

“Access to Finance for Municipalities

Nexus Thinking and Decentralization of Subnational Governments”

January 2020, Amman

Terminology

- **Community engagement:** *“Involving communities in decision-making and in the planning, design, governance and/or delivery of services”*. The Key determinant in this definition is the community composition; who is considered part of the community? Are we addressing the women part of this community?
- **Gender mainstreaming:** *The practice of assessing in any planned law, policy, or programme, its differential implications for women and men with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women.* https://irena.org/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2019/Jan/IRENA_Gender_perspective_2019.pdf
- **Social norms:** *informal rules that govern behavior in groups and societies*

Engaging people

- Why do we need to engage people, and when? Why do we need to ensure gender mainstreaming, and when?
- *“Engaging a community in the discussion increases everyone’s level of awareness, allows individuals to advocate for their ideas, and offers a format to gather advice or guidance based on the community’s expertise and experiences”,* along with its expectations.
- This engagement can take many forms, and use many tools, meetings, FGD... Gender mainstreaming starts from here, who will serve as an enumerator? Location of the meeting, timing of the meetings.....

Akkar at a glance

- Located on the North of the country bordering Syria. Akkar is composed of 128 villages where an approximate number of 400,000 Lebanese and around 105,000 Syrian refugees reside (as of 31 December 2018) (<https://reliefweb.int/map/lebanon/syria-refugee-response-lebanon-akkar-governorate-distribution-registered-syrian-14>).
- The Akkar governorate includes 15% of the cultivated land in Lebanon, while Akkar's area constitutes only 7.5% of Lebanon's total surface.
- Recent UN assessments have reported average monthly household income of \$641 in Akkar (http://www.reachresourcecentre.info/system/files/resourcedocuments/reach_lbn_profile_hcv_akkar_jul2015.pdf)
- Today, Akkar has one of the highest poverty rates in Lebanon, affecting 63% of its population. (*Aicha Moushref, January 2008, for Mada Association, UNDP, Handicap International and EU Humanitarian Aid, Forgotten Akkar, Socio-economic Reality of the Akkar region*)
- When considering the living conditions of Syrian refugees, and as per VASYR 2018, Akkar district is one of the poorest areas in Lebanon with 69% of the surveyed refugee population living below the SMEB level
- 82% of the surveyed population in Akkar is living below the poverty line of US\$3.84 per day, compared to a national level of 68.5%. (*Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASYP) 2018*)

