



seal

IMPACT REPORT

1997 – 2017



WHAT WE DO AT SEAL

Our mission is to unlock economic opportunities among under-served communities in Lebanon.

In 2016 & 2017

SEAL conducted a detailed evaluation of 39 of its 130 projects, using surveys, interviews and focus groups. The evaluation demonstrated the many economic opportunities unlocked by SEAL's projects across Lebanon over 20 years, mainly by allowing beneficiaries to increase productivity with a focus on supply chain upgrades.

The evaluation also revealed the extent to which the impact of SEAL projects has been offset by the overwhelming tragedy of the Syrian war on Lebanon's borders, which has threatened up to 65% of agricultural exports and put pressure on wages as well as infrastructure.

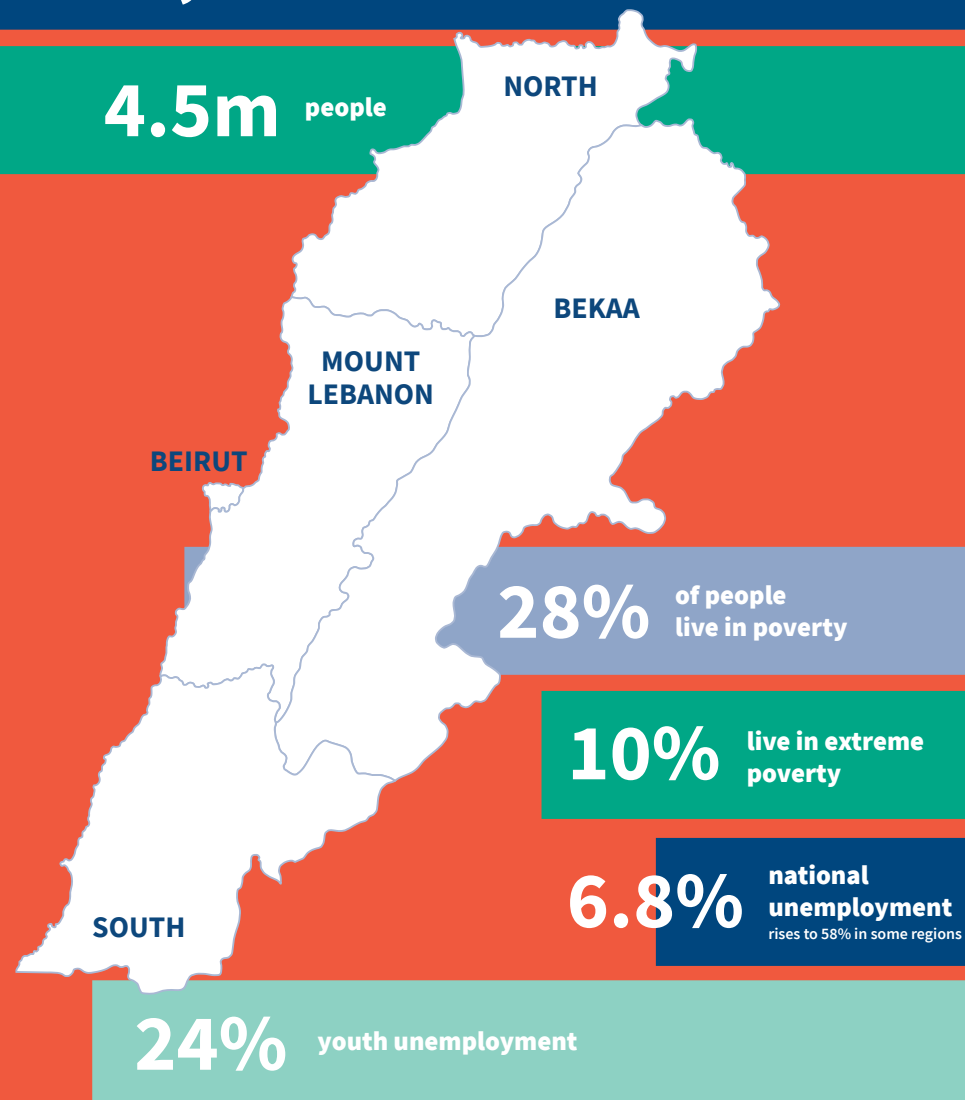
SEAL has primarily worked with rural communities struggling with poverty and rural-urban migration and not benefitting from grant support beyond SEAL's.

