste reduction. Emerging from a particularly harsh economic downturns, this project has the potential to improve Lebanon's access to international markets, generating new jobs and increasing competitiveness in the global market. It will also contribute positively to the environment by reducing waste and pollution and promoting the use of renewable and green energy sources (UNITED NATIONS LEBANON, 2023).

The [Green Impact MED Project – Positive Investments for Positive Impacts](#) (GIMED) is a EU-funded project under the ENI-CBC Med Programme aiming at empowering Green Entrepreneurs and SMEs to better access finance and market. Under the programme, Berytech, in collaboration with Cewas and Eco Consulting, developed the Toolkit for Green and Circular Entrepreneurship that covers every stage of development, from

ideation to acceleration, and is designed to guide business support organizations (BSOs) to lead green entrepreneurs and MSMEs, not only in Lebanon but across the entire Mediterranean region.

For Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt, Palestine, as well as Italy, Portugal and Greece ENI-CBC Med Programme launched [GREENLAND](#), addressing in particular the high rates of youth and female unemployment in the region. The programme promotes social inclusion and fight against poverty by providing unskilled and underprivileged young people with marketable skills and qualifications in the Green and Circular Economy, with the potential to generate thousands of jobs. GREENLAND offers skill-based occupations within the green sectors, reducing skill mismatches in rural areas particularly affected by the climate change. It creates new curricula based on market needs, skills transfer to NEETs and women, media-based training tools, and cultural exchanges among young people. The creation of new employment opportunities will be reinforced by the sector-skills alliances between TVETs and SMEs.

XII) PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IN THE LABOUR MARKET

Women can be significant drivers of change when engaging in economic recovery, the creation of jobs and diversifying export markets. They are often central agents in the private sector producing local goods and services. However, challenges are faced not only considering the fragile balance of pay but also concerning the different gender-based constraints faced by women, decreasing the success rate of their enterprises.

There are many constraints facing women entrepreneurs in both Lebanon and Brazil. However, in Lebanon it results in a low share of women-owned businesses, limiting the gender to working in marginalized sectors of the economy (where production levels are equally low). As far as implementation challenges are concerned, according to Nabil Abdo and Carole Kerbage (2012), women's entrepreneurship development (WED) initiatives in Lebanon face shortfalls which hinders the path towards gender equality and promoting sustainable enterprise development. Challenges include duplication of efforts and over-supply of projects in the same areas, resulting from a lack of co-operation between support organizations; the fact that middle-income women are largely missing from WED initiatives, which target mostly either well-off women entrepreneurs or low-income women; and that women entrepreneurs are still perceived as assistance receivers, not as rights bearers, as most interventions are supply-led or limited to immediate response to basic needs (such as micro-credit loans or support services that further reinforce informality and vulnerability). Restricted to 'feminized sectors', such limitations preclude actual sustainable enterprise development in Lebanon (ABDO; KERBAGE, 2012).

To address such challenges, as part of the European Union for Women Empowerment Project in Lebanon, Berytech and Expertise France are providing Women-Owned or Women-Led Businesses (WOLBs) MSMEs and startups with grants to strengthen and grow their businesses in Lebanon. The [WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT FOR LEBANON PROJECT](#) (WEEL) aims at supporting women-owned and women-led businesses in Lebanon by providing MSMEs and startups with grants to be used for expending investments, covering expenditures and getting technical assistance.

This project is part of a larger programme, the EU for Women Empowerment (EU4WE), a 42-month programme funded by the European Union and implemented by Expertise France. It aims at promoting full and unconditional equality between men and women in Lebanon. The specific purpose of EU4WE is to reduce gender-based violence through women's empowerment and enhance existing institutional mechanisms working towards gender equality.

Under WEEL Project MSMEs and startups undergo a journey of tailor-made technical, business, and financial support that varies from covering legal fees, content creation, and marketing expenses, to the costs of platform development, capacity building, and franchise, in addition to machinery, and many other types of expenditures. WEEL aims at enabling such enterprises to create more jobs and provide import substitution and export readiness, ensuring the injection of hard currency into the Lebanese economy and adapting them to survive the current crisis.

Launched in 2019, the [We-Fi project e-Commerce and Women-Led SMEs in Lebanon](#) is designed to help women entrepreneurs expand their access to domestic and export markets through e-commerce platforms and improve e-commerce related business environment and infrastructure for women entrepreneurs. The project has the support of the government of Lebanon and is implemented in partnership with IDAL, the Investment Development Authority of Lebanon, under the World Bank regional project financed by the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi). According to the World Bank, as women entrepreneurs in Lebanon face a variety of constraints including social norms, family care responsibilities, transportation

issues, and access to finance, there are added difficulties when physically accessing markets, participating in international trade fairs and promoting their products. E-commerce may help overcoming such gender-based market access barriers for women. Additional difficulties include high shipping fees, the cost of international payment solutions, slow customs clearance procedures, limited compliance with export requirements, consumer protection regulations, difficulties with regulations to facilitate ISO accreditation and a lack of information and capacity to utilize available platforms.

The ENI CBC Med Programme, addressing the high unemployment rate and low participation of women in the labour market in the Mediterranean, provides training in digital skills to women and know-how about digitalization approaches to businesspeople. Via [INTERNISA](#) the programme combines training and penetration in the digital sector with professional development in the agri-food, textile, tourism and financial sectors. INTERNISA develops online and offline services addressed to women and employers providing training curricula and personal consulting, culminating in interventions related to match-making of labour demand and supply through an online platform and job fairs to foster contacts among job seekers and employers.



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As far as Brazil is concerned, according to 2022 data from SEBRAE, over 10.3 million women are entrepreneurs and business owners in the country. The survey Female Entrepreneurship 2022, carried out by Sebrae using IBGE data, shows that the figures reached record levels since the beginning of the research, in 2016. Women accounted for 34.4% of all business owners in the country. Together, men and women exceeded the total of 30 million business owners - the highest number in the historical series.

More than half of the female business owners act with service provision (53%), while men account for only 36%. 27% of women work in trade and commerce (men with 20%), 13% industry, while men total only 6% in that sector; 7% in agriculture (against 17% male participation) and livestock; and 1% in construction (20% men). The states with the highest proportions of female entrepreneurs are: Rio de Janeiro (38%), Ceará (38%), São Paulo (37%), Goiás (36%).

The number of female contractors (employers) rose by 30% in one year, reaching 1.393 million in the third half of 2022. However, in the total universe of the sample, 9 out of 10 continue to run their businesses alone, acting solo. Although more and more women have employees, the majority of female business owners (89%) work on their own in their companies.

The Group Women of Brazil ([Grupo Mulheres do Brasil](#)) is a non-partisan group created in 2013 by 40 women from different segments with the aim of engaging civil society in achieving improvements for the country. It is chaired by businesswoman Luiza Helena Trajano and has 119,908 participants in Brazil and abroad, with 155 locus. Engaging in existing projects and institutions, the group aims to promote measurable social impact and seek diversity. One of the Replicable Actions offered is the Free Mentoring for Women Entrepreneurs. 45.4% of entrepreneurs are women and many of them do not have the skills nor the training to engage in such enterprises. The four modules course promotes female empowerment through entrepreneurial training, offering knowledge in finance, people management, marketing and sustainability, aimed at those having formal companies or not. The Programme expects to promote equal gender opportunities, female economic empowerment for decision making and providing financial autonomy (PROGRAMA DE MENTORIA GRATUITO PARA MULHERES EMPREENDORAS, n/d). The activity takes place under the Entrepreneurship Committee.

In 2019, the Entrepreneurship Committee organized the Conecta Empreendedoras gathering, offering opportunities for women microentrepreneurs to obtain credit assistance in their businesses – sponsored by Banco Pan and supported by ToTvs, UN Women and Facebook. The programme offered workshops, mentoring, lectures and panels, which covered topics such as: Entrepreneurial Attitude, Digital Marketing, Sales, Communication, Finance, Afro Entrepreneurship, Longevity, Maturity, among others.

Another example of a Replicable Action is the Successful Entrepreneurs project, developed by the Entrepreneurship Committee and the Vozes Committee, in partnership with Sebrae/PE and the Padre Arlindo Association. The objective is to help people with low income or who do not have financial resources to invest in entrepreneurial training through experience and exchange of knowledge with professionals in the field to enable them to undertake enterprises safely. The modules include, among other topics: business communication and brand positioning; formalizing your business; sales channels; environmental hygiene and food safety; network between different tourist services; notions of English and Spanish; environmental education in tourism; basic tourism guide training – selling products and services in the region; pitch (METODOLOGIA DO PROJETO EMPREENDEDOR DE SUCESSO, 2021). In 2006, after the June 2003 Memorandum of Understanding for beginning the negotiations in the field of tourism cooperation between and the Federal Government of Brazil and Lebanese Republic, following the December 4th, 2003 Cooperation Agreement in the Field of Tourism, and the 76/2006 Legislative Decree, Brazil signed the 5888/2006 Federal Decree.

Another Committee under Grupo Mulheres do Brazil is the agrobusiness, which seeks gender equality in Agriculture, combat violence against Rural Women and Education with a focus on technological training. Neighbourhoods and Communities Connection Committee seeks to unite the city, creating connections with the outskirts and less favoured regions of São Paulo to stimulate and design actions that originate in these spaces and can be replicated in other regions. The committee seeks to give visibility to the work and solutions developed in the communities and encourage the protagonism of the women who participate in them.

The Insertion of Refugees Committee under Grupo Mulheres do Brazil, since 2016, helps to include refugees in society, so that they can rebuild their lives in the country. The Committee raises awareness among

entrepreneurs about hiring these professionals, connect employers and NGOs that support this workforce and collaborate on projects to revalidate diplomas and facilitate entry and re-entry into universities³⁷.

CCAB Wahi Committee, Women's Achievements High Inspiration, has also promoted a round table with Mulheres do Brasil on the different experiences of female entrepreneurship in the Arab region. The initiative is particularly interesting given both entities missions, targeting intercultural dialogue, trade and female entrepreneurship.

