Rural women producers and cooperatives in conflicts settings in the Arab States

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Gender
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Abstract

Ongoing violent conflicts accentuate the challenges that women and men face in the rural areas of Iraq, Lebanon, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The potential of cooperatives for sharing risk, pooling resources, learning together, generating income, and balancing work and family responsibilities, has yet to be actualized. Cooperatives in the three countries remain marginal, and often organizations labelled as cooperatives do not adhere by cooperative principles. Since donor dependency has become pervasive, interventions should focus on skills development for the sustainability of cooperatives. Training needs adaptation to the local context, and gender responsiveness is necessary for the success of interventions.

1. Introduction

Growing joblessness resulting from the global financial crisis and the deepening of food insecurity around the world are exacerbated by conflict and post-conflict dynamics. Conflicts limit the capacity of states to provide basic functions for their populations (Weihe 2004). The legitimacy of the state may be in question, especially where social fragmentation has become engrained and taken political, ethnic, or religious lines, and external actors may choose not to go through the government of a country for political reasons. Thus the focus shifts to non-state actors, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations, party-affiliated organizations, and community organizations. Where private sector is weak and unable to generate enough jobs, the focus shifts from paid employment to self-employment, and the promotion of entrepreneurship. Yet entrepreneurship may often fail in unfavourable conditions lacking secure flow of people, goods, credit, and the availability and accessibility of markets because of the underlying high risks.

High risk is a feature of life in developing countries and is exacerbated in conflict settings. It discourages foreign investment or invites only speculative 'hot money'. In addition to speculative private capital, the flow of donor funds also contributes to the phenomenon. Quick spending frenzy interventions in post-crisis settings dry up after a short stint, leaving very little to hold onto in terms of the social and economic impact. In addition to political conditionality imposed by donors and creditors the volatility of funds further creates instability, particularly where capital outflows are highly mobile.

The risks associated with violent conflict and the labour situation are often interlinked and feed into each other (Cramer 2006). Lack of adequate employment opportunities can be a cause of violent conflict. Violent conflict leads to deterioration of working conditions, including forced labour. The availability of good jobs can consolidate peace in the aftermath of war. Violent conflict affects the infrastructure of social service provisions and leads to geographic redistribution of the population, with people moving abroad, to rural areas and to refugee camps.

The social roles of women and men are typically redefined during conflict and in its aftermath. Although women are less likely to be directly involved in the fighting, they may often be the victims of violence. Moreover, with the temporary or permanent loss of men's contribution towards household income, whether because of the of fighting, disability, death, displacement, or migration, women contribute to a larger share of income-generating activities and may become the main providers, in addition to their unpaid care and housework activities. The transformation of women's survivalist activities into more sustainable income-generating activities is a central challenge in conflict settings.

International actors promoting women's entrepreneurship have often tended to develop their frameworks and tools to target urban women. In conflict settings, however, this emphasis often needs to shift to rural income-generating activities. In the absence of developed markets, people in rural areas establish institutions such as cooperatives to share risks, pool resources, and provide credit (Besley 1995). Cooperatives have a special relevance for women, who typically

form a larger share of the agricultural labour force as contributing family workers, yet are less likely to own collateral needed to secure loans on account of their limited access to land and property. Cooperatives combine features of enterprises and membership-based organizations, and may provide a critical outlet for women's empowerment and economic independence, building the way for faster, fairer, and more sustainable socioeconomic recovery from the conflict.

Under which conditions can cooperatives be a vehicle for the empowerment of rural women in conflict settings? The current paper explores the question in the context of three different conflict settings in Arab States. Its findings are based on previous and ongoing work of the International Labour Organization Regional Office for Arab States in Iraq, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Lebanon. It focuses on evidence emerging from the adaptation and implementation of ILO training tools for women's entrepreneurship and gender equality in the three countries.

2. Methodology

A major challenge in policy analysis of labour markets in conflict settings is the lack of availability and reliability of data. The specific factors affecting data vary in the three countries under study. Where information is available, comparability remains an issue, particularly across time, because of differences in methodologies. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics has received extensive technical support throughout the years in developing the capacity to conduct regular labour force surveys and censuses, despite the devastating effects of the Israeli occupation. In Lebanon, for reasons related to a history of civil conflict and the sensitivity of quantifying the sectarian distribution of the population, the last population census dates from 1932, and last labour force survey from 1970. More recently the Lebanese Central Administration for Statistics has been collaborating with the ILO to conduct a labour force survey. In Iraq, the Central Organization for Statistics and Information Technology has conducted a number of surveys in the post-2003 war period, including an extensive Household Socio-economic Survey in 2007, yet using different methodologies and population coverage. The current paper relies on the most recent data available from national surveys in the three countries.

A particular concern is the lack of data on cooperatives. None of the three countries registers members of producers' cooperatives as a separate status-in-employment category. The survey gap thus requires reliance on establishment surveys and administrative data that are of varying quality, and are often limited to agricultural cooperatives. Moreover, the prevalence of informal cooperatives, which are not formally structured as legal entities and are not registered in official records, makes administrative data less relevant. From a gender perspective, the data deficit is important, particularly as it relates to availability of sex-disaggregated membership data of cooperatives, which is necessary to identify men-only, women-only, and mixed cooperatives as well as the sex distribution across different types of cooperatives (consumer, rural, housing, non-traditional cooperatives are the categories identified by the Arab Cooperative Union). The

information presented in the literature on rural women producer cooperatives is based on micro data from individual cooperative case studies or programmes supporting a group of cooperatives. The widespread informality of economic activities in the three countries is related to the conflict conditions as well as to other factors, as highlighted in country case studies on informal employment (ILO Forthcoming).

United Nations (UN) agencies working in conflict settings are particularly constrained in gathering primary information for their interventions because UN security measures may restrict or deny their access to the area, depending on its security phase.[2] Iraq for instance was at the time of writing under phase IV, with Al-Anbar, Basrah, Diyala and Wasit under phase V (UNDSS 2009). UN agencies often have to rely on intermediaries when they cannot be present in the field. The background research for this paper is partly an outgrowth of the Women Enterprise Development and Gender Equality (WEDGE) component of the Iraq Local Area Development Programme (LADP) that is implemented jointly by the ILO and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). LADP has benefited from focused group interviews with key Iraqi stakeholders from three governorates in northern (Suleymaniyah), central (Babel), and southern Iraq (Marshlands). The WEDGE component has completed its three training activities of Iraqi intermediaries on establishing and improving rural enterprises including family enterprises and cooperative enterprises in 2008. It is currently in the process of grant distribution for the intermediaries to implement the learning from the training workshops in their respective areas. The replication of the training is expected to directly reach rural women producers across the three localities, and a training accreditation process will take place in parallel with the administration of the grants program. The same model will be adapted to Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza Strip based on the learning experience from Iraq.