Data about Lebanon included in this report is from documents published by United Nations bodies, the World Bank, and Lebanese ministries of Agriculture and the Environment. Data about SEAL's projects were collected through SEAL's evaluation in 2016 and 2017.

LEBANON OVERVIEW

10,452 km²

4.5m people



IMPACT OF THE SYRIAN WAR

The war in Syria since 2011 has had a decisive impact on livelihoods in Lebanon, in some cases offsetting much of the positive impact of SEAL's projects and increasing the need among Lebanese communities for livelihoods support.



200,000

more Lebanese people living in poverty



1.5 m

vulnerable Lebanese in Lebanon - the same as the number of vulnerable Syrians



3.3 m

people out of a total population of 5.9m (including Syrians & Palestinians) are in need



Up to 100% increase in unemployment rate since before the war



PROJECT OUTPUT

Our work has provided economic opportunities (increased work and income or job opportunities) for over 28,000 people.



\$2.8m

invested in projects over 20 years, with less than 10% going to operational costs

\$21k

is the average project size



230

is the mean average number of beneficiaries of a SEAL project, making the average cost per beneficiary \$91

Profile of SEAL Beneficiaries

SEAL beneficiaries come from all regions and varied religious backgrounds. 50% of SEAL beneficiaries have never received financing or support from any NGO or government source aside from SEAL.



SEAL FOCUS AREA:

LAND & AGRICULTURE

Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for poor communities living in Lebanon.



38%

of the poor work in agriculture/construction

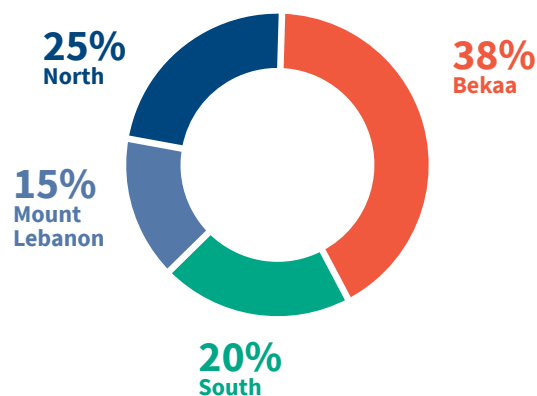
5.5%

of workforce is in the agriculture business



Potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers are the most common vegetable crop. Orange, lemon, mandarin, grapefruit are the most common fruit crops, then apples, bananas, and grapes

Agricultural production by region:



100%

of beneficiaries in Land & Agriculture focus area reported that jobs were created by their SEAL grant

100%

reported some or great hope in their community's economic future

75%

of beneficiaries reported an increase in earnings after their SEAL grant

56%

reported that SEAL improved their access to market

99%

said that SEAL's impact was still being felt today

“If SEAL had not helped, half of the employees currently present would not be here.”

Fouad, Moghraka



SEAL FOCUS AREA:

WATER & IRRIGATION

Poor water infrastructure is one of the largest challenges to reducing poverty in Lebanon.