³⁷ It also works on training, capacitation and cultural preparation on labour relations in Brazil. Trainings are focused on gastronomy, insurance, technology, administration, painting and general services. Through the "Empowering Refugees" program (UNHCR and Global Pact) its targets exclusively refugee women, mostly training them so that they can prepare a good CV, be well evaluated in interviews and be able to enter the job market, among other actions. Partnerships were established with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Cáritas, several other NGOs and with the private sector. In total, more than 100 people have already benefited its actions.

XIII) RECOMMENDATIONS LEBANON & BRAZIL COOPERATION

Brazil and Lebanon share strong historical and cultural ties, significantly bolstered by the prominent Lebanese diaspora in Brazil, which has made notable contributions in economic, political, and social realms. Both countries engage in excellent bilateral relations, yet there remains untapped potential for further exchange in commerce, culture, and South-South cooperation through knowledge, technology, and expertise sharing. Diasporas are increasingly recognized as pivotal stakeholders, acting as agents for cultural exchange, investment, development, advocacy, post-conflict peace building, and agenda influence. This potential aligns well with the Decent Work Agenda, aiming to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection, and strengthen dialogue on work-related issues.

The assessment reveals that previous cooperation initiatives were primarily bilateral, focusing on trade or humanitarian aid across sectors such as agriculture, education, culture, tourism, health, defence, and humanitarian cooperation. However, these efforts were often sectorial and discontinued. The study identifies sectors where sustained cooperation could promote equitable and productive work opportunities. The focus areas include gender equality, inclusion of vulnerable populations, post-conflict reconstruction, diaspora entrepreneurship, youth opportunities, SME promotion, formalization of the informal economy, green jobs, circular and solidarity economy, and just transition, all of which are integral to South-South cooperation and the Decent Work Agenda.

The methodology involved a literature review, desk research on the economic landscapes of both countries, and virtual interviews with various stakeholders, including Chambers of Commerce, Industrial Associations, Cooperation Agencies, Diplomatic representations, and the ILO. A SWOT analysis was conducted, prioritizing agri-food and agro-business, tourism, and construction and infrastructure as key sectors with the potential to promote decent work conditions, social justice, and sustainable development through capacity-building and horizontal exchange of experiences and technical expertise. These sectors align with South-South cooperation principles, focusing on mutual benefit and shared development goals.

The assessment aligns efforts with the Sustainable Development Goals Agenda and ILO aims, addressing forced and child labour, rural productive inclusion, gender equality, assistance for vulnerable populations, green jobs, creative economy, skills improvement, employability, and entrepreneurship. It presents challenges and opportunities for convergence of interests among employers, workers, and Brazilian and Lebanese stakeholders under the ILO SSTC framework. The agri-food sector, particularly when integrated with eco and sustainable tourism, tourism, and construction, offers significant growth potential, promoting local economies, job creation, and inclusive growth. Practical suggestions for partnerships and programmes to support these sectors include enhancing market access, promoting fair trade practices, vocational training, supporting SMEs, and fostering sustainable and responsible tourism and construction practices. Through these efforts, Brazil and Lebanon can further their engagement in South-South cooperation, advancing the Decent Work Agenda and contributing to sustainable development. As for the construction and infrastructural sectoral performance, it can be argued to have high relevance post-crisis, with migrant, refugees and youth populations as target groups. The sector offers opportunity for economic growth and the creation of direct jobs and vocational training via reconstruction efforts; and feasibility to drive change via the encouragement of MSMEs, startups and innovative solutions in green construction, intelligent cities, circular economy, and waste management. Infra-structure is also particularly important in Just Transition Initiatives, presenting great potential to drive sustainable change.

Other potential areas have also been identified, such as financial and banking intelligence, technology, financial cooperatives, wind and solar energy, development of technologies on renewable and alternative sources of energy, and expertise exchange in public/social housing policy development, urban planning,

legislation, low-income access to financing urban development, and basic sanitation and social housing policies. Chemicals, paints, pharmaceutical products and personal care cosmetics were also mentioned as having its trade potential increased.

The report recommends further South-South Triangular Cooperation between Brazil and Lebanon to be continuous, steady, and long-term, with mutual diaspora engagement and investment. The effort must engage in long term and horizontal partnerships, adopting a transversal cross-sectoral approach. SSTC should aim towards multidimensional forms of South-South Triangular cooperations targeting vulnerable populations which adopt horizontal strategies as well as include intercultural and educational exchange and support the access to decent work and entrepreneurship.

As far as actions for the 2024-2025 biennium are concerned, the convergence of interests shall be in line with initiatives under the [Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation, ILO Decent Work Agenda](#) in the Arab States and Decent Work Country Programme in Lebanon, in which tripartite interests converge, as well as integrating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) from the [2030 United Nations Agenda](#). The assessment presented both transversal and broader approaches and recommendations, as well as sector-oriented suggestions, covering action and policies targeting specifically the agriculture, tourism, and construction sector.

For a sustainable South-South practice, the approach must be self-sustainable and shall continue to be effective in the medium to long term, consider the role of inter-cultural dialogue and its knowledge-exchange manifestations as igniters of SSTC and work in close engagement with local population, communities, experts and stakeholders via participative, creative and innovative methodologies. It shall also combine low and high policy level engagements and advocacy and balance between public and private stakeholders, national and local level entities. Sustainable SSTC shall engage in the promotion of initiatives addressing the productive chain as a whole, approaching mutually beneficial sectors in a multidimensional and transversal manner, crossing multiple stakeholders' needs. Practices shall also implement a long-term inclusive, dialogued, context sensitive, egalitarian and horizontal approach to triangulation, being aware of foreign partners dependency and avoid setting over-bold objectives and/or targets or duplicate efforts in identical sectors. Finally, initiatives must coordinate and seize synergies and/or resources from other ILO in-country interventions.

The specific actions and recommendations presented in the report to promote highly productive sectors and value chains included: facilitation of peer-learning event as a means of introducing potential partners; rounds of trade and sector sales missions; field work, investigative missions and case studies (pToc); diaspora targeted awareness-raising and dialogue sessions; awareness-raising and advocacy concerning [MERCOSUL](#) Free Trade Agreement; B2B meetings and memorandum of understandings; encouragement of trans-regional tripartite social dialogue and knowledge-sharing sessions; support diaspora and migrant entrepreneurship in the Global South, targeting youth and women in particular, via facilitating regulatory frameworks, skills and technologies transfer, sustainable business development services and access to financial products and literacy; encourage [Social and Solidarity Economy](#) (SSE), particularly Social and Solidarity Finance (SSF) via financial cooperatives; invest in public-private partnerships; educe the gap between the industry needs and the work force capacitation via matching and skill anticipation; design mobile upscaled training centres, technical schools and worked-based learning stations; invest in local job centres and digitalization of education; facilitate dialogue and exchange between research centres, universities and startups; develop an innovative microfinance support system for start-ups; leverage innovative business offering from business development services, technological/ technical assistance and facilitation of industry connections to in-kind grants; cooperate in the field of information technology and banking technology; encourage cultural, educational and academic exchange programmes; partner with local entities and projects and foment city-to-city modality of cooperation.

This assessment highlights the potential for South-South Triangular Cooperation (SSTC) between Brazil and Lebanon, emphasizing agriculture, tourism, and construction as key sectors for promoting decent work and sustainable development. In agriculture, initiatives may include enhancing market access, securing fair-trade practices, providing financing solutions, and implementing good agricultural practices. Efforts should focus on improving agricultural infrastructure, developing drought-resistant crops, integrating research and education, and supporting Agritech startups. Adapting My.COOP's training package into Arabic and Portuguese can further strengthen agricultural capacity. In tourism, recommendations involve promoting youth and female entrepreneurship, eco-tourism, local agri-food products, and inclusive tourism for the elderly and disabled. Exploring new sub-sectors like health tourism and blue economy services can drive sustainable growth.

For construction and infrastructure, initiatives should address employment informality, provide vocational training, and promote community development and environmental protection. Supporting MSMEs with business knowledge, tools, and micro-finance, expanding green skills training, and encouraging green practices through legislation and incentives are crucial. Establishing platforms for coordination between stakeholders, raising awareness about sustainable practices, and incubating green ventures and innovative startups can further advance the sector. The assessment underscores the importance of medium and long-term cooperation, strengthening domestic institutions, and fostering socially just and economically viable development. By leveraging diaspora contributions and integrating sustainable development goals, Brazil and Lebanon can improve living conditions for vulnerable populations and achieve mutual institutional strengthening through SSTC initiatives. The Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation (Social Justice for the Global South) aims to promote vocational training, inclusive learning, and rural productive inclusion. It also focuses on green jobs, transitioning to a sustainable economy, and promoting a solidarity economy. The convergence of interests in SSTC and local efforts will also address child and forced labour, social protection, labour inspection and administration, green jobs, gender and migration equality, and targeting vulnerable populations. In Latin America, efforts are being made to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals from the 2030 United Nations Agenda. Adapting the outcomes obtained from the report into a SSTC practice can include the following approaches and actions for the 2024-2025 biennium.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE ILO

- Facilitation of peer-learning event as a means of introducing potential partners.
- Complementary field work and case studies to identify factual ground needs and address policy guidance and interventions accordingly.
- Raise public awareness, promote political articulation and work to generate consensus in Mercosur member countries, emphasizing the product-by-product approach; mutual advantages (win-win agreement); and the generation of ancillary benefits beyond trade. Emphasize the relevance and prominence of Lebanese diaspora figures in Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay as well as in the associated states.
- Increase the visibility of Lebanese industrial exports, diversify trade balance, introduce Lebanese products into Brazilian market and raise awareness of the ancillary benefits generated beyond trade, bearing in mind that increasing the interest in trade is the key focus by employers, industrialists and chambers.
- Promote investigative missions in both Brazil and Lebanon with the presence of experts and technicians to identify areas of particular interest.