The selection of Iraqi intermediaries for WEDGE was based on an institutional survey designed to select participants to the training for trainers, which covered 40 Iraqi institutions, in addition to 4 Lebanese and 4 Palestinian institutions in preparation for the next phase of the project. Respondents were asked questions to identify their knowledge of gender equality issues, women entrepreneurship, cooperatives, and their assessment of priority gender issues within the local context in general, and in the field of enterprise/cooperative development in particular. Survey respondents spanned four types of institutions in each country: cooperatives, non-governmental organizations, community organizations, and trade unions. Individual semi-structured interviews were also conducted with representatives of each type of institutions in the three countries. The survey and interviews were complemented with a mapping analysis conducted on several rural production value chains in Iraq, including 'klash' (a traditional shoe produced and worn in Northern Iraq), honey, tomatoes and dates. In the current study, the results of the national surveys, institutional survey, interviews, and mapping analysis, are augmented with a review of the primary and secondary literature and stocktaking of experience to date in ongoing activities.

3. Country contexts

3.1 History and geography of conflict

The three countries have witnessed a history of violent conflicts, under related yet different circumstances. Historically, they were part of the Ottoman Empire which was gradually dismantled after World War I. Lebanon, along with Syria, came under the French mandate, while Iraq and Palestine came under the British mandate. The independence of Lebanon and Iraq, the historic events leading to the partition of Palestine, subsequent wars, military coups in Iraq, Israeli occupation of Arab territories, Lebanese civil war, the Iran-Iraq war, the first Gulf war, sanctions on Iraq, the second Gulf war, resistance to occupation, and internal violence, have been central determinants of lives and livelihoods in the region. Recent events include the US-led war on Iraq and its occupation since 2003, the Israeli war on Lebanon in 2006, and the Israeli war on Gaza in 2008-9 (Falk 2004; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009).

War, occupation, and authoritarian politics can have deep impacts on the geography of territories, by forcing the movement of persons and their separation according to political or sectarian lines, restricting access to natural resources, and changing the natural environment itself. In addition to the traditional rural-urban divide (with Baghdad as the urban capital), the three major divisions of Iraq became Kurdish North, Sunni Centre and Shiite South. While rural communities in northern governorates of the country are relatively more secure and thriving, those in the centre and south need support to ensure safe livelihoods. While some of the people escaping sectarian violence in the cities, especially in the Centre in and around Baghdad left the country to go abroad, others however who had continued connection to ancestral/family land and homes in rural areas.

In Lebanon, years of internal conflict have led to displacement and movement of large populations, increasing the strain on available infrastructure, and contributing to sectarian tensions. The Israeli occupation of South Lebanon until 2000 contributed to large agglomerations in the Beirut southern suburbs; its war in 2006 led to the destruction of homes and other civilian infrastructure, particularly in these two areas, given their identification as Hizbullah strongholds. Particularly since the 1967 occupation, Palestinians are distributed across the largely disconnected West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and refugee camps. The continued destruction of Palestinian civilian infrastructure, expansion of colonial settlements, confiscation of land, and uprooting of trees, have further changed the distribution of territory. Even before the 2008-9 massacres in Gaza, years of blockade, characterized as crimes against humanity, have further destroyed Palestinian lives and livelihoods (Falk 2009).

Table 1. Estimates of population and urbanization trends in Iraq, Lebanon, and the West Bank and Gaza Strip

	Total population (thousands)			Percentage rural (%)		
	1980	**1995**	**2010**	**1980**	**1995**	**2010**
Iraq	14 093	21 632	30 688	34.5	31.2	33.6
Lebanon	2 785	3 491	4 227	26.3	15.2	12.8
West Bank and Gaza Strip	1 476	2 617	4 409	37.6	29.6	27.9

Source: UN-DESA (2007).

Population estimates for Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza Strip follow the world patterns of increase in urbanization, whereas in Iraq the share of the rural population is estimated to have increased since the mid-1990s, partly a consequence of international sanctions and the impact of violent conflict (table 1). Feminization of rural populations, observed around the world, is further exacerbated in conflict settings like West Bank and Gaza Strip, Iraq and Lebanon where men emigrate for work, escape as political refugees, go to fight, are imprisoned, or are killed. According to the Iraq Household Socio-economic Survey of 2007, men outnumber women in government centre and other urban areas whereas women outnumber men in rural areas (COSIT, KRSO, and World Bank 2008).

3.2 Employment situation

Public sector employment has traditionally provided women and men in Arab States with formal jobs that enjoy stability and good social standing, compared with the private sector. With the accelerating change in the social contracts of the region in the past two decades, and the inability of the private sector to generate adequate quantity and quality of jobs, women and men have faced decreasing formal paid employment opportunities. Long-term investments that contribute to economic development are too risky for the private sector in conflict settings and public investment is constrained in the three countries. With the decreasing availability of jobs, and social norms giving men the priority in having a job, women have had to revert to work in agriculture and low value added services.

The structure of employment differs across Iraq, the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and Lebanon (table 2). In the three countries, women and men's employment is mainly in the service sector, and men are more likely than women to work in industry. Agriculture provides jobs for a third of employed women in Iraq and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, compared with only 3 per cent in Lebanon.[3] Iraq had a relatively large working women population during the Ba`th era especially in urban areas and in the public sector; during the years of sanction, public sector wages collapsed.

Table 2. Distribution of employment by sector and sex, Lebanon, Iraq, West Bank and Gaza Strip, 2004

Country	Year	Sex	Total employment ('000)	Agriculture (%)	Industry (%)	Services (%)
Iraq	2004	M	5036.919	14	19.8	66.1
	2004	F	978.306	32.6	7.4	60
West Bank & Gaza Strip	2004	M	473.755	12	28.3	58.5
	2004	F	104.683	33.7	8.2	56.3
Lebanon	2004	M	850.065	8.8	27.8	63.3
	2004	F	258.063	3.4	10	86.6

Source: ILO, 2009; CAS, UNDP, and MoSA, 2006.