60%

of Lebanon's water supply is used for agriculture, which is ineffectively managed and contributes only 6% to GDP



92%

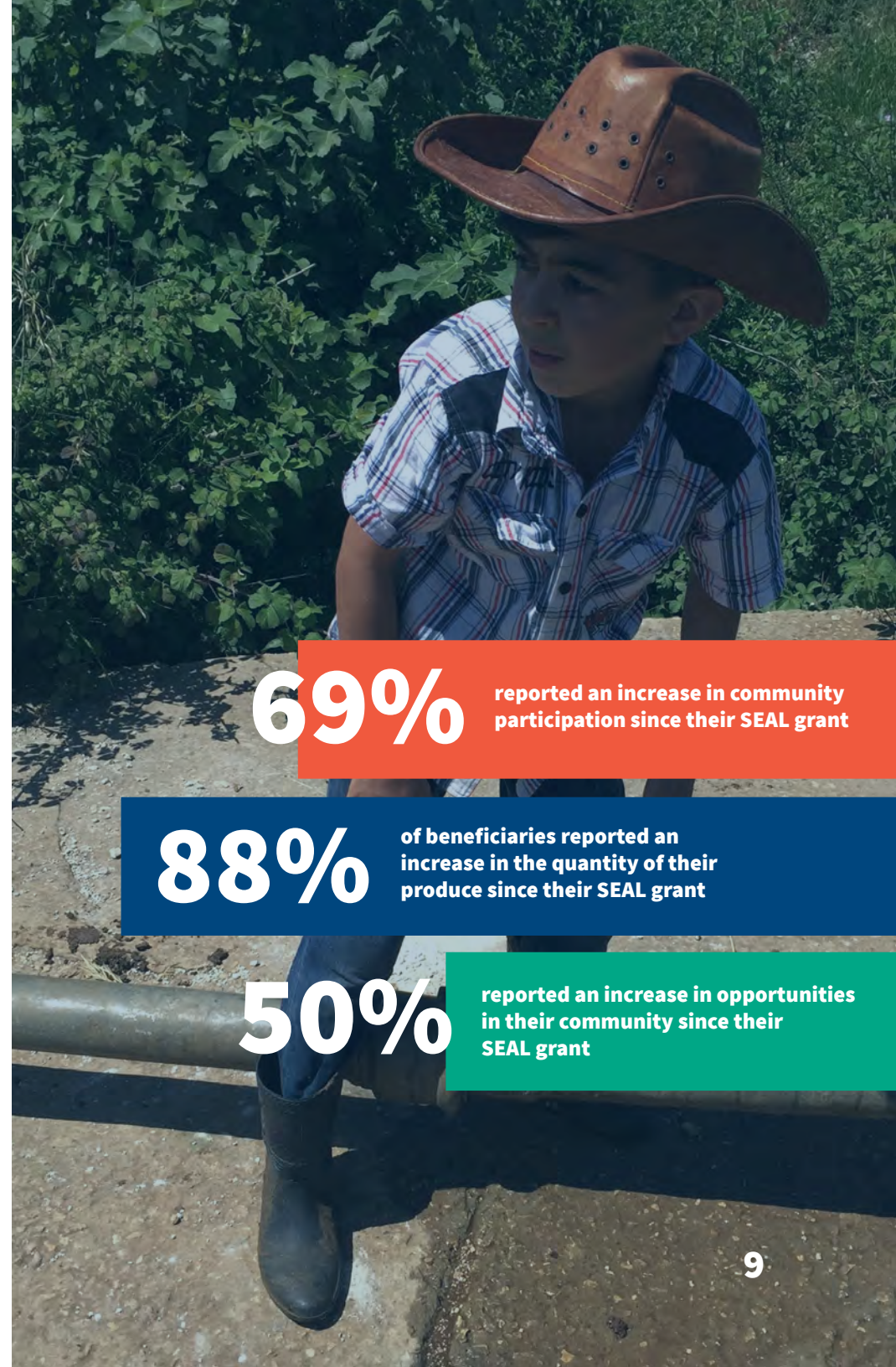
of sewage goes untreated into the sea, posing huge environmental risks



A water deficit is predicted to occur within 15 years

“If we hadn't had those pipes, the orchards would have died and the land would be lost to us, the farmers would have ended up leaving the village.”