- Celebrate Memorandums of Understanding between main employers organizations on Brazil and Lebanon.
- Encourage social trans-regional dialogue and knowledge-sharing sessions contemplating Latin American and Middle Eastern perspectives. Instructive to learn about sectoral bottlenecks, challenges as well as develop innovative solutions when advancing Brazil Lebanon SSTC.
- In regard to enterprise development, strengthen collaboration with ILO ROAS and their partners working to promote a more enabling and inclusive business environment for sustainable enterprises, the promotion of cooperatives and social and solidarity entities. Enhance women's entrepreneurship, promote responsible workplace practices; value-chain development, strengthening the whole market systems — enterprises, business relationships, market structures, and the business environment - generating economic growth and development. Engagement with Brazilian SEBRAE to foster entrepreneurship and provide guidance to small businesses via technical support and training to expand businesses.
- Encourage and bolster up the provision of sustainable business development services in the country, of entrepreneurs able to offer MSMEs support, commercial capacitation and financial education, digital solutions, e-commerce, marketing, brand training and sustainable practices – especially targeting the youth, women and refugees. Offer gender-sensitive environment and capacitation to women entrepreneurs.
- Awareness raising and advocacy in governmental bodies of the role of female entrepreneurship and formalization of the informal sector.
- Incentivize new sources, instruments and mechanisms of innovative financing for funding the Sustainable Development Goals. Financial cooperatives can be good examples to be leveraged, as well as social and ethical banking; financial cooperatives including the credit union movement, cooperative banks and building societies, community based saved schemes, saving and credit cooperatives, as well as forms of participatory budgeting, labour solidarity funds, social financial intermediaries, micro-credit, and equity debt instrument. Learn from SSTC Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs) toolkit to address obstacles to financing the SDGs (see [SOUTH-SOUTH AND TRIANGULAR COOPERATION FOR FINANCING DECENT WORK - A Peer-Learning Guide, 2021](#)).
- Encourage Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), particularly Social and Solidarity Finance (SSF), in order to democratize access to finance, reinsert values and practices of solidarity and reciprocity into the financial sphere, foster local economic development and boost community building.
- Raise awareness and provide instruments capacitating the enforcement of international guidelines and instructions in the world of decent labour, tackling from work force regulation and equitable labour to environmental standards.
- Coordinate engagements with the Bureau for Workers 'Activities (ACTRAV), strengthening trade union capacities to enforce the wider ratification and application of ILO relevant Conventions and facilitating cooperation in promoting awareness-raising and social dialogue fighting discrimination towards migrant and domestic workers.

- Awareness raising campaigns in schools and trainings in recruitment agencies to sensitize them of the importance of inclusive work standards, domestic migrant and other vulnerable workers' rights, particularly women migrant domestic workers and disabled women.

Invest in active dialogue with local governments, diplomatic representatives, non-governmental organizations, civil society entities, chambers of commerce and commercial associations³⁸.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BRAZILIAN AND LEBANESE STAKEHOLDERS

- Rounds of Trade and Sector Sales Missions with the support of Chambers of Commerce and Industrial Associations exploring new markets. Tourism and Gastronomic Fairs and workshops introducing new products, facilitating network, presenting different marketing strategies, and identifying mutual demands and convergence of opportunities.
- Diaspora targeted awareness-raising and dialogue sessions on the rich opportunity for market growth and trade diversification in Latin American and Middle Eastern markets, knowledge on the human capital available and on the importance of the MERCOSUR Agreement.
- Consider as target of investment measures aimed at training qualified human resources with vocational training, tailor fit to the demands of both economies, and actions aimed at reshaping the bilateral trade profile, diversifying exports and working in favour of introducing products with greater added value.
- Foment the promotion of B2B meetings not only to increase trade but also promote information, technology and know-how exchange.
- Support diaspora and migrant entrepreneurship in the Global South, with a number of SMEs operating informally, by recognizing diaspora communities and migrants as shapers of economies, empowering them as entrepreneurs. Measures should include: facilitating regulatory frameworks; facilitate foreign direct investments and regulations on remittances; alleviate administrative barriers for MSMEs; facilitation of peer-to-peer exchanges; skills and technologies transfer; facilitate access to financial products and promote financial literacy of migrants, in particular women and youth; expedite the recognition of migrant's foreign qualifications (see ICMPD, 2015).

³⁸ Considering the priority sectors mentioned, active dialogue with local governments, diplomatic representatives, non-governmental organizations, civil society entities, chambers of commerce and commercial associations may be explored via potential collaborations with - but not limited to - the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Education, Economy and Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Environment, Tourism, Water and Energy and Labour and Social Affairs. Lebanese and Brazilian diplomatic bodies, such as the Brazilian Embassy in Lebanon and SECOM Beirut, the Lebanese Embassy in Brazil and Lebanese General Consulates in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo; State Tourism Offices; the Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (via CCAB LAB and Wahi Committee); the Brazil Lebanon Chamber of Commerce (CCBL); EMBRAPA; Brazilian Institute for the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA, MMA); Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (ICMBio, MMA); Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil (CNA); APEX Brasil; Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC); Caixa Econômica Federal; Environmental Company of the State of São Paulo (CETESB); Brazilian National Electric Energy Agency (ANEEL); Brazilian National Service of Industrial Training (SENAI), particularly SENAI Innovation Institutes (ISI) and its Vocational Training Centers transferred to other Southern countries with the support from the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC); SEBRAE; National Confederation for the Commerce of Good, Services and Tourism (CNC), Brazilian Agency for International Promotion of Tourism (EMBRATUR); International Halal Academy; National Confederation of Industry (CNI); Mulheres do Brasil (Empreendedoras de Sucesso Programme); SIELBRA; South American-Arab Countries Summit cooperation (and BibliASP); UNESCO's Arab Latinos!; Council for Development and Reconstruction (CDR); IDAL Invest in Lebanon; Association of Lebanese Industrialist (ALI); Federation of the Chambers of Commerce Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon (FCCIAL); Chamber of Commerce Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon (CCIA-BML); Business Incubation Association in Tripoli (BIAT); Entrepreneurial Development Foundation (EDF); Lebanese Association for Research, Innovation, and Development (LARID) and different UN agencies.

- Information exchange between Brazil and Lebanon: industrial capacity and machinery, rates and statistical data to identify the convergence of capacities and interests. Improving data transparency and availability, indicators and indexes.
- Boost diaspora positive activism via facilitating investments, supporting entrepreneurship, assisting foreign donors and remittances, making return migration more visible and promoting development projects. Reduce transaction costs associated with migration, enabling benefits from internal mobility, and making mobility an integral part of national development strategies.
- Encourage intensive investment in Technology, Research, Development and Innovation (RD&I) projects geared to the demands of the productive sector. Intensive investment in both professional and technological education and in innovation and technology is believed to increase the productivity and competitiveness of companies as well as accelerate the transition to a more inclusive, sustainable and resilient economy.
- Invest in public-private partnerships, based on a mutual listening of demands and concerns, Increasing the cooperation between the private sector and state vocational training institutions.
- Engage and invest in transregional tripartite social dialogue promoting negotiation, consultation and/or exchange of information between representatives of governments, employers and workers.
- Reduce the gap between the industry needs and the work force capacitation via matching and skill anticipation. Address the skills mismatch between education, training and the job market. Promote regular engagement and communication between skills training centres, employers, the private sector and workers. Closer alignment between Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and employers, incorporating approaches to education and training that enable the young to acquire actual competitive advantage in the job market, obtaining skills that combine training with opportunities to generate employment and income.
- Invest in local job centres and digitalization of education. Facilitate dialogue and exchange between research centres, universities and startups developing innovative technology and creative research, particularly targeting green energy, green construction, sustainable and blue tourism and solid waste management. Invest in enabling dialogue with companies and final consumers.
- Explore potential for city-to-city modality of cooperation such as São Paulo-Beirut and others. Inspiration from current examples such as Rio de Janeiro-Beirut (Rio-Beirut: paths for two cities) with the celebration of a Cooperation Protocol with the Municipal Secretary of Urbanism of Rio de Janeiro, following Municipal Law No. 5134/2009. Case studies of ongoing urbanism, transportation and sustainability projects.
- Support and leverage local startups benefiting them with: tailored capacity-building activities, business development services, training, coaching and scouting (design thinking bootcamps to develop solutions and one-on-one mentoring sessions developing entrepreneurial competencies); immersion trips; increase visibility in local and international markets; provide access to technological and technical facilities and provide technical assistance; financing with in-kind grants; facilitating industry connections with sector stakeholders and experts via networking events; and demo day to pitch solutions to local and regional investors and stakeholders.
- Develop an innovative microfinance support system for start-ups, focusing on young entrepreneurs with promising business ideas facing credit constraints.

- Cooperate in the field of information technology (legislation on digital signature 'e-signature'; online government purchases 'e-procurement'; and digitalization of public files, improving the Right of Access to Information). Explore mutual benefits from advances in banking technology aimed at income transfer programmes and microcredit operations, as well as facilitating trade and investments (such as pix technology, open banking).
- Advocacy in governmental bodies of the importance of approving the MERCOSUL Free Trade Agreement with Lebanon, considering the legislative impediments in Lebanon.
- Design and establish mobile upscaled training centres and stations, technical schools and worked based learning addressing the mismatch between vocational capacities and market demands. Explore the potential cooperation between SENAI's Mobile Actions Programme (PAM), ILO and the Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI). Explore the interest and expertise in mobile work-based training stations.
- Cooperate in the realm of digital innovations and solutions, particularly SEBRAE digital solutions for MSMEs, such as UpDigital, boosting social networks sales and networking; PNBOX advising and tools for developing a digital business plan and market insertion; Sebraetec; as well as payment facilities and issuance of e-invoices.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON AGRICULTURE – FOR THE ILO

- Encourage Brazilian and Lebanese universities exchange of agricultural knowledge and projects design. Developing partnerships with public agencies and private research institutes developing technological solutions and applied agri-food research.
- Learn from previous UN and domestic initiatives for the improvement of the agriculture sector productivity and for the enhancement of access to markets, diversifying the agri-product export agenda, especially targeting farmers and MSMEs in the agri-food sector. Seize synergies and/or resources from other ILO interventions as well as learn from the many initiatives supported by Berytech and Fair Trade Lebanon, as well as SEBRAE initiatives and Agro.BR Project promoted by the Confederation of Agriculture and Livestock of Brazil (CNA).
- Establish thematic and working groups to adapt key ILO resource material, produce transversal booklets, training package and learning modules. Adapt My.COOP's training package and programme on the management of agricultural cooperatives into Arabic and Portuguese, exploring pilot training activities and country adaptations.