Women's participation in employment is low in the three countries, with women holding less than a quarter of total jobs. In 2004, women's share of employment was 16 per cent in Iraq, 18 per cent in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, and 23 per cent in Lebanon. In Lebanon, 57 per cent of women's non-agricultural employment and 62 per cent for men's was informal in 2004 (Yaacoub Forthcoming); in the WBGS, depending on definitions, informality characterized 45-57 per cent of women's total employment and 53-59 per cent of men's in the same year (Hilal, Al Kafri, and Kuttab 2008). Surveys may understate women's participation in the labour force. One reason is that survey methods often lack gender responsiveness, especially when it comes to capturing contributing family workers or home-based workers. Another reflects the nature of women's employment: the measurement of seasonal employment varies according to the timing of the survey, and the size of employment from home or in the field is often underestimated because of its close connection with homemaking responsibilities.

Deficits in all forms of security are characteristic of conflict settings. In rural areas, there are additional limits to the reach of social security, with remittances from relatives forming the most important part of informal social protection, especially for Lebanon and the West Bank and Gaza Strip, which have a long history of emigration and conflict. Informal activities span a wide range of community responses, such as bartering goods and services, including aid, and pooling of resources. Moreover, internally displaced people and refugees provide a source of cheap, unprotected, casual labour. Speculation and hoarding, especially by middle people, contribute to highly inflated prices, further heightening tensions in the war economy.

In such circumstances, children can provide a form of old age security, linked to higher fertility rates, a phenomenon compounded by conflict and poverty. Fertility rates are higher in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, at 4.6 births per woman in 2006, and Iraq, at 4.3 births per woman in 2006, and lower in Lebanon, at 2.1 births per woman in 2005. Palestinian women marry young and begin their childbearing at a relatively young age. It is argued that population growth is an active strategy of resistance to occupation and a direct response to the high risks of mortality.

Higher fertility rates are partly the consequence of earlier age at marriage. In Iraq the legal age of marriage is 18 years for both men and women, but with parents' consent and a judicial permission this age can be lowered to 15 years. Under-age marriages occur particularly in rural areas. According to the PCBS almost one quarter of Palestinian girls between 15 and 19 are married, divorced or widowed. Marriage patterns are being distorted by the construction of the Separation Wall, as people cannot easily choose a spouse from other areas. The legal age of marriage in Lebanon is different for men and women and also varies between different personal status codes. A common feature is that women can generally be wed at a younger age than men.

Households, and mainly women within them, have to compensate for the lack of social security. Where there is social security, it is associated often directly with men. As contributing family workers, which constitute 32 per cent of women's employment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip,[4] rural women often lack even indirect access to social security (table 3). Since contributing family work is unpaid and often taking place in households that are headed by men, on its own, it is not a sufficient indicator of economic empowerment.

Table 3. Status-in-employment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Lebanon

Country	Year	Sex	Employees	Employers	Own-account workers	Contributing family workers
West Bank & Gaza Strip	2006	M	60.2	5.4	27.7	6.6
	2006	F	55	0.8	12.7	31.5
Lebanon	2004	M	56.5	6.4	34.1	3
	2004	F	84.7	1.1	10.2	4

Source: ILO, 2009; CAS, UNDP, and MoSA, 2006.

In times of crisis the family is the basic socioeconomic unit providing security and support. Yet the family itself varies across different contexts, and its structure goes through rapid changes along with political and economic shifts. The weakening of family ties in Iraq has not meant weakening of the patriarchal stronghold. The sectarian/religious affiliations became central to a rule of 'street patriarchy' hostile to women's presence in the public sphere, portraying them as "weak and a potential threat to public morals" (Al Jawahiri 2008). Women are more likely to be targeted with claims of 'immodesty of attire' often referring to not covering their heads sufficiently, wearing clothes considered too tight or revealing and moving around without men as chaperons.

Interpretations of traditional and non-traditional gender roles vary between the cultural, economic, political, social and religious contexts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Lebanon, and Iraq. However, in the three settings of political struggle, occupation, national, ethnic and religious conflict gender roles have gone through substantial transformations. The loss of many adult men's capacities as breadwinners has changed power dynamics within families and communities. There is evidence of increase in the number of women playing multiple roles as breadwinners, activists, fighters, political prisoners, and martyrs in the face of displacement, loss and destruction (Center for Mediterranean & Middle Eastern Studies 2008).

In conflict settings, women-headed households, especially in rural areas, often show a growing trend. In Lebanon, with a 14.4 per cent rate of women-headed households, women in rural areas were especially affected by the war due to the large numbers of men migrating to urban areas or abroad. Women were often left to fend for themselves and their workload doubled (Nauphal 1997). In Iraq, women–headed households, 10.2 per cent, are more likely to be food insecure particularly in rural areas (COSIT et al. 2008), which generates the notion that women farmers who head households are the ones who need support as a priority. While households headed by women might face specific vulnerabilities, the majority of women who work in agriculture and contribute to rural livelihoods live in men headed households and they need development support too. While the household is an important unit of analysis and entry point for interventions, intra-household divisions of labour, and roles and responsibilities as they relate to control over decisions and resources are critical elements for incorporation in analysis and policy work.

The conflict situations have further deteriorated the opportunities of women for accessing decent terms and conditions of work as well as financial resources. Often, their physical mobility is severely restricted in the face of security constraints, road blocks, and check points. For women, additional constraints to mobility include housework and care responsibilities, and prevailing social norms. The Israeli Separation wall, also referred to as the Apartheid wall, has made close areas inaccessible, even in emergency situations; because of checkpoints, distances that would take minutes can take hours, if access is granted, seriously impeding overall mobility, particularly for workers commuting. In Iraq, the average distance from residence to job is 11.4 km for men, compared with 4.6 km for women. A larger share of women commute by foot (45 per cent) compared with men (25 per cent). Men mainly commute using public transport, at 43 per cent, compared with 35 per cent for women (COSIT, KRSO, and World Bank 2008).

