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*Support to an Enabling Business Environment
for MSMEs Development & Financial Inclusion*

Lebanon - MSMEs Financing Country Outlook

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Lebanon Roadmap for MSMEs Innovative and Alternative Financing

Discussion paper

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1 Introduction

The MED MSMEs Program aims to support EU Southern Neighbourhood countries in the implementation of the Small Business Act (SBA) for Europe, which constitutes the reference framework for the formulation of the SME development policies, frameworks, adapted laws and regulations. The programme accompanies the beneficiary countries in the implementation of some dimensions of the Small Business Act - for Europe, namely: in areas of access to finance (principle 6 of the SBA) and internationalization of small businesses (principle 10 of the SBA).

In this context, the MED MSME Program carried out in 2020 a comparative analysis of the policies and financing mechanisms of MSMEs in the region with a view to identify and promote areas for improvement likely to facilitate MSMEs access to financing, through supporting activities aimed in particular at promoting alternative finance and innovative financing mechanisms, adaptation of policies and implementation of regulations, as well as coordination of political decision-makers, public and private dialogue. The comparative analysis has been formalized in a first short document "Country Outlook". The country outlook document produced for Lebanon focused mainly on: i) The state of play of MSMEs alternative and innovative financing, ii) Policies and strategies supporting the development of MSMEs alternative financing, and iii) A roadmap proposing priority initiatives and possible activities aimed at support facilitating alternative financing mechanisms.

The Country Outlook document analysis and proposed activities for facilitating MSMEs access to alternative and innovative financing were discussed during the meeting of the working group "Innovative and alternative MSMEs financing" which took place online on November 17th, 2020. Based on the meeting conclusions, and feedback received later, the present document "Lebanese Roadmap for MSMEs Innovative and Alternative Financing" is drafted.

2 Proposed Activities

The proposed activities aiming at improving and facilitating access to finance for MSMEs resulting from the analysis carried out and the public-private dialogue organized by MED MSME program and SBA coordinator and the working group meetings dedicated to access to finance were as follows:

1. Support updating the regulations for electronic payment services aimed at **supporting the development of Banking 4.0**. Facilitate the transition of the financial sector towards alternative finance by supporting the adoption of the EU Payment Services Directive 2 (DSP2) at national level.
2. Support the launch of the **Fintech Regulatory Sandbox** (area in which the Programme has developed a guide). The sandbox is a first tool that foster the development of digitalisation, FinTechs and alternative finance.
3. **Support enhancing the capacities of existing guarantee players**. The possibility of creating a regional counter-guarantee facility that would encourage Lebanese Guarantee Companies to offload the risks on their books.
4. Support formulation of policies and regulations enabling **MFIs to up-scale** in order to better meet the needs of the Small Sector, not properly served by the Banking sector – missing middle, and to encourage the formalization of very small businesses.

5. Support exchange of good practices in terms policies for women entrepreneurs to access finance. The **financing of women led MSMEs** and female entrepreneurship remains one of the weak links in financial inclusion around the world; Lebanon is no exception to the rule.
6. **Support the establishment of an observatory for financing the MSMEs** to facilitate the development of policies and programs for financing the MSMEs.
7. **Support the exchange of good practices relating to entrepreneurship financing** through capital investment (Equity): Angel Investor, Venture capital, etc. Exchanges of good practices in financing of entrepreneurship through Angel Investors and Venture Capital (through PCMA). If possible, bringing support for the ways to engage private sector money (e.g., family offices, established large businesses, DFIs) can be key to help maintain the financing ecosystem in Lebanon, particularly with the much-lessened role of banks in terms of debt instruments, and the de-facto halt of Circular 331's impact in terms of equity instruments.
8. There are various models to support trade operations, from digitalisation of documentary trade to **facilitating open account trade**; a study can be supported to propose the best working alternative within the Lebanese context in this area.
9. Support introducing FinTech based **innovative models to enable credit scoring of MSMEs**, thereby fostering financial inclusion. In addition, this credit scoring facility can be tied in with similar initiatives at the regional level, or linkages across countries of interest to facilitate and attract cross regional investments.

The working group and bilateral interactions made it possible to identify among these proposals the activities for which the Regional Program could have an added value, serve the implementation of national strategies, and exercise a catalytic role by generating synergies with bilateral interventions.

The proposed short list of activities to be discussed and agreed within the framework of the Working Group are four in number:

1. **Support updating the regulations for electronic payment services** aimed at supporting the development of Banking 4.0 through facilitating the transition of the financial sector towards alternative finance by supporting the adoption of the EU Payment Services Directive 2 (PSD2) at national level. MED MSMEs Programme can support the study, the evaluation and approach recommendation for sharing information with a third party, taking into consideration the European regulation of electronic payment services.
2. **Support the launch, by the Lebanon Monetary Authority (BDL), of the Fintech Regulatory Sandbox** (area in which the Programme has developed a guide). The sandbox is a first tool that foster the development of digitalisation, FinTechs and alternative finance.
3. **Support enhancing the capacities of existing guarantee players.** The possibility of creating a regional counter-guarantee facility that would encourage the National Guarantee Companies to offload the risks on their books related to impact finance and alternative financing transactions. A Regional Counter Guarantee will encourage the creation of other institutions capable of attracting funds circulation outside the Lebanese banking system.
4. **Support for the formulation of policies and regulations enabling MFIs to increase their loan size (up-scaling)** to better meet the needs of the Small Sector, not properly served by the Banking sector – missing middle, and to encourage the formalization of very small businesses.