RECOMMENDATIONS ON AGRICULTURE – FOR BRAZILIAN AND LEBANESE PARTNERS

- Design innovative initiatives in the agricultural sector, adopting new technologies and creative solutions in order to promote inclusive growth via market diversification, rural development, agricultural productivity, cost reduction and quality enhancement and the adoption of sustainable practices. Support local food production to meet domestic demand, enhancing access to markets and increasing exports.
- Secure fair-trade practices along the food value chain, focus on sustainable practices which promotes rural development, increases agricultural productivity and fosters inclusive growth. Investment in organic produce and ecological transition.

- Promote initiatives to support micro and small-scale farmers, accounting for the large majority of agricultural production, improve and restore access to finance and inputs and encourage business acceleration programmes. Enable MSMEs and cooperatives access to financing and investments, including creative financing solutions. Ensure micro and small credit facilities.
- Introduce product control quality, good agricultural practices, food safety standards of processing and labelling, packaging, traceability, standardization and certification systems. Ensure compliance, adoption of good farming practices and new technologies in production and post-harvest practices.
- Offer market training and capacitation on market diversification, develop a well-defined import-export calendar to protect local production. Strengthen the role and work of cooperatives and other forms of collective management. Offer training in family harvest, quality standards, legislation, added value, marketing, cooperativism, sustainable development, inclusion and participation (see DARWICH, 2023).
- Provide marketing and digital marketing support, including: planning, benchmarking, business and investment plans, sponsored campaigns, target definition, rationale of editorial line and schedule, visual identity, social media, graphic design consulting (logos, labels, tags and product catalogues) and improving content SEO positioning in organic search.
- Territorial interventions in order to improve agricultural infrastructure, including rehabilitation or establishment of good water supply, irrigation systems, storage facilities and roads. Transversal integrated initiatives such as this tackle both infra-structural as well as agri-food sectors targeted in this study.
- Previous missions convergence of interest: capacitation in water treatment, control and monitoring of water quality. Support in the area of epidemiological surveillance, preventing outbreaks of diseases transmitted through air and water, and promoting rapid response to outbreaks. Health, sanitary and phytosanitary technical collaboration concerning animal and plant health.
- Cooperate in research development of new cultivars and crop variants adapted to dry-land areas in both countries. Collaborate in irrigation and cultivation techniques in semi-arid areas. Potential for improving effective post-harvest technology and processing, introducing new species, integrating the production and introducing intercropping schemes, multi-span greenhouses and drip irrigation.
- Integrate extension research and education into the agricultural development, making new knowledges on agriculture production and post-harvest practices accessible to and adopted by farmers, improving access and building mutual trust. Designing tailored capacity building programmes to reduce costs and losses with the support of agricultural technicians and engineers (see DARWICH, 2023). Facilitate access, dialogue with research centres and implementation of new technologies and schemes pre- and post-harvest. Improve application of technology and research in the field. Foment strong collaboration among the government agencies and regulatory bodies and in collaboration with research institutions, updating policies and laws (see DARWICH, 2023).
- Encourage technological solutions via CCAB LAB, incubating Agritech startups, agrifoodtech innovative solutions and Agrytech Accelerator Programmes. Engage with CCAB Ellos Platform as well as Apex's Brasil Exportação Platform, both facilitating digital trade, with a focus on micro, small and medium-sized ones.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COOPERATION ON TOURISM – FOR THE ILO

- Promote workshops, technical missions and exchange of professionals in the tourist segment. Focus on training and capacitation for promoting youth and female entrepreneurship in the sector, including financial education, entrepreneurship and enterprise development support/business formalization, marketing and digital marketing, management, career guidance, business communication and brand positioning; sales channels; environmental hygiene and food safety; facilitate network between different tourist services; basic foreign language training; environmental education in tourism; basic tourism guide training – selling products and services in the region; pitch training.
- Support Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the tourist sector engaging the local community, promoting local jobs and work opportunity, while building effective partnerships with schools, universities, and NGOs through awareness workshops and activities to ensure the involvement of youth and locals in rural development. Learn from initiatives supported by Berytech, ENI CBC Med and GIZ.
- Offer expertise and leverage Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, tackling both the agrifood and the tourist sector promoting sustainable development, green jobs and decent work conditions. Provide eco-tourism consultancy and training towards service improvement. Consultants and experts can help organizing thematic events, handling and creating new activities in complete harmony with the domain atmosphere, support the upgrade of the tourism services and activities, as well as design and develop promotional plans according to the setting's needs. Expertise and capacity building can include tailor fit programmes, concept development, product strategy, itinerary design, pricing and promotion, besides training in responsible tourism, enhancing communication techniques via workshops and identification of new local destinations and experiences.
- Promoting Brazilian and Lebanese destinations and supporting of Sales Missions for igniting engagement between partners. Encourage stronger promotion and publicity, facilitating diaspora-oriented information and dialogue sessions, workshops and networking events aiming sector workers, companies as well as consumers.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COOPERATION ON TOURISM – FOR BRAZIL AND LEBANON

- Promote the expansion of specialized staff offering eco-tourism and green activities in order to attract more tourists to and inject foreign currencies into the economy. Boosting eco-tourist attractions that promote awareness like permaculture, pedagogical farm and organic farm green packages, promoting local agri-food products and encouraging local tourism countrywide.
- Based on an intercultural diaspora approach, engage in cross-sectoral initiatives merging tourism and agri-food, promoting local experiences, services, cultural heritage and products - offering inclusive and diversified work opportunities and growth.
- Promote close engagement with local entities and village activists, building capacity alongside local authorities, experts and NGOs to ensure sustainability, cultural diversity and respect. Assure locals are at the centre of such experiences, including their products, craft and artwork, preserving intangible heritage and sustaining local talent.

- Finance and raise awareness on the importance of the improvement, restoration and conservation of cultural and both material and immaterial aspects of heritage and tradition tourism.
- Engage in partnerships with schools, universities, and NGOs through awareness workshops and activities to ensure the involvement of the youth and locals in rural and community development. Ensure close engagement with municipalities to promote conservation and development of local economic opportunities.
- Encourage inclusive tourism by raising awareness among entrepreneurs, promoting cultural change and encouraging sustainable initiatives, actions and destinations in the tourism industry. Efforts shall promote the preservation and conservation of natural resources, respect for cultures and peoples, as well as social inclusion, facilitating access for the elderly or people with disabilities in hotels and tourist sites. Learn from Tourism for All Project and Accessible Tourism Programme initiatives.
- Enhance the national partnership between all essential stakeholders toward creating necessary policies and regulations to adopt the culture of inclusive tourism for people with disabilities.
- Promote Halal tourism and 'Muslim friendly' hospitality, food and services. Adaptation of hotels, restaurants and installations, capacitation and training of business owners, suppliers, as well as staff working in the sector. Certification protocol, opportunity for inclusive work and awareness raising in the promotion of principles of inclusion and tolerance, respecting cultural and religious diversity. Exchange knowledge and expertise with Lebanese industry and services.
- In the tourist sector, design transversal projects integrating cultural heritage, urban planning and urban development as well as eco, sustainable and responsible tourism. Architecture, sustainable solutions to transportation, rethinking public spaces and culture can all be integrated into multifaceted cooperation projects. Such innovative experiences and solutions can be designed jointly between both cities and/or countries, including by boosting and incubating startups, integrating both the tourist and infrastructure sectors.
- Approach eco-tourism and blue tourism as key drivers to investment in sustainable and responsible tourism, impacting not only rural development, empowering local women and small local business owners, as well supports the local economy and collaborate with the youth in finding local jobs. Encourage the major Blue Economy potential in both Brazil and Lebanon, jointly enhancing sustainable coastal and maritime tourism development, creation of business and job opportunities in the field of ecosystem-oriented services, coastal and maritime tourism, coastal management and adaptation to climate change.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CONSTRUCTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE – FOR THE ILO

- Offer employment-related services and training. Developing partnership between commercial and industrial associations with technical and vocational education and training entities to deliver workshops and capacitation on skills matching the needs of industrialists and businesses associations. Learn from previous ILO projects improving the capacity of domestic NGOs vocational training and developing competency-based curricula providers in delivering market-based skills training. Gather information on, identify, analyse the private sector and market needs in order to provide targeted services responsive to local market demands.

- Map the market demands and requirements in terms of skilled labour, per region and in dialogue with local organizations and authorities; offer the upgrading of the skills and capacities of training providers and construction workers as to meet market requirements.
- Introduce TVET programmes in industrial segments such as infra-structure, painting and chemicals in coordination with industrialist associations' needs. Promote curricula development and skills development programmes side by side with awareness raising. Coordination between employers and government. Synergy with SKILL-UP, SOLIFEM, EIIP and SENAI.
- Foster public sector capacity, facilitating the implementation of employment intensive programmes and building capacity of private companies to implement Local Resource Based Technology (LRBT) and decent work principles. Good practices in the construction of green community assets shall use labour-intensive methods to create immediate jobs to rebuild local infrastructure, promoting community development and environmental protection.
- Platform set up for coordination between green engineering firms, trade unions, employers' organizations, contractors, suppliers, and operators.
- Efforts must partner and collaborate with ministries, local authorities, business organizations, trade unions, technicians from previous programmes in place, private entities, NGOs and international agencies specializing in employment activation and social protection.
- Raise awareness and promote the reuse of solid construction waste; develop pilot projects in the area of solid waste management, recycling and basic sanitation. Encourage wind, solar and other forms of clean energy generation, such as ethanol, biodiesel and green hydrogen. Support companies engaged in just and inclusive transition to low-carbon, and environmentally sustainable economies and societies.
- Collaborate in post-disaster planning and post-crisis recovery, creating resilience and management skills to social and natural disasters in an urban environment.
- Consider the post-2023 crisis scenario learning from post-2006 and post-2020 crises and responses. Explore the potential for training and capacitation, professionalization and cooperativism targeting post-war reconstruction efforts and impacted vulnerable populations. Support initiatives which promote jobs, social inclusion, economic sustainable development, advance the resettling of displaced in the south, rehabilitation of infrastructure as well as strengthen institutions and promote solidarity and new models of collective governance.

RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING CONSTRUCTION AND INFRASTRUCTURE – FOR ALL

- Awareness raising and information campaign on workers' rights vis a vis irregularity and informality, particularly targeted at migrant and refugee workers allocated in the construction sector. Regulate the current employment informality in construction (decent work conditions, offering incentives for employers to register, encourage independent unions, and engage in a tripartite coordination).
- Support local small enterprises through the provision of business and management training, concrete tools/equipment via socio-economic recovery strategies and access to micro-finance and grants; enhance financial capacities and managerial knowledge of construction SMEs; in

partnership with local entities, offer vocational counselling, guidance and facilitate linkages with the labour market, industry connections and knowledge on market requirements.

- Expand the supply and offering of green skills training programmes and courses. Incorporate sustainability issues in more forms of worker training and skills development, making them mainstream instead of isolated efforts. Engage in trainings, coaching sessions, education, green construction curricula, capacity building workshops and sub-grants to consolidate green business creation and green business development.
- Offer employment-related services, skills and marketing training; entrepreneurship and enterprise development support, financial and not; career guidance, soft skills, financial education and self-employment. Partnerships with TVET, SENAI and SEBRAE shall be encouraged, providing long term solutions instead of short-mid-term ones.
- Raise awareness and promote social dialogue on the relevance and need for offering both technically oriented capacity and qualifications – green skills via Technical and Vocational Education and Training - as much as the understanding of sustainability elements and its increasing importance in the labour market.
- Instating laws and regulations for green and sustainable practices in the construction and infrastructure sector, guaranteeing the approval of legislation and standard protocols as well as enforcing their adoption. Address inadequate environmental regulations.
- Encouraging stakeholders to consider green initiatives and green jobs. Create and reinforce current incentives and policies for increasing demand for workers with green skills and productive sectors who respond to sustainable practices when engaging in green construction.
- Promoting green jobs in waste management and recycling, as well as based on renewable energy and energy efficiency companies. Creative and green economy SEBRAE.
- When establishing a long-term professional qualification policy for the industry, consider: insertion and adoption of environmental management processes; emphasis on changing consumer habits; greater rigor in the control of pollutants; prioritization of clean technology research targeting small consumers (see SKILLS FOR GREEN JOBS IN BRAZIL, 2018).
- Promote cooperation, incubation, technology and expertise exchange between sustainable green construction initiatives, particularly green ventures and sustainable innovative startups providing solutions for green cement and sustainable bricks; recycling and awareness raising, waste management end-to-end solutions, advising and offering software solutions; and reuse of disposed waste generating electricity and other forms of green, renewable and clean energy solutions. Encourage youth innovative urban solution, smart cities and green construction startups.
- Offer qualified training centres and well as networking spaces for exchanging ideas and bringing together developers, consumers and companies. New training platforms opening a venue for cooperation and technical exchange among rising startups and constructechs offering creative solutions for the entire chain.
- Knowledge and expertise exchange in public housing policy development, urban planning, legislation and low-income access to financing. Mutually engage citizens, buyers, construction companies and material supplier companies in SSTC on non-conventional construction techniques,

adapted to the local reality, pre-fabricated housing, green jobs in social housing and promoting sustainable, just and inclusive public policies.

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LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

The following entities were interviewed to this study between September and November 2023:

- Arab-Brazilian Chamber of Commerce (CCAB)
- Brazilian Embassy in Lebanon
- Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC)
- Association of Lebanese Industrialist (ALI)
- National Confederation of Industry (CNI)
- Lebanese Embassy in Brazil
- TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) Coordination Offices ILO Beirut
- Brazil Lebanon Chamber of Commerce
- National Industrial Apprenticeship Service – SENAI

ANNEX I: SWOT ANALYSIS ON LEBANON-BRAZIL SECTORAL PERFORMANCE

Having identified and delved into the different domains comprising the sectors longlist and having discussed principles of **social responsibility, sustainability, and inclusivity**, we are now able to identify the **convergence of interests** and assess the **sectors shortlist** with a focus on agri-food and agrobusiness, tourism, construction and infrastructure. The convergence of interests also includes **action-oriented practical suggestions** of partnerships and particular programmes or approaches which should be considered when engaging in future South-South Triangular cooperation between Brazil and Lebanon.

Brazil and Lebanon could strengthen horizontal collaboration by partnering with International Organizations to triangulate cooperation efforts. The South-South Triangular Cooperation framework involves the exchange of knowledge, skills, technical know-how, and resources between developing countries, facilitated by ILO. This framework brings together governments, regional organizations, civil society, academia, and the private sector to pursue national capacity development objectives. The ILO's tripartite structure allows for sustainable economic development, considering different stakeholders like governments and social partners. Involving different stakeholders in SSTC initiatives can make project designs more inclusive, democratic, and feasible. Aiming to formulate strategies that capitalize on **strengths** and **opportunities** while mitigating **weaknesses, threats** and other external factors which could hinder the cooperation success between both countries, the overall SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) can be presented as follows. The analysis will then be followed by an assessment of the social impact and will resume **sectorial contributions to decent work, job creation, skill development, and overall socio-economic well-being** of both countries.

Figure 18 - SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Strengths

- Both communities have established historical ties. Diasporas are increasingly acknowledged as pivotal stakeholders and active agents in both host and homeland settings.
- Brazil and Lebanon enjoy diplomatic relations in great terms.
- Comprehensive and multi-sectorial existing/previous bilateral initiatives in place.
- Accumulated knowledge from past missions with experts and technicians in order to map cooperation.
- Strong culture of small and medium businesses and entrepreneurship know-how.
- Both countries host initiatives and have mutual interest in formalizing the informal sector and promoting equal opportunities for work and free enterprise.
- Mutual national commitment to ILO's mission and UN's 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development Goals.
- Strong domestic legislation protecting workers' right in Brazil and well established public-interest. Partnership with private institutions well versed in social, cultural, vocational and educational services, offering expertise in the world of work and open to knowledge-exchange and South-South cooperation.
- Both countries enjoy technical expertise, excellent human capital as national assets and are resourceful in knowhow.

Weaknesses

- Few examples of joint cultural, educational, commercial and technical cooperation efforts.
- Cooperation initiatives mostly commercial and oriented towards the Arab countries in general.
- South-South cooperation with Lebanon has mostly been bilateral and periodic. Previous agreements discontinued or not enforced in its full potential.
- Disengagement or limited engagement from earlier diasporas.
- Inequalities in the trade balance and between industrial parks.
- Lack of systematized data on previous and current bilateral and SSTC between Brazil and Lebanon.
- Territorial and language hindrances.
- Sensitivity of initiatives tackling domestic and refugee workers.

Opportunities

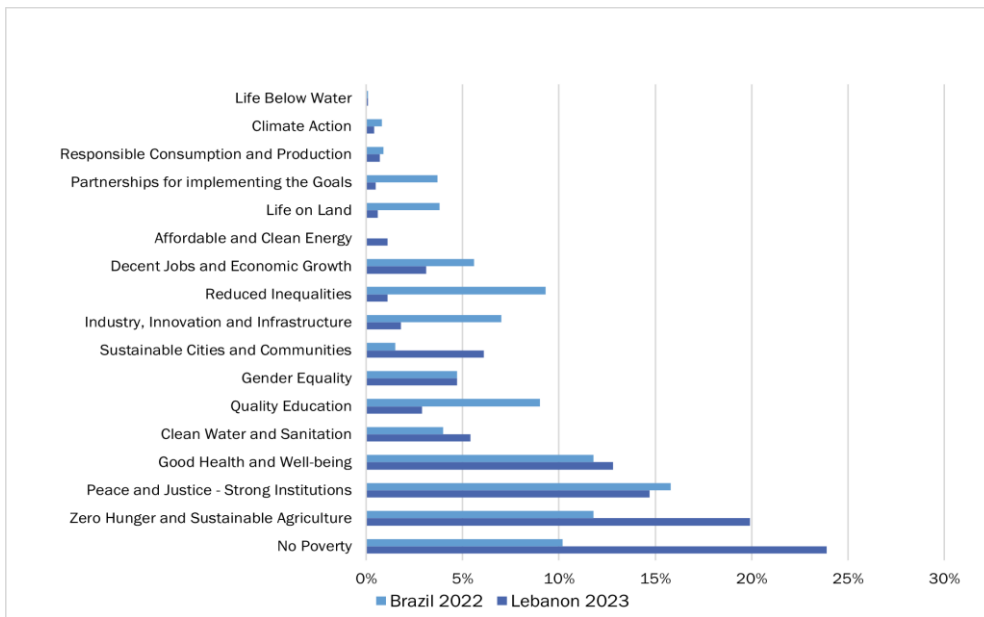
- Inaugurating and establishing a steady and long term basis for South-South Triangular Cooperation.
- Promote initiatives within the Triangular Cooperation for the Development of the Global South framework. Benefit from cooperation towards institutional strengthening and the promotion of environmentally sustainable, socially just and economically viable development in sectors of mutual identified interest.
- Stimulating actual diaspora engagement and facilitating investment.
- Both countries particularly strong in agri-food, agri-products and tourism sectors.
- Strong potential for improving and diversifying the bilateral trade, introducing products with greater added value. Additionally, exchanging of expertise may produce accessory benefits in areas other than trade.
- Designing multi-faceted initiatives integrating agri-food, tourism and infrastructure sectors.
- Mutual engagement in professional training, vocational capacitation, financial education and inclusive learning.
- Mutual interest in green and solidary economy, particularly in self-management efforts.
- Presenting innovative, creative and participative solutions - from sustainable development to technology and digital solutions.
- Promote close engagement with local population, experts and stakeholders via participative and innovative methodologies.
- Improve the gap and mismatch between market's requirements and industry needs, on the one hand, and work force capacitation and skill training on the other. Encourage intensive investment in vocational and technological education, as well as in research, development, innovation and technology geared to the demands of the productive sector.
- Exploring financial intelligence, technological cooperation and credit cooperatives.
- Brazilian political environment opened to multilateralism, trans-regional exchange and diplomatic relations with Arab countries. Lebanese business-owners and industrialists striving to increase the interest in external trade and creating work opportunities.

