



GLOBAL GRANTS COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Use this form to report community assessment findings to The Rotary Foundation when you apply for a global grant.

Assessing the strengths, weaknesses, needs, and assets of the community you plan to help is an essential first step in designing an effective and sustainable global grant project. See [Community Assessment Tools](#) for full instructions and helpful tips.

This form will help you report the results of your community assessment, and it's required when you apply for any humanitarian or vocational training team grant. Complete a separate form for each beneficiary community (e.g., school, health care system, or village), using information that is both current and specific to each community. Remember, you can't use global grant funds to cover the cost of doing an assessment, but you can use district grant funds.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW

Describe the characteristics (such as geographic information, main sources of income, population size, and access to education/health services) of the specific community where this project will take place.

Ehden (34°17'27.99"N 35°57'54"E) is a village situated in Northern Lebanon, at an altitude of 1.500 m – 2.000 m above sea level, and a place of a small population (approx. 25.000 inhabitant during summer). It is known for its protected natural reserve which is one of the most beautiful in Lebanon as well as its climate, forests and abundance of water, fauna and flora.

It has famous summer resorts, and it is a destination for environment lovers, and a touristic center where the reserve and the gastronomy are the major attraction.

The population has access to education, health and other primordial services.

In Summer 2022, the region was subject to severe wildfires that resulted in losing a big chunk of its green cover

COLLECTING COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT DATA

When you conducted the assessment, who in the community did you speak to? At least two different community representatives and beneficiaries who are not involved in Rotary (such as teachers, doctors, or community leaders) should be included in the discussions.

Along with our partner Jouzour Loubnan, we spoke with the Municipality board members, local

environmental activists, members of the Horsh Ehden Reserve committee with whom Jouzour Loubnan are in continuous contact as they are conducting reforestation activities to extend the area of the reserve.

When in the last year did the discussions occur?

October 2022 with follow up in December 2022

What methods did you use to collect information from community members (such as community meetings, interviews, or focus groups)?

Our local partner Jouzour Loubnan Association NGO have strong ties and activities in environment fields.

We tapped on their continuous direct contacts with key stakeholders (municipalities, Ministry of Environment, etc.) and their field activities to get a clear view on the situation on the ground, through:

- Jouzour Loubnan activities in the field (reforestation, agroforestry, nurseries) where they are experiencing first-hand the issues related to the rampant desertification across the country due to forest fires, cutting, urban development and agricultural fields left fallow;
- Focus Group Discussions where members from our club participated;
- Key Informant Interviews as well as continuous informal contacts;
- Training sessions where the farmers shared their issues and problems;
- Students doing research activities with their teachers for their master's degree or their PHD;
- Jouzour Loubnan updated research and databases;
- Contact with other local and international NGOs active in the region and more generally in Lebanon.
- Follow-up of the international and local economies to understand the macro-economic environment and its potential impact on the region and stakeholders.

Describe the process of how the beneficiaries were identified.

- Discussions with the municipality of Ehden, focus groups, Jouzour Loubnan knowledge of the region and key informant interviews helped in mapping the beneficiaries in the area.
- On another hand, research activities led by university volunteers, feedback of other NGOs that worked in the region were and addition to address the beneficiaries identification process while planning for the project

TARGET POPULATION

Who is directly benefiting from the project? List the groups that will benefit (such as schools, hospitals, vocational training centers, cooperatives, or villages).

The reforestation campaigns have a significant impact by mobilizing regional volunteers and engaging them in the plantation of the targeted number of trees.

- Plantation will be accomplished with the active cooperation of the respective municipalities; the participation of regional and national volunteers such as the local community, civil society organizations,

corporation employees and their families, schools and universities students, scout associations, the Lebanese Army...etc.

- The local nurseries in the North area by:
 - The purchase of the targeted number of 4,000 cedar trees and other tree species and shrubs for the reforestation action;
 - The transmission of know-how and expertise through the scientific evaluation report on low cost forestation activities of local species.
- Workers, and service suppliers. We give priorities to local workers (over 2000 men-days during the life span of the project);
- Local farmers and businesses for the supply of seedlings, equipment and supplies
- Enhancing ecotourism in the region by promoting it on media platforms. The location of the reforestation site in Ehden is already strategic, and by reviving this area, the number of visitors will increase. This will directly benefit local farmers, guesthouses, hotels, restaurants, guides, and neighboring reserves.
- General public through awareness campaigns on above the line media and social media
- Schools through:
 - Environmental educational sessions as unfortunately environmental education is not included in the curriculum of Lebanese schools.
 - Drawing competition on Arztrak Hayitak theme
 - Plantation days with students to gain on the ground knowledge. The engagement in such actions has a positive impact on schools' reputation and new generations' culture.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS, NEEDS, PRIORITIES, AND PROJECT DESIGN

Describe what matters to members of the community as they were expressed during the assessment.