In the region, it is often argued that rural women are more empowered than their urban counterparts as they work in the fields side by side by with men. Yet their work remains mainly unpaid. Early marriage and lack of access to basic social services and land are pressing issues in rural areas, especially for young rural women. Economic progress for rural women in these settings is also hampered by a lack of skills and training. Years of war and sanctions have set back the educational achievements of women in Iraq; a third of rural women are illiterate, compared with a fifth of urban women. The rate of illiteracy for men is about half the rate for women in both areas, with an overall illiteracy rate for women and men in Iraq at 18 per cent. The main reason for never attending school is lack of family interest (37 per cent of women, 27 per cent of men), lack of schools (18 per cent of women, 16 per cent of men), and social reasons, mainly for women (16 per cent for women, 2 per cent for men) (ibid.). In Lebanon, 17 per cent of women were estimated as illiterate in 2004, compared with 9 per cent of men (CAS, UNDP, and MoSA, 2006). In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, in the same year, the rates of illiteracy among women and men were 12 per cent and 4 per cent respectively (ILO 2008a). Rural women have limited contact with agricultural extension service providers compared with rural men. Extension workers are often also men. Knowledge on new technologies is rarely transferred to women. Such knowledge tends to turn a blind eye to the workload, constraints and responsibilities of rural women.

The consequences of war and occupation add further obstacles to women's access to and control over resources. Land ownership of women has been historically low in all three settings. Data on land ownership is not readily available (FAO 1995); the 1998 agricultural census in Lebanon estimated that women constituted 7 per cent of landholders (MoA and FAO 2000). In the West Bank and Gaza Strip actual women's share of ownership of land is 5 per cent (PCBS 1999). Women's low ownership of land is attributable to patriarchal inheritance practices and the legislation that governs the distribution of land. In Lebanon and Palestine religious inheritance laws have been in place since the Ottoman times; in Lebanon, non-Muslim women have equal right to inheritance as non-Muslim men. In Iraq, until the passing of the most recent constitution, the inheritance provisions of the 1959 personal status law and its amendments ensured basic gender equality. Although Islamic Shari`a law is often blamed for women's limited access to inheritance in the form of land and capital, a closer look at the practices of other religious communities in the region suggests that established gender norms, even when not codified in law, are detrimental to women's inheritance chances. Lack of collaterals affects women's access to credit. In Lebanon, among an estimated 30 institutions lending to small-scale rural projects, only nine provide men and women with equal conditions. Women's share of the loans from these nine credit institutions is low and ranges between 10 and 20 percent (CEDAW 2006).

3.3 Overview of cooperatives

Under the circumstances outlined above, formal and informal cooperative activities can be important in organizing rural populations to share risks, pool resources, and provide credit, particularly for women who would otherwise have limited access, agency and voice in these settings. A cooperative is "an autonomous association of persons united voluntarily to meet their common economic, social and cultural needs and aspirations through a jointly owned and democratically controlled enterprise" (ILO 2002). Cooperatives in the three countries have a long history. In Palestine, the cooperative movement, active since the 1920s, has played a key role in political mobilization, particularly for women. Supported by the government in the late 1960s-1970s, cooperatives in Lebanon suffered from civil war and occupation, with the recent resurgence in cooperatives driven largely by donors and political parties. In Iraq as in other Arab States, government-supervised cooperatives provided the state with institutional channels to manage rural affairs after its nationalization of lands. Medium land-owners played an important role in newly created cooperatives, as they had better access to political power (Owen, pp. 26, 202).

Box 1
Cooperative values and principles

According to the ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193), the promotion and strengthening of the identity of cooperatives should be encouraged on the basis of:

(a) cooperative values of self-help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity; as well as ethical values of honesty, openness, social responsibility and caring for others; and

(b) cooperative principles, as developed by the international cooperative movement, namely: voluntary and open membership; democratic member control; member economic participation; autonomy and independence; education, training and information; cooperation among cooperatives; and concern for community.

Source: ILO, 2002.

Cooperatives were made mandatory in rural Iraq following the 1958 land reform for those who were receiving land. In Iraq prior to 2003 occupation, cooperative groups functioned under the control of the ruling party and served a social and political organizational function. In some cases rural cooperatives were points of distribution for government-provided inputs, such as fertilizer or seeds to agricultural producers. In post-occupation Iraq, agricultural producers no longer benefit from government support for agricultural inputs. The cooperatives that are now being encouraged in Iraq are envisioned as private sector entities strictly based on 'market principles'. The cooperative format is seen only as a way to facilitate cooperation between agricultural producers to achieve economies of scale by buying in bulk at a reduced price, thus reducing the cost of their inputs and increasing their margin of profit (USAID 2005).

The legal organization of cooperatives dates in the three countries dates from the first half of the century. In Iraq, the first law regulating cooperatives was introduced in 1922, whereas in Palestine, the Mandate introduced in 1933 the Cooperative Societies Ordinance, and a 1941 government decree organized cooperatives in Lebanon. A discussion of the legal hurdles on cooperatives is beyond the scope of this paper, suffice is to note that in the Palestinian case, there are two laws regulating cooperatives, one in Gaza Strip, and the other in the West Bank, although there are efforts to unify legislation. The new Palestinian cooperatives law should also help distinguish actual cooperatives from charitable organizations and private businesses that are currently registered as cooperatives.

The oversight of cooperatives falls under different ministries. In Iraq, the cooperative sector falls under the Ministry of Agriculture. In Lebanon, the Ministry of Housing and Cooperatives was created in 1973 and abolished in 2000. Similar to the Palestinian case, cooperatives currently fall under the Ministry of Agriculture in Lebanon, which hosts a General Directorate of Cooperatives.

The resurgence in cooperative enterprises around the world has not been coupled with a similar expansion in Arab States. Cooperatives have come back into prominence with donor

agencies working in rural areas in conflict countries of the region as a strategy for local economic development. Since NGOs are often more urban and middle class in nature, cooperatives are perceived to fill a gap in rural development as they are better grounded in the local context. Of the three conflict countries covered by this paper West Bank and Gaza Strip has had the most substantial cooperative movement especially in rural areas. Lebanon has seen some new cooperative formations especially in organic food realm with extensive support from international donor agencies and organizations. For instance the Italian Cooperation for Development in Lebanon and Syria has provided support for 27 agricultural cooperatives in Lebanon since the 2006 war (Italian Cooperation for Development in Lebanon and Syria, 2009). In Iraq, there have been recent efforts in cooperative formation through international donor organizations as well. However, the lessons learned from these efforts have not been shared with the larger development community.