- Elias Khalil el Hage, Baskenta Cooperative



69%

reported an increase in community participation since their SEAL grant

88%

of beneficiaries reported an increase in the quantity of their produce since their SEAL grant

50%

reported an increase in opportunities in their community since their SEAL grant



IMPACT STORY

Irrigation in Baskenta

Baskenta is a beautiful village in Mount Lebanon. The surrounding countryside suffered from a landslide in 2009, cutting off the water channels from the region. Orchards died; local government was unable to help; the situation was desperate.

“We showed SEAL the situation and they quickly put in pipes to replace the concrete channels,” Elias Khalil el Hage, Baskenta’s agriculture cooperative leader said.

“This reduced waste and made the flow much faster. If we hadn’t had those pipes, the orchards would have died and the land would be lost to us, the farmers would have ended up leaving the village. 50 farmers would have lost their entire livelihoods. These pipes allowed them to survive. And the water is still reaching the farmers today.”

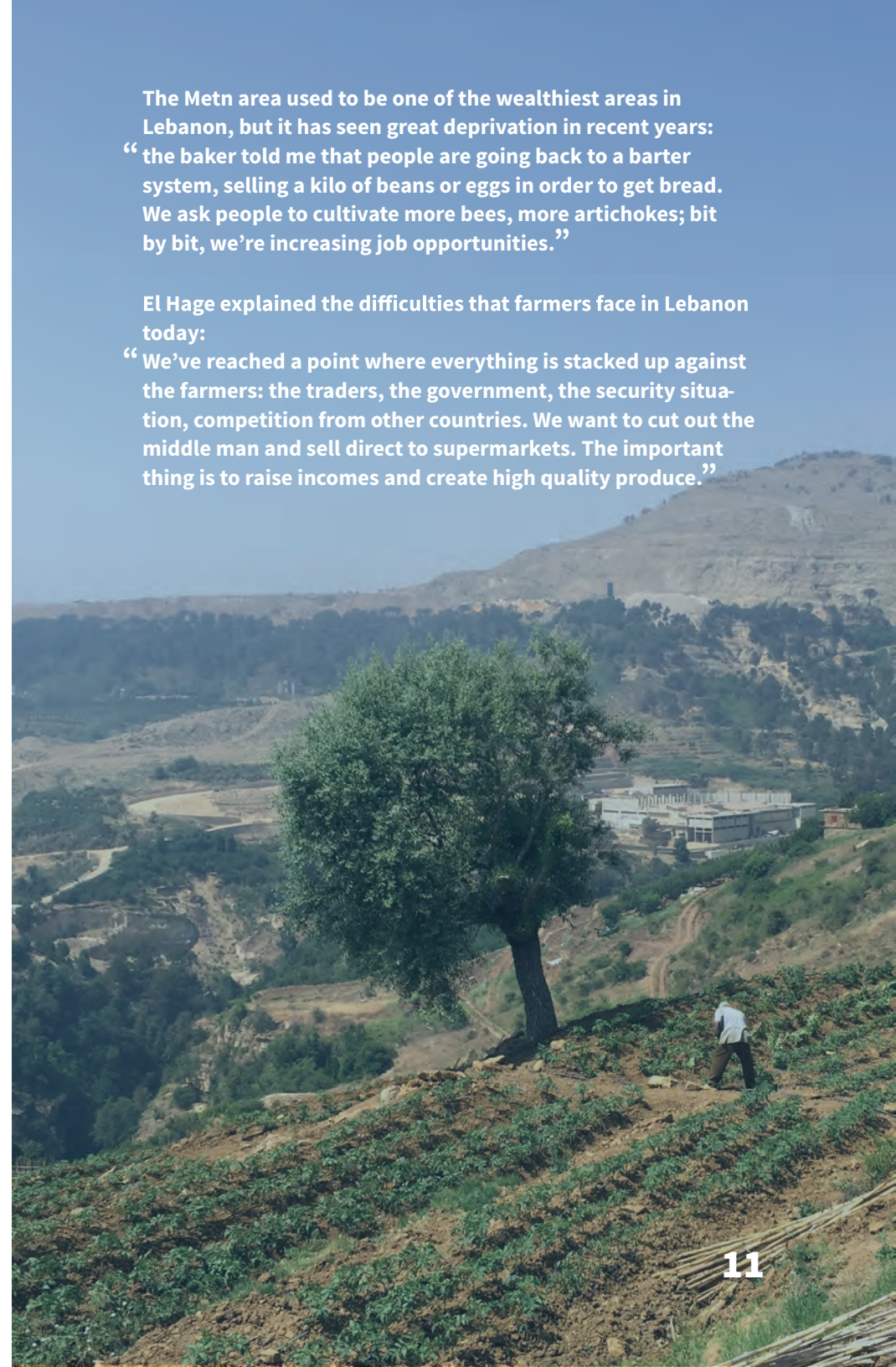
El Hage explained how the pipes have enhanced the sense of cooperation in the village:

“Each individual is responsible for himself and his use of the equipment, but we all help each other. People have started to enjoy working together – although we are still in Lebanon: people following different parties find it hard to collaborate in the cooperative.”

The Metn area used to be one of the wealthiest areas in Lebanon, but it has seen great deprivation in recent years: “the baker told me that people are going back to a barter system, selling a kilo of beans or eggs in order to get bread. We ask people to cultivate more bees, more artichokes; bit by bit, we’re increasing job opportunities.”

El Hage explained the difficulties that farmers face in Lebanon today:

“We’ve reached a point where everything is stacked up against the farmers: the traders, the government, the security situation, competition from other countries. We want to cut out the middle man and sell direct to supermarkets. The important thing is to raise incomes and create high quality produce.”





SEAL FOCUS AREA:

WOMEN IN THE WORKFORCE

Lebanon has the 8th worst gender equality in the world and the 3rd worst in the Middle East and North African region. This is mainly driven by the poor political and economic empowerment of women.



24%

of workforce in Lebanon are women



18%

of businesses are owned by women

“The women themselves become more independent, more confident, they can face anybody who does an injustice to them. This is all about women’s empowerment.”

Hayat Arslan, Society of Lebanon the Giver, Aley

100%

reported increase in earnings

66%

reported feeling some or great hope about their community’s economic future