Threats

- Non inclusive, context insensitive or top-down approach to triangulation.
- Brazil South-South Cooperation mostly focused on the Gulf countries as well as on the commercial and trade aspect of cooperation.
- Duplication of efforts and over-supply of projects in the same areas. Saturation and overlapping of initiatives supporting the agricultural sector in Lebanon.
- Setting over-bold objectives and targets when designing projects.
- Targeted population as assistance receivers instead of rights bearers. Services limited to immediate response to basic needs and as short-mid term solution.
- Triangular initiatives tied and dependent on foreign partners.
- Lack of confidence in the Lebanese banking system, economic crisis and absence of bank credit lines.
- Political instability and legislative deadlock, hindering the approval of agreements. Insecurity due to the 2023 War on Gaza. Weak state institutions, lack of resources and structural challenges.
- Weak accountability of state expenditure in both scenarios.

But where do interests converge? In broader terms, considering the United Nations support to both Lebanon and Brazil on its national commitments to the **Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030**, an overlapping of priorities can be identified. UN is currently implementing **238 key activities in Lebanon and 274 in Brazil** during the ongoing programme cycle. Available resources for Lebanon are US\$470.7 million, and for Brazil US\$191.3 million. The SDGs Agenda is supported in both locations through government capacity strengthening, financing development needs, and constructive partnerships with civil society and the private sector. The below pattern shows a mix of mismatches and fields of almost perfect match. Taking only the United Nations stance and investment in SDGs agenda, not considering sole domestic projects or other forms of financing, in both Brazil and Lebanon Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions receive one of the largest amounts of investment, around 15% of resources, Good Health and Well Being around 12%, Clean Water and Sanitation 4.5%, and Gender Equality receive 4,7% of resources in both locations. Mismatches are observed in agendas such as No Poverty, Zero Hunger and Sustainable Agriculture, Reduced Inequalities, Quality Education, Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure and Sustainable Cities and Communities.

Figure 19. United Nations Contributions to SDGs in Brazil (2022) and in Lebanon (2023)

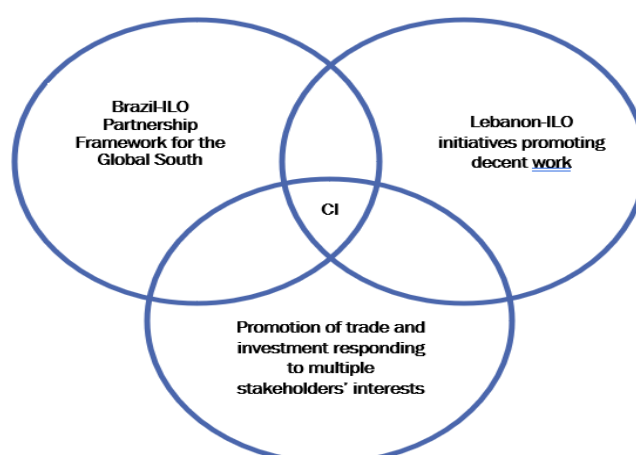


Source of the data: United Nation in Lebanon, Sustainable Development Goals, 2023; United Nations in Brazil, Sustainable Development Goals, 2022.

In Lebanon, most United Nations investments to advance the Sustainable Development Goals are done via UNHCR (US\$ 170,4 million), WFP (US\$ 85.6 m), UNDP (US\$ 72.1 m), WHO (US\$ 32.6 mi) and UNOPS US\$ 31.5 m). The ILO, via EU, Netherlands and Germany represents US\$ 20.2 million in total investments, tackling Decent Jobs and Economic Growth but also No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Gender Equality and Peace and Justice – Strong Institutions and Agendas. **As for Brazil, main** investments are done via UNDP (US\$ 68.7 million), IFAD (US\$ 54.4m), UNICEF (US\$ 53.1 m), UNHCR (US\$ 43,9 mi) and UNESCO (US\$ 31.8 mi). The ILO, via the Government of Brazil, represents US\$ 10 million in total investments, tackling mostly Decent Work and Economic Growth, but also Health and Well-being, Peace and Justice – Strong Institutions, Quality Education, Gender Equality and Reduced Inequalities Agendas (UN IN LEBANON, SDGS, 2023; UN IN BRAZIL, SDGs, 2022).

This assessment highlights the challenge and potential of identifying cooperation efforts that promote trade, investments, and decent work under the ILO framework, while also considering the demands and stakes of governments, commercial associations, and civil society partners. One of the ways of assessing this convergence of interests is identifying the initiatives under the Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation – Social Justice for the Global South in which tripartite interests from government, employer, and worker representatives converge and cross them with the previously presented efforts already taking place in Lebanon as well as with the interests from businessmen and women, industrialists and Chambers of Commerce when promoting commerce, trade and investments. The overlapping of these interests and initiatives will show us where the interests converge.

Figure 20. Brazil-Lebanon South-South Cooperation - convergence of interests



Under the **Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme Social Justice for the Global South**, a few policies and efforts can be listed as particularly interesting for this study:

- ❖ Vocational training, learning policies and inclusive learning.
- ❖ Rural productive inclusion.
- ❖ Green jobs and transition to a sustainable economy.
- ❖ Transition to formality and productive inclusion – financial capacitation.
- ❖ Solidarity economy - National Programme for Strengthening Family Farming and Agriculture.
- ❖ Traceability and certification in productive chains.
- ❖ Income transfers programmes.
- ❖ Policies to assist migrants.
- ❖ Digital labour platforms.
- ❖ Labour regulation and union organization - social security taxation, e-social work/domestic work.

Training programs in Brazil and Lebanon are based on businessowners and industrialist demands, aiming to reduce the gap between industry needs and workforce capacity. Stakeholders have stressed the need for mutual interests, including public and private. Brazil and Lebanon may receive additional awareness and enforcement tools for guidelines, including workforce regulation and environmental standards. Transitioning to formality and inclusive work is also shared, and public-private partnerships are necessary in both countries. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has been actively involved in combating child labour and promoting social protection. However, the SSTC has also expanded its focus to include other areas such as eliminating forced labour, promoting green jobs, and promoting gender and migration equality. In Lebanon, South-South efforts have been less prominent, but initiatives have been launched to promote decent work for Syrian refugees and host communities in the Arab region, integrating Sustainable Development Goals, decent work, and employment. In partnership with the ILO, Lebanon has also addressed the Syrian Refugee Crisis, child labour, skills and employability, labour inspection, social protection, migrant domestic workers, and support for Palestine refugees. Showing different emphasis towards South-South Cooperation and in terms of priority segments, the table below exposes the convergence of interests in terms of decent work and implementing sustainable development goals agenda; fighting forced and child labour; promoting rural productive inclusion; gender equality; assisting particularly vulnerable populations such as domestic and/or migrant workers, women and youth; encouraging green jobs and creative economy; as well as improving skills and employability and enabling self-employment and enterprise. The table includes relevant principles and initiatives under Brazil South-South Triangular Cooperation and Arab States South-South Triangular Cooperation. Additionally, it comprises both Brazil-ILO

and Lebanon-ILO partnerships in the forms of projects. Most cooperation initiatives have been commercial, humanitarian, cultural, and educational. Post-war and post-crisis Brazilian Missions in Lebanon and Lebanese Missions in Brazil have promoted cooperation in areas such as technical cooperation and trade promotion. These exchanges have been mutually beneficial and have the potential to yield significant results beyond commerce. Past examples and guidance include: cooperation in the areas of irrigation applied to fruit growing, with emphasis on drip, dairy farming, and horticulture, development of tropical and semi-arid fruit agriculture and cultivation techniques.

- SENAI Capacitation Programmes such as carpentry, woodwork and hydraulics. Mobile Actions Program (PAM) and post-conflict workforce and labour training in affected regions.
- Urban development cooperation in sectors such as solid waste management (garbage collection, sorting and recycling technology), basic sanitation and social/low-cost housing policies.
- Banking technology aimed at income transfer programs and microcredit operations, and information technology (legislation on digital signature 'e-signature' and online government purchases 'e-procurement').
- Capacitation in water treatment, control and monitoring of water quality. Support in the area of epidemiological surveillance, preventing outbreaks of diseases transmitted through air and water, and promoting rapid response to outbreaks.
- Post-disaster planning and creating resilience and management skills to social and natural disasters in an urban environment.

The areas where interests converge in terms of feasibility to drive change, opportunity for inclusive growth and relevance to targeted groups, such as vulnerable communities, are reflected in both Brazil and Lebanon ILO programmes currently in place or implemented in the recent past, as presented in the table above.

ANNEX II): MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS: NEW PERSPECTIVES FOR BRAZIL AND LEBANON

The growing labour international mobility increases the need for the protection of migrant workers, a particularly vulnerable group in terms of labour rights, safety, and decent work. After the 1960's, the percentage of individual workers living outside of their home country has grown significantly, reaching 3,3% of the world population in 2015 – 244 million people (HOLZMANN, 2016, apud DELGADO; HALIK, 2019, p. 287).