Cooperatives are organized at the sub-national, national, regional, and international levels. The Arab Cooperative Union (ACU), founded in 1981, counts among its members the National General Federation of Lebanese Associations, the Palestinian Cooperative Movement, and six Iraqi federations: the General Cooperative Federation, the Baghdad Cooperative Federation, the Consumers' Cooperative Federation, the Producers' Cooperative Federation, the Housing Cooperative Federation, and the Services Cooperative Federation (ACU 2009).

The functioning of cooperatives in the three countries has been closely linked to political alliances. The cooperative movement in Arab region has at best a tainted history. Old coops have a bad reputation with corruption, bad management, and other features, also related to their close ties with government. Political party affiliations and associated nepotism can be detrimental to the effectiveness of cooperatives. In Lebanon, a high profile case involved the prosecution and arrest of a former Minister of Agriculture. He had “allegedly allocated funds to fictitious cooperatives owned by his own relatives”, with the action taking place after the minister lost political backing, about a year after the allegations were made public by a member of parliament (Adwan 2004).

While there are negative effects to the politicization of cooperatives, there can also be positive effects. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, economic cooperatives were set up by the women's committees around the first Intifada as a part of the popular front of mass mobilizing efforts (Hanafi and Tabar, pp. 202; 206). Focusing on embroidery and local food production, they responded to practical needs, but also served more strategic objectives of recruiting women to the national struggle, promoting self-reliance and a national economy as part of the resistance to the Israeli occupation. Some argue that the cooperatives and the women's committees increased women's political participation and contributed to their social and economic autonomy. Others suggest that they have not been effective in dismantling patriarchal structures of authority where women continue to do the work in the home and do not take part in decision making processes. Today, Palestinian women cooperatives are marginalized as the women's movement in the post Oslo period shifted to professional NGOs, research institutions, and women's centres, among others.

4. Stylized facts and lessons learned

4.1 Cooperatives remain marginal

The current paper's focus on cooperatives for rural women is not based on the *actual* role of formal cooperatives but on their *potential*. First, formal cooperatives provide jobs for an insignificant share of the employed population, not exceeding one per cent in any of the three countries. Second, women's participation within formal cooperatives is negligible. Women's involvement in cooperatives is often in women-only entities that are significantly smaller in size and production. Third, much of the literature on rural women and cooperatives in the three countries paints an overly optimistic a picture, often because the main goal is to confirm the value of external funders' support to the cooperatives. Such literature typically emphasizes successes more than lessons learned, often giving uncritical support to the strategies used or results achieved.

The discussion on rural women's employment in the three countries has shed light on their conditions, which needs to inform policy interventions. First, rural areas in the three countries have low levels of investment: weak state involvement which curtails public investment, (in the Palestinian case, there is no 'state' to begin with, only a 'national authority') and high risk and instability that discourage private investment. Second, rural women have high illiteracy rates. Third, rural women in the three countries lack access and control of resources, particularly land and credit. Fourth, rural women's mobility is constrained by lack of adequate transport and other infrastructure, absence of affordable provisions of care work and housework, conflict-related insecurity, and restrictive gender norms. Fifth, rural women's work, whether within the production boundary or not, is mainly within the home and family, in agriculture as contributing family labour or low value added services.

As regards to size of membership, cooperatives in the three countries are mainly agricultural, with a large number of consumer and housing cooperatives following closely after. The annex provides a compilation of some relevant statistics. In the West Bank and Gaza Strip, rural areas host mainly agricultural and marketing cooperatives, while urban areas host more housing, consumer, and handicraft cooperatives. While the number of housing cooperatives is higher, the membership of agricultural cooperatives is much higher. Women work mainly in handicraft and credit cooperatives, and less so in agricultural cooperatives. Cooperative stakeholders in the West Bank and Gaza Strip question the "cooperative' nature of these credit groups, often dismissing them as simple Rotating Saving and Credit Associations (ROSCAs).In Lebanon, women cooperatives are often found in food processing and handicrafts. Cooperatives managed by women constitute 1/6th of all cooperatives in Southern Lebanon (ICU 2008).

The emphasis here is on expanding the *potential* role of the cooperative form of organizing for rural women, building on their actual experience in conflict settings. Cooperatives can allow for sharing risk, pooling resources, learning together, generating income, and balancing work and family responsibilities. The labour intensiveness of cooperatives can support employment expansion, and their decision-making process can contribute to improving women's

position and status. They can also be conducive for social cohesion, and the transformation of social norms towards more gender equality and mutual support, although there needs to be enough trust in place first, an outcome of the political process. The following points further highlight the constraints and possible setbacks encountered in encouraging rural women producers to work in cooperatives.

4.2 Not every 'cooperative' is a cooperative

The reality of cooperatives is often different from the ideal. And many institutional entities that identify themselves as cooperatives in the three countries often do not have the basic tenets for being cooperatives (table 4).

Table 4. Comparison of cooperatives, private enterprises, and non-profit organizations

Attributes	Cooperatives	Private Enterprises	Non Profit Organizations
Ownership	Members	Entrepreneur owned	Often not owned by anyone
Control	Democratic	Entrepreneur, bank	Board, leaders, beneficiaries
Purpose	Self-help	Maximize returns	Serve public interest
Funding	Member equity	Capital markets	Tax-exempt, public or private donations, funding
Social Responsibility	Community Development	Some community activities	Collective action for a common good

Source: OCDC, 2007.

In the three countries, numerous private enterprises register as cooperatives, mainly to take advantage of the legal benefits and donor funds available to cooperatives, although they are not based on member ownership and rely mainly on the work of paid employees. Although cooperatives may generate profits, their primary purpose is self-help for the development of the community (Parnell 2001). While there is sparse evidence of actual links between private sector enterprises and cooperatives in the three countries reviewed, a recent survey of Lebanese micro and small enterprises, has noted that enterprises that serve cooperatives as their main clients perform better (Hamdan 2006).

Other cases include non-profit organizations registering themselves as cooperatives. In Bethlehem, West Bank a group of women established the Aseela Women's Cooperative in 2004 to address income-generation needs of families in refugee camps and rural villages, by focusing on high quality olive-oil production. Although its principles of collective action for common good might be close to those of cooperatives, Aseela is not membership-based nor democratically controlled; it is a support institution rather than a cooperative.