100%

reported that new jobs were created

78%

reported that they had better access to markets for their products





IMPACT STORY

Women Seamstresses

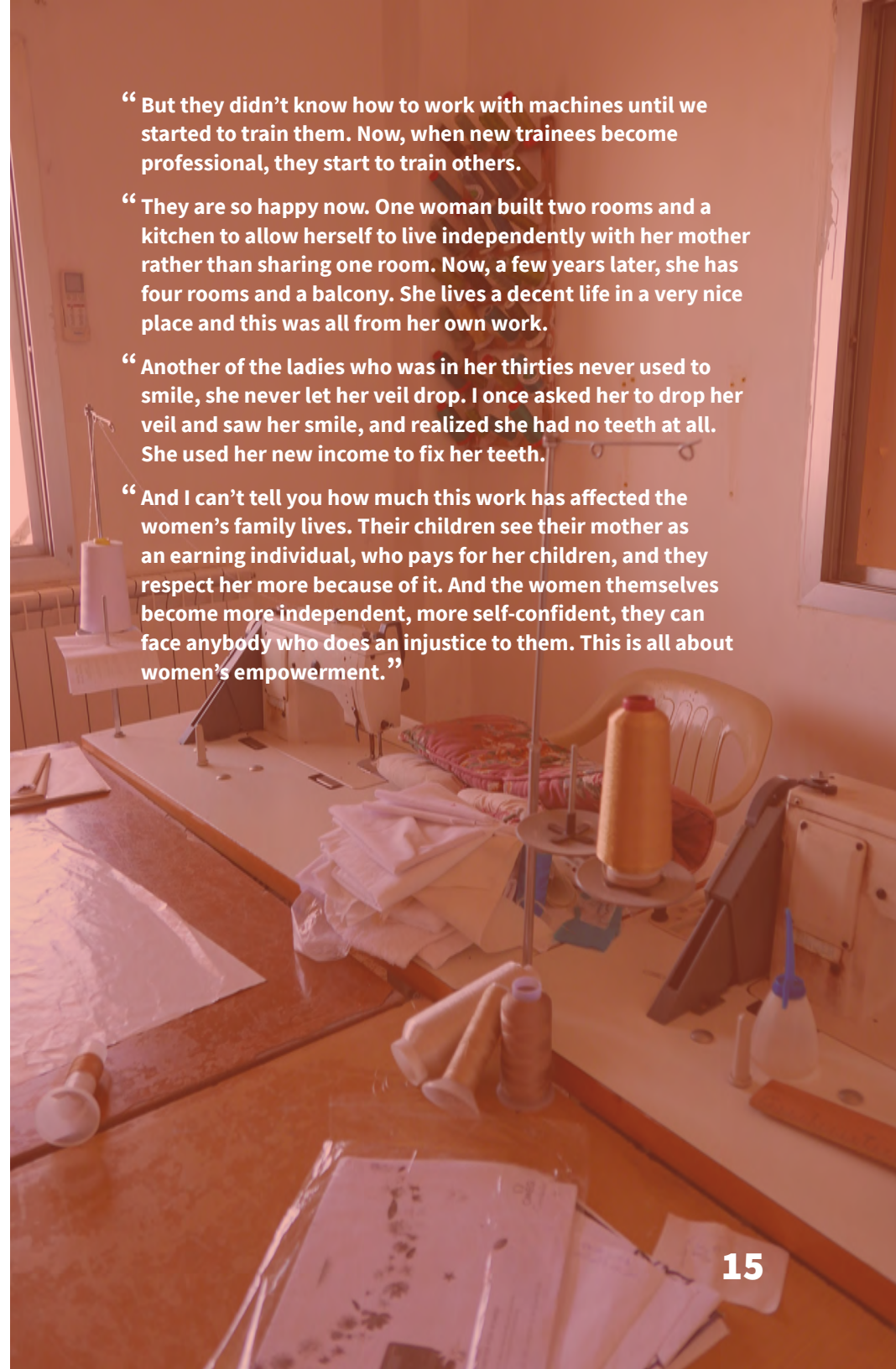
Back in 2000, SEAL's second ever project was to deliver 2 industrial sewing machines to a group of women in Aley, managed by the local NGO Society of Lebanon the Giver.

17 years later, the machines are still in daily use. An extraordinary 800 women have been trained to become professional seamstresses, making shawls, tablecloths and embroidered clothing.

10 women are now employed by the NGO as dressmakers, and around 170 others work for themselves.

Hayat Arslan is the head of the NGO and said:

“Before they started working here, some women used to work in agriculture and livestock to help their families; others would sell plastic containers. Many were destitute. They knew how to embroider by hand – it's traditional and part of our heritage.”



“But they didn't know how to work with machines until we started to train them. Now, when new trainees become professional, they start to train others.

“They are so happy now. One woman built two rooms and a kitchen to allow herself to live independently with her mother rather than sharing one room. Now, a few years later, she has four rooms and a balcony. She lives a decent life in a very nice place and this was all from her own work.

“Another of the ladies who was in her thirties never used to smile, she never let her veil drop. I once asked her to drop her veil and saw her smile, and realized she had no teeth at all. She used her new income to fix her teeth.