Akkar at a glance

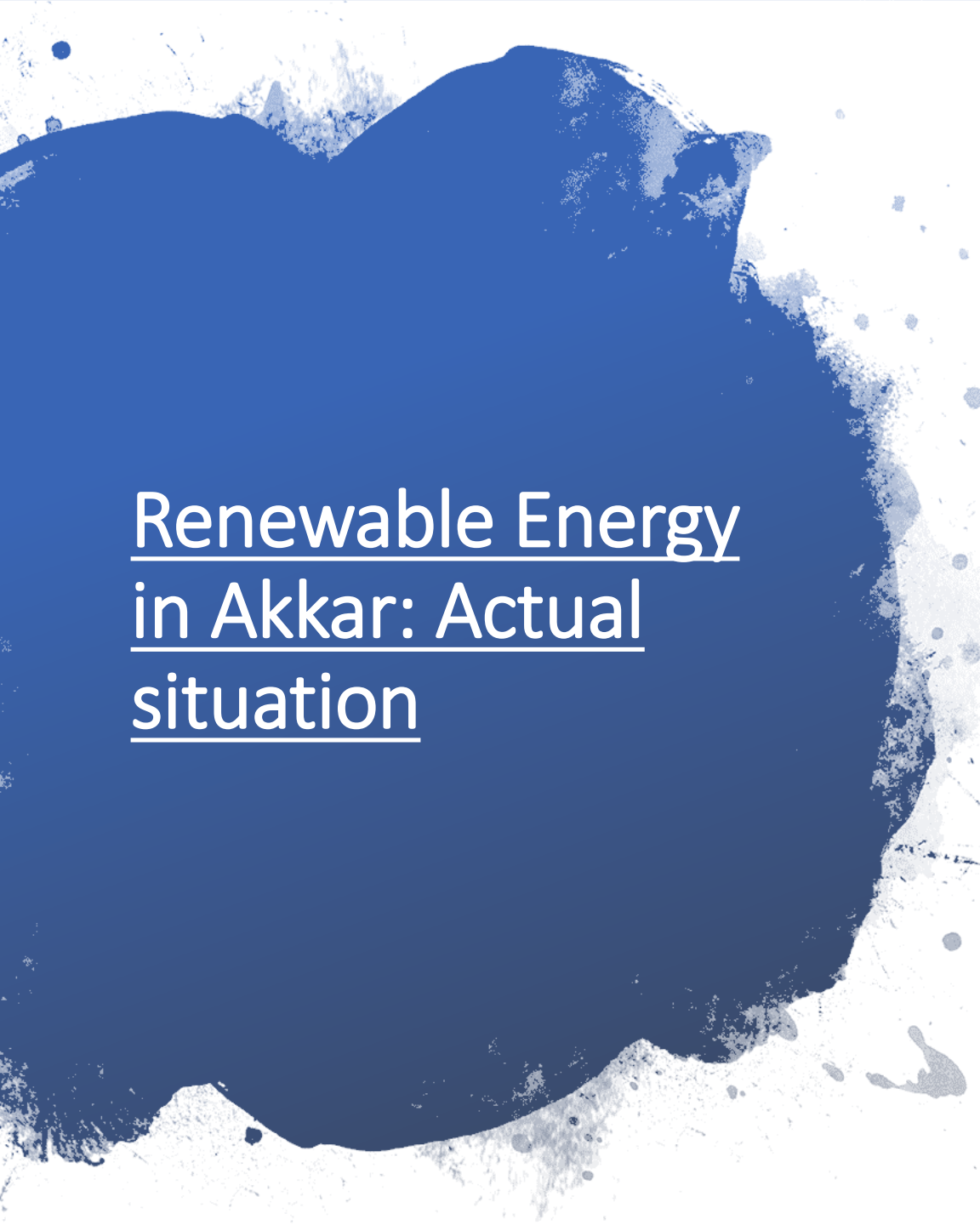
- As many as 25% of families in Akkar rely on a military salary or pension as their primary source of income (*FAO / REACH Food Security and Livelihoods Assessment of Lebanese Host Communities, June 2015*^(SEP)).
- As per the FAO, 64% of Lebanese surface is considered agricultural, and 14% of total land is considered arable.
- In the same time, and relying on Akkar's natural resources, around 28% of the local population is engaged in the agricultural sector, including full-time and part-time or seasonal labor. Up to 31% of the agricultural labor force rent the lands they cultivate
- Akkar's poverty problems, have been linked in several assessments with the lack of support for agriculture and agribusiness activities, "*Lebanon's rural people live in poverty as a result of the major problems facing agricultural production, which are mainly the small size of agricultural holdings, lack of agriculture policies, high production costs and lack of specialized agricultural credit. Women, who make up one third of the agricultural labour force, are particularly disadvantaged by the lack of programmes and interventions targeting women. This leads to their poor representation in all aspects of agricultural production, with negative repercussions on their own socio-economic status and that of their households*".

<http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/web/rural-poverty-portal/country/home/tags/Lebanon>



Energy in Akkar: Actual situation

- In September 2013, some areas in Akkar had benefited from the electricity for the first time (<http://www.nna-leb.gov.lb/ar/show-news/55664/>)
- Recurrent Blackouts
- Reliance on private generators, some managed by municipalities, some by the private sector



Renewable Energy in Akkar: Actual situation

- Lebanon Wind Power s.a.l., Hawa Akkar s.a.l. and Sustainable Akkar are the first firms to create and operate wind farms in Lebanon.
- This venture is part of Lebanon's action plan towards increased renewable energy by 2020
- The three wind farms aim to create 180 MW. (*The Daily Star*). With a large countrywide shortage, the wind farms could make a significant contribution to national energy provision.
- Very limited used of solar energy for water heating (per household, although recent numbers had shown an increase in household/ water heating), and/or public street lighting.



Renewable energy in Akkar: Questions

- What is the perception of renewable energy in Akkar?
- Is this the reason why Akkar witnessed a diversified response from the local population, especially in the areas of implementation of the windfarms?
- Environmental impact assessment? Economic Impact? Developer's obligation?
- Akkar had witnessed lately an engagement from the 3 companies with the local population in Akkar.
- How can we ensure that people are taking an informed choice?



Renewable energy in Akkar: Questions

- What can renewable energy provide for Akkar?
- How can renewable energy play a role in decentralization and empowerment of local governance?
- How could renewable energy increase the participation of women and youth within the labour force and within public decision making?
- How can renewable energy enhance the safety and security of the population in Akkar (namely women and adolescent girls)?



Renewable energy in Akkar: Prospects

- Prospects of employability:
- What impact on the economic activity in Akkar?
- What impact on vulnerable communities, women and youth in Akkar?
- What's in it for Akkar?