A European Union-funded study mentions that "local and international NGOs [in South Lebanon] ... operate in the field of social services and economic development, from *the creation of agricultural cooperatives, and the covering of all their expenditures*, till the education of women" (Etudes et Consultations Economiques 2004, emphasis added). NGOs working in rural development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip indicate that they prefer to encourage companies

rather than cooperatives as they associate cooperatives with handouts from foreign aid programmes.

In contrast, Palestinian trade unions are keen on the interface between cooperatives and trade union members. They are interested in encouraging workers in cooperatives to join trade unions and having their members establish cooperatives. Both cooperatives and trade unions are often excluded from the discussions on economic and social policy formation. In platforms promoting gender justice, cooperatives are more likely than trade unions to be represented.

Trade unions and cooperatives are both based on principles of voluntary and open membership and democratic member control and emerge from the belief that organizing rural workers is an important first step towards securing improved conditions of work and income. Yet in the three countries studied in the current paper, joint action between trade unions and cooperatives is rare and there is no common strategy between them to organize informal workers. If one were to include agricultural workers among informally employed then trade unions often do not have good reach in rural areas. In the context of Iraq and Lebanon they are also fragmented. In the Palestinian context West Bank and Gaza Strip unions are geographically cut off by the military occupation unable to access each other. Cooperation and coordination is necessary to redefine organizations and make them more in line with their stated ideals, especially given the number of entities which are fictitious, undemocratic, inactive, or serve vested interests.

In line with the ILO's Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193), the Bethlehem Chamber of Commerce and Industry has recently started registering cooperatives among their members. Other Chambers of Commerce and Industry across the West Bank and Gaza Strip are now being encouraged by their Federation to expand their membership to include cooperatives. For some trade union leaders and NGOs supporting the Palestinian cooperative movement, this recent trend is an indicator of how many private businesses are actually registered as cooperatives. They voice similar concerns as to the number of charitable organizations and NGOs registered as cooperatives making targeted interventions for promoting cooperatives difficult.

4.3 Donor dependency has become pervasive

In the three countries, rural cooperatives are often established and/or supported through quick turn-around conflict funding. Based on a reading of different donor agency reports on cooperative development, one can conclude that donor agency funds subcontracted to international development agencies and their NGO partners often encourage models of engagement that are based on their own home country experiences rather than building on what may work in the local context. Historically cooperatives were often used by colonial settlers and then by independent states to "control the people conquered during colonization and in no way to promote the interests of their members… sometimes tarnishing the way local populations see cooperatives forever" (Tchami, 2007, p. 11).

Often a dependency is created on short-term donor funds in these settings, as depicted in microfinance services, which could be disbursed through credit cooperatives. This dependency comes with several downsides: First, continuity/sustainability of such initiatives depends on the ebb and flow of donor priorities and they close down in the absence of funds. Second, representatives of cooperative support institutions in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, point out to the dangers of the skills developed by the staff of the cooperatives in donor relations, proposal writing and reporting than in actual cooperative management, and marketing the products and services of the cooperatives themselves. In Lebanon, cooperative advocates also note that the international development funds available in large quantities have transformed the function of cooperatives from being productive ventures to recipients of development aid with the chief function of gathering donations and project funds. Third, the donor relationship actually allows the cooperatives to skirt the issues around building long lasting alliances with the local stakeholders including local governments. In the words of Rami Zurayk (2007), recounting the experience in Lebanon:

> *[A] coop is often a precondition for accessing development aid by small farmers. Driven by our donors' agendas, we, development workers, coerce poor farmers into creating a cooperative, and they usually passively obey. Once we stop injecting it with funds, the cooperative dissolves and fades away. Of course, there are some successes, the exception is necessary to prove the rule. But out of the hundreds of cooperatives that were created in the past 10 years, only a few are still functioning.*

The support of donor agencies in promoting rural women's employment has had mixed blessings. When donors identified gender equality as an entry point for rural development, they focused on applying their own models of gender integration in institutions whether this is about establishing women-only cooperatives, or encouraging women leadership in mixed cooperatives. One common experience in the post Beijing era is when international donor agencies encouraged governments to create women's departments in line ministries along with national women machineries at centralized government levels. These women departments often became isolated islands of expertise. The resources and knowledge generated stayed at a level that hardly trickled down. Rural women units in the agricultural ministries became equipped with well-trained staff without much connection to the other departments of the ministries nor benefiting the rural women themselves except for a few pilot studies and projects here and there.

4.4 Skills development is central to sustaining cooperatives

The short time-span of donor-funded projects aiming to promote women's cooperatives often leads to completion of the project before securing market access and economic viability of the cooperative. Many projects come to an end without sufficient transfer of management and marketing skills to members of the cooperatives. Moreover, large number of projects promoting the production of closely substitutable products makes the infant cooperatives compete with each other. Such shortcomings draw attention to the importance of coordination among cooperatives, which is a key cooperative principle; they also point out to the need for better coordination among development actors in planning and implementation, and for the inclusion of economic literacy as a central component of training.

It has been suggested that instead of advocating specific forms of organizing, development actors should build on existing indigenous informal cooperative production activities (Zurayk 2007). Value chain analysis can be a crucial economic literacy tool to for rural producers to conduct their own assessments of the production chains that they are engaged in, including the key actors involved, the costs of inputs and outputs in each step. Gender-responsive analysis needs to highlight women and men's time allocations and transport needs, the nature of organizing among people involved across the chain, if any, and the external enabling or disabling factors.

Box 2
Value chain analysis

After identifying a given product chain, teams of action researchers can look into each step of production to understand the gender division of labour, organizing dynamics as it relates to formal and informal cooperation and group formations, time allocations, and support institutions involved. The key to the exercise is to understand the steps that are involved from production to the market and the returns to the value of their labour.

The analysis of 'klash', a traditional shoe produced in Northern Iraq, showed how it is a labour intensive job performed by men and women with minimal returns to their labour relative to the time and intensity of effort involved, and the poor working conditions they face. The analysis also showed how undervalued the work of the producer is compared with the trader who sells the final product. It allowed people to see which stages of the production are less valued providing them with some basic economic literacy. It also opened up discussion on how to add more value to the products (in terms of quality, diversity, market identification, etc.) for better returns to the producers.

Source: ILO 2008c.