“And I can't tell you how much this work has affected the women's family lives. Their children see their mother as an earning individual, who pays for her children, and they respect her more because of it. And the women themselves become more independent, more self-confident, they can face anybody who does an injustice to them. This is all about women's empowerment.”



IMPACT STORY

Zaatar in the Bekaa

Joumana el Taki was in her late twenties when she teamed up with the municipality in Wadi el Taym, her village in the Bekaa, to learn zaatar production techniques.

Zaatar is a Lebanese speciality that is picked by local farmers and commands good prices, and back in 2004 Joumana saw it as a way to employ women in the area:

“There’s very little employment here, few people want to work in agriculture today. All the men leave. But women can’t leave, we have our families.”

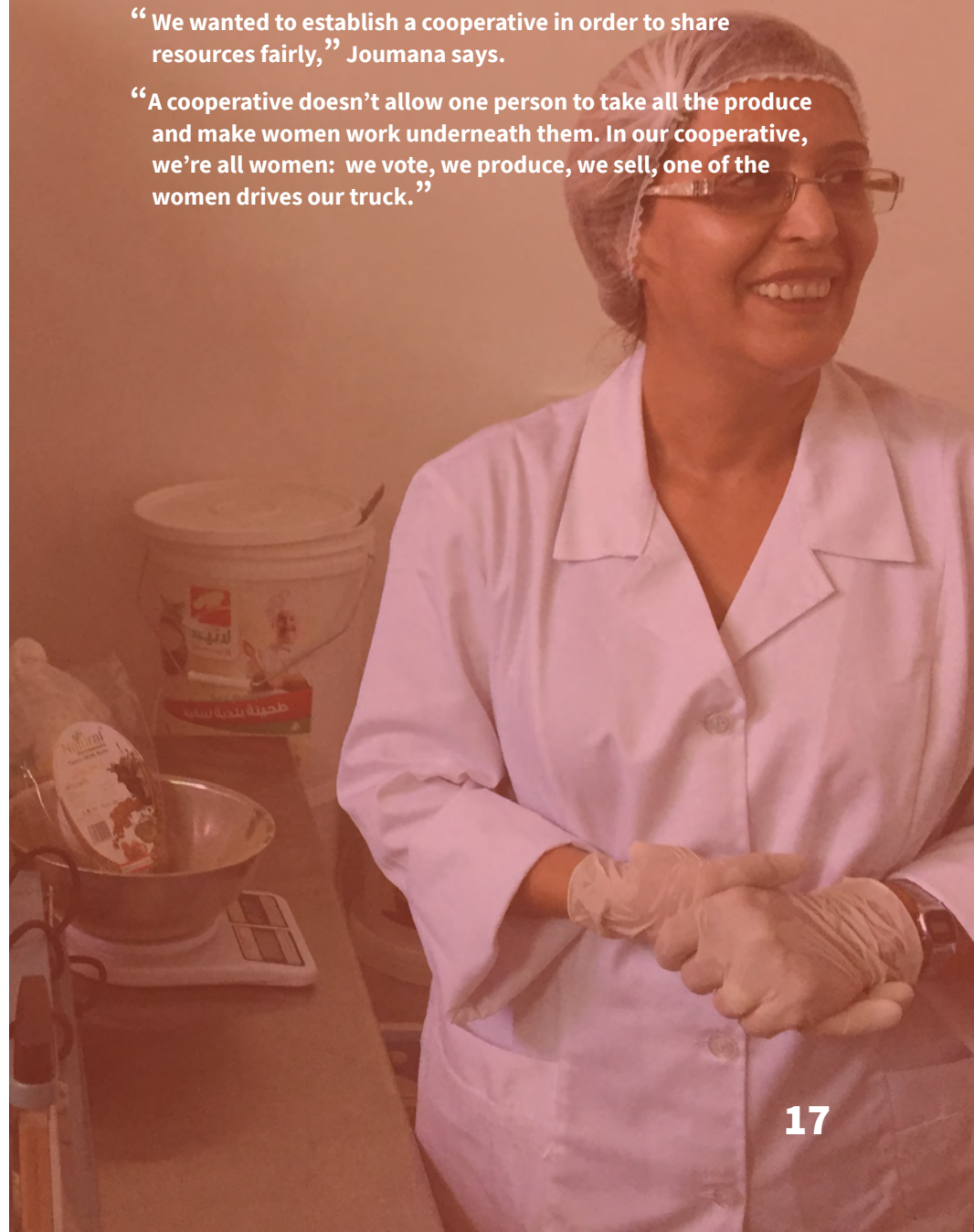
In 2016, SEAL fitted out the factory with industrial equipment.