- The key point of interest is to strengthen the tourism in the area by increasing the size of the reserve and the attractiveness of the region, thus developing the economic cycle and benefiting local businesses (bakeries, restaurants, hotels, handmade products, eco-tourism, tour guides, etc.).
- The inhabitants see the project as an opportunity to develop their expertise in planting toward better farming and forestry practices, and to be involved as workers and suppliers in the implementation and maintenance of the project throughout its duration and beyond.
- Environmental awareness & climate change implications were also identified as an important point to address as unfortunately these are not taught at schools and excluded from official curriculum

Describe the community's strengths and resources.

The community expressed its will and seriousness to be fully engaged in the reforestation activity. It has been hardly hit by the prevailing economic crisis in Lebanon and does not have the means to conduct the necessary environmental activities (e.g. reforestation, protection, education, etc.) without external funding.

This support is confirmed through an MoU signed by the Municipality, Rotary and Jouzour Loubnan dedicating this region to be a protected reserve with only eco-tourism activities.

Describe any challenges and gaps in the community's behaviors, skills, and knowledge.

- The local community is already extremely familiar with and positive about reforestation activities.
- Uncontrolled and overgrazing is the key challenge that the project might face. This challenge will be addressed by:
 - Fencing the plantation area, and by the agreed protection that the municipality will provide.
 - The municipality will suggest new grazelands to the shepherds, to mitigate any potential conflict and to reduce the risks.
- Environmental education is a must as most identified beneficiaries are not fully aware of the impact and importance of protecting the environment for future generations

What issues will the project address, and how does the community currently address those issues?

- This project aims at developing eco-tourism and educate communities on environmental issues.
- From an environmental point of view, as the project is being implemented on an arid land, it will participate in fixing the soil and improving its fertility, combat global warming through carbon sequestration, provide wildlife habitat and food as well as improve biodiversity.
- The local community and the key stakeholders welcome this effort and is very supportive. In fact, they are already planting new trees every now and then, but the number of trees they plant is not significant due to lack of financial resources.
- The project comes as an external assistance, in terms of funds and expertise, in order to help the community reach its target of extending the reserve, create awareness of the importance of environmental education and developing the eco-tourism in the area.

Provide the specific details of the project design and how it will solve these issues.

- Targeting the restoration of Ehden mountains and conservation of native species through a successful plantation targeting 4,000 cedar trees striving after 3 years as well as close to 800 shrubs that will act as a natural fence on a total area of 8 ha, will increase the forest cover; restore and protect its ecosystem in the selected area.
- The purchase of equipment and seedlings for the plantation action will have an immediate impact on the economic development of the regional nurseries and shops.
- Seeking to engage local community in the reforestation activities, the proposed on-site trainings given to the Ehden inhabitants will equip them with the technical and managerial skills required to execute a reforestation action. This will increase their ability and role in regional development as well as in the implementation and management of forestation projects, along with the first-hand experience acquired during the project implementation. Such capacity trainings enable them to co-implement the plantation activities on the ground, and further monitor, maintain, manage, supervise and, evaluate the site during and post-planting phase.
- Local schools' students will directly benefit from the acquisition of knowledge and environmental awareness on the multi-purpose forest functions for protection, restoration, conservation and, economic

development. This is primarily achieved through active participation in the plantation campaigns and awareness training sessions to be delivered at public & private schools. This plays an essential role, especially given the low public environmental awareness.

- The online communications serve as efficient and multifunctional platforms to reach out general public s on regional, national, and international level and amplify the dissemination of information about the benefits of conservation and forestry practices.

- From a broader perspective, such activities result in promoting partnerships and networking among regional, national, and international actors, and enhance social inclusion as well as the capacity and participation of local communities and diaspora in sustainable project management and restoration practices.

Describe the long-term plan for the project (such as oversight, financial responsibilities, and expected behavior change) after Rotary’s involvement ends.

After Rotary’s involvement ends, the municipality will be directly responsible of following up on the project, by protecting the planted trees, planning and organizing environmental and ecotourism activities in the reforestation area, thus promoting awareness, creating job opportunities, and benefiting the local small businesses.

The municipality will also be looking at planting productive forest trees/shrubs (like sumac, hawthorn, junipers, jujube, lavender and/or rosemary once the Cedar trees ensure cover so they can plant underneath. This will generate extra income that will feed back in the project financing.

Jouzour Loubnan NGO along with Rotary club Beirut Cadmos members will continue its annual follow-up in order to provide the municipality with any necessary advice on the way forward.

Point to highlight: Cedar tree is protected by a government decree that bans Cedar trees cutting especially that life span of a Cedar is 6000 years+.