Given the extent of international and local competition, cooperatives need to find niche markets to target their products. Product labelling for quality or marketing purposes may include 'fair trade', 'organic agriculture', ISO, Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points HACCP, and, in the case of occupation, political slogans such as 'Free Palestine' and 'Buy for Peace'. Evidently, the quest for niche markets is conditional on securing the local food supply; otherwise prioritizing export markets can feed into a humanitarian crisis.

Women in rural cooperatives often produce food items and handicrafts. The mind-sets of cooperative members are often not oriented toward the consumers or the market. Taking pride in their products, they struggle with valuing their products according to consumer tastes rather than the quality of their homemaking skills. These products may be intended for the local market or for export. For local market, a key issue is transport to urban areas. For export, it is important to build relationships with reliable partners. Evidence-based analysis of the opportunities and constraints for rural women in the particular conflict settings needs to inform the design and implementation of training, albeit within the potential restrictions imposed by the urgency of the interventions and the inaccessibility of conflict areas.

4.5 Training needs adaptation to the local context

Since training materials are often developed in countries other than those they are ultimately used in, particularly by international organizations, obstacles related to effective communication and transfer of skills and experience can arise. The first obstacle is the language barrier, both for international experts working in the field and for the development of training materials. Simultaneous translation may be too costly, impractical, or inappropriate for the needs of participants, who may feel less comfortable expressing themselves without being misunderstood, or may not be able to participate actively in conversations, particularly if translation is of inadequate quality. Since men are socialized to be more vocal in public settings than women, women may feel uncomfortable to participate fully, particularly when they are in minority.

The translation of training materials to the local language may not be sufficient to ensure effective learning, for two related reasons. First, there may be a variety of dialects for the same language. Experience working with Arabic-language materials has shown that participants may relate to modern standard Arabic to differing extents, depending on how close the translation is to their local usage. Presenting written materials is additionally problematic when the target group is illiterate or has limited literacy. Second, there may not be a single local language. Language is a sensitive political issue in Iraq, as illustrated with Kurdish participants having reservations on communicating in Arabic during training sessions, despite their knowledge of the language.

Closely related to the language barrier are the conceptual barriers. Even when translation is able to render closely the original meaning, the content may remain unpalatable to the receivers on account of the 'foreignness of concepts'. Training participants, whether intermediaries or from the target population, may not relate to the concepts and presentation of the materials, which may appear to them as foreign and of little relevance to their lives. Concepts like 'gender', 'entrepreneurship' or 'informal employment' do not often have established equivalents in Arabic, and illustrations in training materials may not adequately represent the specific social context, particularly for women.

The adaptation of WEDGE materials for rural women producers in conflict settings in Arab States explicitly took into account potential barriers to effective communication, in accordance with the approach the ILO has developed to promote gender equality in the region. The first step was word for word translation followed by adaptation of the language to local usage. The adapted materials were peer reviewed and tested with small groups of intermediaries. Given the need to develop a local pool of trainers who can work directly with the target group, namely rural women producers, the project selected local intermediary institutions based on the criteria discussed in the methodology section. The trainers were trained to promote entrepreneurship and gender equality issues in their institutions, share their knowledge locally, nationally, and internationally, and supervise or conduct training for rural women producers in their countries.

Considering the ongoing situation in Iraq, the selection of institutions and their representatives is not always well targeted. As in other post-authoritarian conflict settings under occupation, the 'civil society' that is cultivated is not organically grounded in grass roots community activism. As a result participants in capacity building activities often end up being professionals and members of institutions who are part timers with great interest but not necessarily the skills and time to engage directly in hands-on community based interventions.

Training covered entrepreneurship issues for rural women producers and cooperatives, and emphasized gender-responsiveness in training content and process. A highlighted element was the need to start with the actual experience of rural women producers and the skills they already have, while developing the skills needed to improve productivity and job prospects. Too much emphasis on the comparative advantage of women in skills related to homemaking responsibilities, can lock women in the same set of skills and restrict their labour market prospects, whether in self-employment or in paid employment. Training in management, finance, accounting, marketing, internet and communication skills, is necessary in the long run, since training in embroidery, cooking, and related activities increases occupational segregation and confines women to their traditional gender roles.

4.6 The focus on women is insufficient: gender responsiveness is necessary

The focus on women alone without paying attention to gendered structures of power can be counterproductive. The promotion of women in cooperatives has been based on their lower participation in cooperatives, particularly in rural areas. "Mixed" cooperatives with men and women tend to be synonymous with "men's" cooperatives. When mixed cooperatives are encouraged to incorporate women in their governance structures, women who join are wives of prominent leaders, cooperative officers and village administrators who enjoy several advantages by virtue of their social positions. There is anecdotal evidence and institutional assessments which indicate this is the case in the rural cooperative context in Lebanon. Often decision-making, responsibilities, rights and resources are not equally distributed within mixed cooperatives. Women members do not benefit to the same extent as men or women leaders. Women are also often absent from the leadership structure of mixed cooperatives.

When women are in cooperatives they are confined to smaller and women-only activities. Even when the cooperative is women-only in nature, the benefits generated may be controlled by family or community members. Moreover, cooperative membership and leadership means an increase in workload and an overburdening of women without necessarily empowering them, unless there is a simultaneous gender re-division/re-negotiation of work between men and women in the household to balance time spent on economic activities. As long as rural women cooperatives stay small in terms of capital, number of members and production capacities, either on account of the members' aversion to risk or due to the vision of the external support institutions, they will continue to have limited ability to realize economies of scale and to develop market power comparable to that of their up- and downstream trading partners. The role of larger rural cooperatives or cooperative clusters, especially in accessing markets, can help

overcome these limitations while at the same time taking advantage of the transaction-cost economizing properties of such small entities.

In practice, a typical women cooperative has 20-30 members. Five to seven of the members are often active in the activities of the cooperatives. Some cooperatives are perceived as captured by these few individuals in leadership positions giving themselves salaries, etc. These cooperatives are often registered with the goal of income generation for members. While some degree of job distribution and division of labour may exist, overlapping skills and roles in relation to cooperative activities are often observed. These cooperatives are likely to function without any feasibility studies or business plans *unless they have received some external assistance*. The decisions in meetings are delivered through word of mouth and/or basic reporting. While new members can join in principle, it is not often that they do, unless the cooperative is considered a success in providing returns to its members.