According to Joedson Delgado and Aline Halik (2019), the Brazilian government follows the orientation of the [Convention nbr. 118 of the International Labour Organization](#), which deals with the equality of treatment to national and foreign workers in relation to social security, and of the [International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR) of 1966 (Decree n. .3197, 1999; Decree n. 591, 1992). Brazil also follows the **Convention nbr. 102** about social security minimum standards that brings the dispositions about minimum appropriate treatment to several benefits with social security nature (DELGADO; HALIK, 2019, p. 283-284). In the spirit of the promotion of a variety of rights related to social security, such agreements have as fundamental objective the establishment of rules to standardize fundamental principles towards the treatment of migrant workers and their families, via appropriate international protection and long-term benefits, especially considering their vulnerable situation and distance from their home state (DELGADO; HALIK, 2019, p. 284).

Between 2014 and 2017, under the Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme for South-South Triangular Cooperation, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico (observer) and Trinidad and Tobago have engaged in the protection of the rights of migrant workers (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023, p. 12). Under the [Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme](#), the project focused on protecting the rights of migrant workers. The initiatives towards the improvement of social security and social protection policies to assist migrants have an impressive potential to be expanded, given it constitutes of only 4% of the mobilized resources through a project approved in 2023. These initiatives fall under the axis 'eradication of child labour and labour analogous to slavery' and 'promoting more and better jobs and strengthening social protection' of the 2023-2027 Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation (SOCIAL JUSTICE FOR THE GLOBAL SOUTH, 2023, p. 11, 16, 19).



Figure 21. Signature of the Brazil-ILO Partnership Programme during the X Brazil/ILO Annual Review Meeting, Geneva, June 2023

Based on a 2013 ILO rapid assessment on the employment profile of Syrian refugees and implications of population influx on Lebanon's labour market, the ILO developed a series of interventions as an integral part of its response to the Syrian refugee crisis in the country. The interventions are particularly interested in enhancing the resilience of individual and groups of producers as well as workers affected by the Syrian

refugee crisis in Lebanon's rural areas, focusing on the livelihoods, host communities, resilience, and social protection.

According to [ILO](#), over 250,000 migrant domestic women workers reside in Lebanon. Compared to international standards, institutional and legal protection for migrant domestic women workers remains very weak in Lebanon, and efforts to ensure decent working conditions are confined to a limited number of local organizations, international actors, and activists. Since 2005, the ILO, in partnership with Lebanon's Ministry of Labour, has advocated for the protection of migrant women domestic workers, primarily focusing on the introduction of relevant legal instruments as well as the development of capacity building programmes supported by advocacy efforts.

In response to the compelling need to protect migrant domestic worker's rights, the ILO implemented the [Promoting the Rights of Women Domestic Workers in Lebanon](#) (PROWD) project, which has been working to promote the rights of women domestic workers throughout the country (THE ILO IN LEBANON, n/d). The project (LEB/10/04/EEC) ran from 2011 until 2014, and it aimed at enhancing the economic integration for women migrants and improving labour migration governance and social dialogue as a means to contribute to poverty alleviation through decent work for migrant workers. The project included the revision of laws that apply to domestic workers, to bring them in line with international labour laws and standards, capacity-building of stakeholders to monitor the working terms and conditions of women migrant domestic workers (WMDWs), and awareness-raising of domestic workers and of the Lebanese public to the rights and obligations of domestic workers (PROWD, 2014, n/p). Outcomes of the project were an enhanced capacity by Lebanon's Ministry of Labour and other key players to manage, coordinate and monitor the working terms and conditions of migrant domestic workers in Lebanon; an increased awareness of the situation of women migrant domestic workers in Lebanon; and the establishment of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to provide overall guidance, support, and monitoring of the project and to continue to coordinate with the National Steering Committee on women migrant domestic workers (PROWD, 2014, n/p).

Still in the thematic field of improving the rights of women migrant domestic workers, ILO interventions in Lebanon included: [Palestinian Women Economic Empowerment Initiative \(LEB/10/03/SDC\)](#); and [Towards counting as Workers: Protecting the Rights of Women Migrant Domestic Workers \(WMDWs\) in Lebanon Through a Participatory Policy Dialogue and Action Process](#) (PROWD) (LEB/10/05/SDC). (ILO EVALUATION OFFICE, 2015). The later pursued innovative communication and dissemination approaches, such as [awareness-raising campaigns in schools](#). Additionally, training was provided to recruitment agencies to sensitize them on the issues and the rights of female migrant domestic workers, aiming at encouraging them to abide by a code of conduct (LEB/10/05/SDC).



Figure 22. Lebanese domestics workers, participants of the PROWD project, 2011, Lebanon

In order to promote and expand migrant workers' rights, further engagement can be coordinated with [Bureau for Workers' Activities](#) (ACTRAV), the main link between the International Labour Office and the world

of work through workers' organizations, strengthening trade union capacities of ensuring the wider ratification and application of ILO relevant Conventions ([Migration for Employment Convention No. 97 \(Revised\)](#), 1949 and [Migrant Workers \(Supplementary Provisions\) Convention No. 143](#), 1975) and promote the [ILO Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration](#) for a rights-based approach to labour migration (BUREAU FOR WORKERS' ACTIVITIES, ACTRAV, 2008). ACTRAV also facilitates cooperation between trade unions in countries of origin and the countries of destination of the migrant workers, fighting discrimination, racism, and xenophobia and promoting awareness-raising and social dialogue on the issue of labour migration at domestic-national, regional and international level (BUREAU FOR WORKERS' ACTIVITIES, ACTRAV, 2008).

Lebanon is part of the [Mediterranean Transit Migration Dialogue](#) as well as the [Strengthening African and Middle Eastern Diaspora Policy through South-South Exchange](#) (AMEDIP) initiative. Projects such as these can improve outcomes for migrants as well as for destination countries by simplifying channels that allow people to seek work abroad, ensuring basic rights for migrants, reducing transaction costs associated with migration, enabling benefits from internal mobility, and making mobility an integral part of national development strategies (UNOSSC, UNDP, IDB, 2014, p. 40).

ANNEX III): DEFENCE, SECURITY AND PEACE KEEPING COOPERATION

It is then possible to move the conversation to the defence, security and peace keeping cooperation. From 2011 until 2021 Brazil was in command of the [Maritime Task Force of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon](#) (UNIFIL). The command was passed on to Germany in January 2021. As the conflict in Syria worsened, the Brazilian Government has repeatedly expressed its support for Lebanon in its task of maintaining the stability of the country (MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, LEBANESE REPUBLIC, n/d). Brazil has joined efforts from the international community to maintain peace, independence and sovereignty of Lebanon through its participation in international peacekeeping forces in Lebanon³⁹.

In October 2022, the **Agreement Between Brazil and Lebanon on Defence Cooperation**, signed in Beirut in December 2018, was ratified. The PDL 770/2019 report was authored by Senator Tasso Jereissati (PSDB-CE), Legislative Decree 136/2022, DOU 10/14/22. On the 25th of July 2023, under Decree 11.620, the Brazilian Presidency promulgated the agreement (PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NBR. 11.620/2023, DOU 26/07/2023). The agreement will seek to promote cooperation between the parties on matters relating to defence, with emphasis on the areas of research and development, logistical support, acquisition of defence services and products, and contribute to matters related to systems and equipment in the field of defence.

In 2018, Lebanese Armed Forces received four Embraer ALX/A-29 Super-Tucano aircraft, the result of a partnership between Brazil Embraer Defence & Security and the North American company Sierra Nevada Corporations. SNC and Embraer have also been contracted to provide logistics support, training, spares and support equipment for the airforce.

Additionally, negotiations between Brazil and Lebanon were held towards the **Interinstitutional Cooperation Agreement between the Federal Police of Brazil and the Internal Security Forces of Lebanon**, which began in 2017. As of 2022 the agreement was ready for signature by both parties (RIBEIRO, 2022). Still, the Brazilian defence industry has little entry into the Lebanese market, dominated by traditional partners who donate their weapons and use them in operations in the country. However, there is certainly a great deal of potential for exploring trade relations in this market (RIBEIRO, 2022).

According to data provided by the [Brazilian National Confederation of Industry](#) (CNI), in Brazil, the Defence Industrial Base plays an important role in its current economic cycle. It accounts for approximately 4.78% of domestic GDP and generates around 2.9 million direct and indirect jobs, being responsible for 2.2% of the country's formal employment. Under the [New Growth Acceleration Program – Novo PAC](#) – launched in August 2023, nearly US\$ 52,8 billion are expected to be invested in the Defence sector in order to guarantee the implementation of strategic defence projects in the medium term. Novo PAC is the investment program coordinated by the federal government of Brazil, in partnership with the private sector, states, municipalities and social movements. The joint effort is aimed at accelerating economic growth and social inclusion, generating jobs and income, and reducing social and regional inequalities. Divided in 9 axes, Defence is the

³⁹ This engagement has reflected Brazil's aspirations in participating in Middle Eastern security issues and in United Nations peacekeeping efforts more directly (ABDENUR, 2016). Such involvement projects Brazil's **influence and presence in the Middle East**, in line with the country's strategic goals in expanding its **participation in United Nations peacekeeping forums and efforts** (SILVA et. al., 2017). Additionally, Brazil positions itself as a key agent able to promote dialogue, international security and peace in the region, as recently observed during its **mediation efforts and attempts to approve a cease-fire resolution on the War on Gaza** under its rotative presidency of the United Nations Security Council during October 2023.

fourth axis the receive the most investment, followed by Sustainable and resilient cities, Transition and energy security and Efficient and sustainable transportation.

As per information provided by the Brazilian National Confederation of Industry (CNI), initiatives such as the development and national production of conventionally armed nuclear-powered submarines; frigates and shipyards; wheeled armoured vehicles; long-range artillery and its ammunition; as well as the production of military freighters, such as the KC 390, and high-performance fighters, such as the Gripen, produced on Brazilian soil by [EMBRAER](#), are of fundamental importance not only for the country's defence autonomy but also for the development of its economy and technological park.