The impact was decisive: production has increased by a factor of 10 from 200kg per month to 2 tons per month. Now, 24 women work at the zaatar factory and 40 have been trained in zaatar production.

These women have innovated to produce their own type of all-natural zaatar with walnuts and almonds, which has proven popular, and the cooperative is starting to export and sell its produce through social media, as well as to local bakeries and supermarkets.

“We wanted to establish a cooperative in order to share resources fairly,” Joumana says.

“A cooperative doesn’t allow one person to take all the produce and make women work underneath them. In our cooperative, we’re all women: we vote, we produce, we sell, one of the women drives our truck.”





FISHING

The fisheries sector in Lebanon is artisanal, with many fishermen engaged in generations of family trade. While demand for local fish is steady, supply is low.

Overfishing is a major contribution to the problem, as the fishing industry lacks proper regulation. Imported fish also makes up the majority of demand, leaving most Lebanese fishermen below the poverty line.



70%

less than Lebanon's average GDP per capita (\$3000 p.a.) is about what a fisherman earns. This is 45% less than minimum wage



\$64m

in profits are generated by fishing per year in Lebanon



Since 2011, hundreds of Lebanese fisherman have fled the country by boat to seek refugee status elsewhere due to economic difficulties

On average, the high-quality Japanese nets provided by SEAL doubled their production

100%

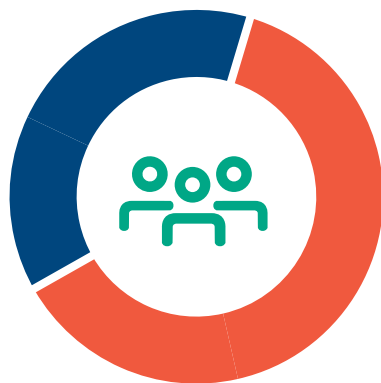
of beneficiaries reported that their SEAL grant gave their community hope

“There’s lots of cooperation between us fishermen – we work together. I give my food to other people’s children if they’re going to sleep hungry. But I have 3 children, and I’m not managing to bring them up. This year alone, 5000 fishermen from Mina fled to Europe.”

Salim, a fisherman from Mina

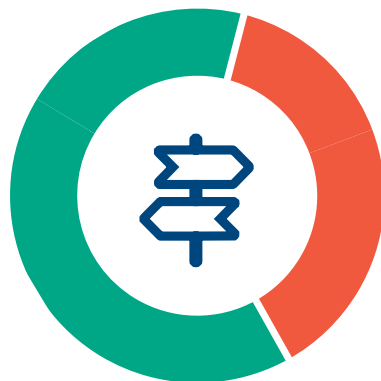
OUR OVERALL IMPACT

Social Impact



69%

of beneficiaries reported that there has been an increase in community participation and collaboration since their project with SEAL



28%

said that SEAL has reversed emigration in their community. Before their project with SEAL, people were moving away, now they are moving back

Economic Impact

90%

said that SEAL's impact was still being felt today (up to 10 years post project)

85%

reported that their project with SEAL increased sales

89%

reported that their project with SEAL led to an increase in the quantity of their produce

49%

say that opportunities in their community have increased since the time of their project with SEAL



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