Box 3
Women cooperating and networking after conflict

Dayr Qanoun Ras al Ayn, a village located in southern Lebanon, was heavily shelled by the Israeli bombing of Lebanon in July 06. Homes, lives and livelihoods were destroyed. A women's cooperative with 20 members that produced traditional foodstuffs, mostly jams, pickles and dried herbs sought support from the Land & People Relief Programme of the American University of Beirut (AUB) to rebuild the community.

Identifying and reviving local and traditional products that face extinction, the women's cooperative expanded its market from immediate neighbours to the larger village and emigrants who visit the village every year. More recently the women's cooperative has reached a wider market by participating in Beirut's Souk el Tayeb farmer's market and Healthy Basket shop at AUB. Today, these revitalized products contribute significantly to the incomes of the 20 cooperative members.

Source: Zurayk et al., 2008.

Whereas encouraging the establishment of women-only cooperatives may be necessary given gender segregation in the public sphere, the expansion of cooperatives will ultimately require active engagement with men. Participation of men is often low when rural employment and cooperative development activities are viewed as being primarily focused on gender, often perceived as "women only" activities. Men's presence may also be limited when the participating groups are women-only groups, as in traditionally feminine activities like sewing and weaving. Some women advocates in these settings argue that targeting of women exclusively on gender equality issues does not lead to real change in the household and the community. Many development practitioners follow the assumption that such targeting may actually increase awareness among women and helping them analyze their own situations better and recognize their own rights. The inclusion of men in such activities from the onset is likely to ensure their support and reduce resistance.

While there are examples of self proclaimed feminist rural women cooperatives in other conflict areas, like Nicaragua, such cooperatives are not common in the Arab region. From outside observers' perspective 'empowerment' outcomes in the households of women members of cooperatives may be taken as "feminist" indicators. However, one of the often repeated critiques for Palestinian rural women cooperatives has been how little change has been achieved in terms of changing gendered division of roles and responsibilities within members' household. Having said that the solidarity and the collective voice generated for members might qualify some of the cooperatives in these countries as such.

5. Conclusions

Reducing urban biases in economic policies and shifting focus to supporting rural employment generation through mechanisms such as cooperatives can support women and men in these communities to enhance their livelihood options and to improve the quality of life for their families and communities. Cooperatives allow for sharing risk, pooling resources, learning together, generating income, and balancing work and family responsibilities. The labour intensiveness of cooperatives can support employment expansion, and their decision-making process can contribute to improving women's position and status. They can also be conducive for social cohesion, and the transformation of social norms towards more gender equality, mutual support (although there needs to be enough trust in place first, an outcome of the political process).

Given their limited number and size of employment, cooperatives need to build alliances with organizations that share common principles, including civil society organizations. Trade unions face challenges in organizing informal workers, given the diversity and conflicting interests of informal workers and their job impermanence. Informal forms of employment, such as women's home-based work, are unfamiliar territory to trade unions that sprang in the heart of the public sector and industrial workplaces. Cooperatives can address such challenges as members provide themselves the job protection and security they need, although sustainability is dependent on good management, or the presence of external support. Coordination and cooperation are necessary to redefine cooperatives and make them more in line with their stated ideals, especially given the number of entities which are fictitious, undemocratic, inactive, or serve vested interests.

Women-only rural cooperatives and mixed cooperatives with women members have been lauded as the ways to achieve agency, voice and empowerment. Using idealized reference points, the proponents argue that cooperatives address inequities and power imbalances between men and women of different classes by helping to strengthen the members' self-confidence, status and voice. Yet a lot of the rhetoric is not substantiated with evidence from the local contexts. Often cooperative initiatives put too much emphasis on existing home making skills of women, which reinforces traditional gender division of labour and existing power imbalances. Adequate interventions need to be gender-responsive, inclusive, interactive, contextualized, and forward-looking.

The emphasis in this paper has been on ways to expand the *potential* role of the cooperative form of organizing for rural women, building on their actual experience in conflict settings. While bringing rural women into cooperative arrangements, formal and informal, to improve their access, agency and voice can be a central strategy in rural development efforts, such initiatives need to be locally owned, even if not totally locally generated. Cooperatives must further be grounded in realities on the ground through better contextualized cooperative laws, establishment of cooperative federations and awareness-raising and economic literacy of members of cooperatives with the local communities.

Considering evidence on cooperatives is missing and given the paucity of gender disaggregated data in war-torn states, the key issues pulled out related to rural women producers and their cooperatives need to be further explored through further policy and action research in the region, preferably conducted in close coordination with the cooperative stakeholders, namely the cooperative departments in public sector institutions, cooperative federations, trade unions and other cooperative support institutions in civil society.

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ANNEX

Table A1. Selected statistics on cooperatives in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, August 2007

Sector	Per cent of cooperatives	Per cent of members
Agriculture	39%	39%
Housing	44%	26%
Credit/Saving	13%	17%
Consumer	2%	16%
Crafts	2%	2%
TOTAL	**100**	**100**

Source: Ministry of Labour. Palestinian Authority. 2008.

Table A2. Selected statistics on cooperatives in Iraq

	Local and agricultural cooperatives (2001)		Consumer cooperatives		
	Members	**Number**		**2001**	**2004**
Local and agricultural cooperatives	205037	881	No. cooperatives	221	50
Collective farms	169	3	No. members	887270	187962
Specialized cooperatives	16397	49	No. employees	3209	780
Poultry	10%	8%			
Households raising cows	0%	2%			
Bee breeding	2%	2%			
Fishery & fish breeding	7%	10%			
Livestock husbandry	17%	22%			
Birds and tropical-fish nurseries	0%	2%			
Horticulture	24%	45%			
Agricultural machinery	0%	2%			
Vegetables	39%	6%			

Note: The activities of consumer cooperatives stopped during 2002-2003.
Source: COSIT, 2009.

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[2] Security PHASES are as follows: PHASE I : Precautionary; PHASE II : Restricted Movement; PHASE III : Relocation; PHASE IV : Emergency Operations; PHASE V : Evacuation (UNDSS 2009).

[3] There is indication of understatement of agricultural and family work in the Lebanon survey, particularly for women. Establishment surveys have revealed the family nature of most enterprises in Lebanon, with extensive paid and unpaid family workers. The 2004 living conditions survey spans the period between February 2004 and March 2005, and it is unclear when rural areas were surveyed, a crucial question given the seasonality of agricultural employment.

[4] No data available for status-in-employment for Iraq.