According to CNI, strengthening the national defence industrial base is a strategic initiative. Such efforts increase national power as well as the spill over positive externalities to various sectors of civilian industrial production. In this respect, cooperation in the realm of applied research, systematic innovation, development, industrial production and patent registration are fundamental to enhancing the delivered products. Additionally, it also foments the development of applied technologies, help promoting institutional innovations, particularly of those defence products of dual-use, and potentially further develop the countries' industrial parks. Particularly following the 11.620/2023 decree, other approaches to be the target of investment are measures to train qualified human resources, meeting the demands of both economies, especially in the field of technical vocational education, and actions aimed at reshaping the bilateral trade profile, diversifying exports and working in favour of introducing products with greater added value.

ANNEX IV): ACADEMIC-SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION AND EDUCATIONAL & CULTURAL LINKS BETWEEN LEBANON & BRAZIL

Academic and scientific cooperation are particularly important for the South-South exchange of knowledge and technology. Efforts towards this form of approach shall invest in the human capital, intellectual and scientific capacity as local asset of both countries, preventing brain drain. Not only academic and scientific cooperation can be promoted between universities and research centres, but also Brazil can greatly benefit from the excellent education and formation from Lebanese, allowing for remote working and benefiting businesses in Brazil. The Brazilian Ministry of Education, in partnership with the Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Relations, may encourage programs and engage in further cooperation considering: Ciências sem fronteiras; Lebanon Abroad; Programa Leitorado CAPES; PEC-G Programa de Estudantes-Convênio de Graduação (undergraduation student agreement) and PEC-PG Programa de Estudantes-Convênio de Pós-Graduação (graduation student agreement). Finally, the Kanoun Institute of International Compared Law Brazil-Lebanon presents an initiative for South-South Cooperation in the realm of law and juridical studies. The Kanoun Institute works with comparative studies of Brazilian and Lebanese laws, as well as cultural and academic exchange between universities, courthouses, libraries and legal associations from both countries. It also holds lectures, seminars, and conferences on the topic.

Moving to the cultural arena, it is needed to emphasize that cultural policies represent a particularly relevant factor in a country's international presence, promoting its values and culture abroad. As argued by the Brazilian diplomat Edgard Telles Ribeiro (2011), cultural diplomatic diffusion acts in the service of the Brazilian foreign policy, promoting the country's highest external interests. By cultural relations not only state-centered cultural diplomacy is considered, but also transnational communications spontaneously established between social groups, academic communities, artists, and cultural producers, regardless of the frontiers separating them. The state has a key role in facilitating those exchange flows, projecting national values, but also because beyond its intrinsic merits, cultural relations enable, with a unique effectiveness, other types of state goals in the political, economic, or commercial level. The universe of cultural diplomacy includes exchange of peoples, promotion of art and artists, language teaching as a vehicle of values, integrated distribution of promotional material, support for intellectual cooperation projects, support for technical cooperation projects, and integration and mutuality in scheduling (RIBEIRO, 2011, p. 15, 25, 31). Cultural diplomacy can also be considered a modality of soft power, with the capacity to influence policy, public opinion, and decision-makers.

In 2011 the Brazil-Lebanon Cultural Centre in Beirut Guimaraes Rosa was inaugurated. Lebanon is the sole Arab country where there is a branch of Guimarães Rosa Institute. The space works towards cultural promotion and teaching Portuguese as a heritage language for the Brazilian community that lives in Lebanese capital Beirut. Between 2020 and 2022, despite COVID pandemic constrains, the course had 130 students enrolled by trimester (RIBEIRO, 2022). With an increasing number of activities and students, the Centre also assists Lebanese military who will attend specialization courses in Brazil (MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, Lebanese Republic, n/d). Other cultural initiatives in Lebanon include the Brazilian Cinema Festival in Lebanon, Beirut Chants Festival and Art Exhibitions with Brazilian artist.

Current project carried out via partnership between The Brazil Arab Chamber of Commerce and the Lebanese University Usek - Digitization of the Memory of Arab Immigration in Brazil and Latin America. The digitalization project is under the realm of Usek's Latin American Studies and Cultures Center (Cecal), which works towards knowledge exchange between Lebanon and Latin America. Also, in 2020, celebrating 140 years of the Lebanese presence in Brazil the Associação Cultural Brasil-Líbano (ACBL) promoted a virtual exhibition on 360 technology with an unprecedented collection of photos, maps and stamp from commemorative editions in partnership with Saint-Esprit de Kaslik (Usek) University.

Celebrating 140 years of Gibran Khalil Gibran, the Association in partnership with the Gibran Museum also launched in October and November 2023 a traveling exhibition of his paintings and photographs of the sacred Qadisha Valley, where Gibran was born. An official postal stamp and federal lottery tickets will circulate in honour of 100 of the publication of *The Prophet*. The initiative also has the support of the Brazilian Federal Government, São Paulo State Secretary of Culture, Economy and Creative Industry, Mount Lebanon Club, Bandeirantes Television, Brazilian Post and Telegraph Company, Correios, and Brazilian Federal Bank, Caixa Econômica Federal. The Immigration Museum in São Paulo will also host a temporary exhibition presenting the trajectory of the Lebanese immigration to Brazil, including the historical visit by D. Pedro II emperor to Lebanon, one of the factors which boosted the increase in the arrival of immigrants to Brazil still in the 1880's.

In September 2020, following the Beirut port explosion, a TV show special "Um Abraço em Beirute" was exhibited by TV Cultura, Brazilian public television network based in São Paulo, featuring famous Brazilian singers such as Claudia Leitte, Gilberto Gil, Roupas Nova, Daniel, Fagner, Frejat, Lenine and the Refugee Orchestra who performed to gather donations for the victims.

Diaspora Houses is a touristic and cultural project from Lebanese Diaspora Energy that includes the restoration of numerous ancient houses, to serve as a cultural hub and place of gathering for both emigrants and locals. It brought together many nationalities and helped them working together and exchanging ideas in a geographically small place but boundless with its significance. The result of this great effort resides in its cultural importance through the continuous setup of festivals, forums, and the participation of other countries with the hope of boosting cultural exchange. So far 5 houses were opened, and some others are in the restoration process (LDE, n/d).

The Lebanese-Brazilian Academy of Letters, Arts and Sciences (ALB) is a cultural institution inaugurated on September 9, 2022, headquartered in Rio de Janeiro, whose aim is to cultivate and preserve the literary, intellectual and artistic creativity and cultural values of Lebanon and Arabs in Brazil, as well as to safeguard, promote and disseminate the literary, artistic and scientific works of its patrons, founders and academics. ALB instituted the Lebanese-Brazilian Academy of Letters, Arts and Sciences Medal in order to award and reward relevant services rendered to ALB and the community by individuals or companies, as well as the Gibran Khalil Gibran Prize, awarded annually to authors of Lebanese and Arab origin in recognition of their literary, artistic and scientific work.

The Brazil Friendship Group Grupo Amizade Brasil is a group of Lebanese-Brazilian women who have come together to maintain Brazilian customs, culture and traditions while living in Lebanon, promoting cultural integration between peoples and engage in solidarity actions. As a non-profit organization, they aim at helping people all over Lebanon. Promoting intercultural dialogue, Arab Latinos. UNESCO initiative preserves the influence of the Arab culture in Latin America and the Caribbean, engaging in Arab culture education, preservation, promotion, and dissemination actions. It promotes South-South cooperation, strengthening practices of cultural diversity and solidarity. The project is a cross regional 5 years plan aimed at promoting social inclusion and the fight against discrimination via stimulating contemporary flows of scientific and cultural collaborations between the regions. Arab Latinos! project explores the historical and ongoing cultural ties between Arab States and Latin America and the Caribbean, aiming to combat stereotypes and discrimination. It delves into the intertwined roots of "Arabs" and "Latinos" shaped by transatlantic interactions, fostering a South-South intercultural dialogue against racism. Initiatives for the South-South dialogue and solidarity include literature translation, artistic mobility and residencies, youth engagement and anti-racism recommendations, exhibitions, memory preservation, the creation of a website with actions developed by the projects, talks and workshops on the collaboration of Arabic poetry for knowledge formation and social transformations, and the role of the arts in the Arab cultural diversity.

A series of cultural and artistic activities can be fomented in order to engage the youth, promote literature, art exhibitions, film festivals, cuisine and sport initiatives. In 2023, Ryadah Committee was created by the

Arab Brazilian Chamber of Commerce aiming to encourage business and investments related to sports between Brazil and the Arab countries, understanding sports as a vector of human, economic and social development. Sports cooperation and youth engagement can be potentially stimulated with the endorsement of the Riyadh Committee.

Within a South-South perspective of solidarity, the Summit of South American-Arab Countries (ASPA) is one of the first bi-regional mechanism to promote cultural and educational cooperation. After 2005, commercial, diplomatic, and cultural relations between both regions strengthened considerably (FARAH, 2017).

On the cultural front, important projects include the Arab-South American Library and the opening of Bibli-ASPA, the Arab, African and South American Library and Research Center in São Paulo. The centre was created to promote critical reflection through research, production and the dissemination of ideas on Arab, African and South American peoples. Bibli-ASPA vision is to establish and strengthen consistent and long-lasting cultural, educational and economic relations among such countries through the constant production and publication of academic knowledge and cultural exchange. Promoting cultural diplomacy and South-South solidarity, the initiative engages in translation and teaching programmes, publishing migrant literary expressions, organizing exhibits, festivals, courses, workshops as well as cultural and educational exchange programs. Activities also include promoting social inclusion, welcoming of migrants and refugees, facilitating communication, assuring respect for diversity, and supporting access to work. BibliASPA has a bazaar to collect funds for refugees, but the centre also offers food, transportation, clothing as well as legal aid and translation and assistance in finding a job. With the support of the Municipal Secretariat for Human Rights and Citizenship of the City of São Paulo, they provide orientation to formalize small businesses and entrepreneurships, issuing a work card, access to social security, support for finding a job and registering a CV and provide information on the domestic legislation regulating work conditions. This is a particularly significant example of a multidimensional South-South cooperation initiative aimed at vulnerable populations. The horizontal strategy includes cultural and educational exchange, humanitarian aid while supporting access to decent work and entrepreneurship.