Subject to approval by DG NEAR, the Program may intervene through direct support on these four activities. For the other activities (Long list), the MED MSMEs Program will support the SBA coordinator in the organization of the technical dialogue with the donors active in Lebanon to present these activities and identify opportunities for implementation by existing or future programs.

3 Selection Rationale and Intervention Strategy

Driven by dialogue with the Working Group and bilateral consultations, the four intervention areas selection were based on the following five criteria:

- (1) Focus on MSMEs.**
- (2) Contribution to the post-COVID-19 rebound and the financial crisis.**
- (3) Added value regionally (regional lens);** the team tried to take up interventions that were not only mentioned in one country working group but also in different countries and during the program review seminar on December 3, 2020.
- (4) Duration of impact** (max. 18 months, which is the remaining duration of the MED MSME program).
- (5) Complementarity with EU bilateral initiatives;** care was also taken to ensure that the proposed activities in the roadmap complement the initiatives and programs of other donors already in progress and support them positively through regional interventions.

In general, the proposed intervention activities were considered by the Program because their content is aligned with the regional intervention approach, strengthen innovative financing mechanisms in favour of Lebanese MSMEs, means of supporting the Program stakeholders, and facilitating digital technology. Digital financial services and FinTech solutions could facilitate MSMEs access to financing. Digital technology now offers an unprecedented opportunity to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on MSMEs financing. More specific reasoning behind the choice of these four support activities is presented below:

3.1 Support the Development of the FinTech Sector

Lebanon does not have measures to promote the adoption of data sharing frameworks in banking yet. The second Payment Services Directive (PSD2) is part of a global trend in bank regulation emphasizing security, innovation, and market competition, by requiring banks to provide other qualified payment-service providers (PSPs) connectivity to access customer account data and to initiate payments.

The introduction of PSD2 is designed to bring more competition to the Lebanese payments sector, particularly among non-traditional banks. PSD2 further aims to provide lower costs and higher security for consumers and to afford payment service providers greater flexibility to differentiate customer experiences. PSD2 is the regulation that allows projects such as Open Banking to take place. Through Open Banking, consumers will be allowed to view all their bank accounts, payments accounts and bills in one place, such as an Application Programming Interface (API), through third-party providers.

Introducing PSD2 will enable Fintech's; large technology firms, nonconventional banks, and even certain retail organizations to go head-to-head with big-name banks as Payment Service Providers. Consequently, this will lead to a significant rise in the number of neo-banks and big tech firms seeking regulatory approval to operate banking and payment services. Therefore, there is a need to support development of the FinTech sector towards Banking 4.0, taking into consideration the European regulation of electronic Payment Services Directive (PSD2).

The EU is considered the “cradle” of open banking and the United Kingdom’s Open Banking Standard pioneering the concept. There are now more than 50 jurisdictions around the world that have begun working on establishing, or have already established, open banking regulatory frameworks. Introducing PSD2 will aim to ensure fair and open access to payment markets and to strengthen consumer protection. And more specifically, it will support the opening of bank information systems to new players - open banking or banking 4.0 - and at the same time strengthens the security of online payments to fight against fraud and cybercrime.

This sharing of customer-permissioned data by banks with third parties is leveraged to build applications and services that provide faster and easier payments, greater financial transparency options for account holders, new and improved account services, and marketing and cross-selling opportunities. It will foster an innovative, secure, and competitive financial market. Open banking can help MSMEs use open data and payment applications which can enable MSMEs to gain access to finance more easily and aid in their digital transformation. Account aggregation links financial accounts across banks and/or geographic borders and can provide a small business with a coherent picture of its consolidated financial position; when combined with other tools such as an online accounting or payroll package, account aggregation allows the SMEs to easily make tax and salary payments in just a few clicks.

However, one of the main challenges for regulated open API frameworks is how to encourage adoption of business models that maintain a level playing field between banks, obliged to share their data, and the FinTechs accessing that data. Lebanese Banks will have to be encouraged to play a major role in facilitating PSD2. Lebanese Banks can also choose to use PSD2 as a steppingstone to a platform business model. Updating the regulations for electronic payment services through drawing inspiration from the European regulation of PSD2, which is considered worldwide as a benchmark for regulating the openness of data and ensure the security of transactions (as a first step towards open banking). EU’s PSD2 applies only to payments processing data that banks need to share with a third party with prior customer consent.

As a result, the MED MPME program will be able to help raise awareness and facilitate implementation, in particular by offering benchmarks and facilitating the exchange of experiences between countries which have succeeded in convincing banks to disclose customer data to service providers, third-party services. The program will thus be able to support decision-makers in Lebanon to develop new policies allowing secure digital payments and the use of fintech services. An exchange also at regional level to be considered in order to present the EU's experience in this area and to discuss the way forward to support the use of PSD2. Furthermore, the program can support organization and implementation of support policies for the FinTech sector. By working on this subject, Lebanon can continue to develop this sector which is a lever for financing entrepreneurs and MSMEs businesses.

3.2 Support the launch of the Fintech Regulatory Sandbox

Fintech sector in Lebanon is promising: A young and highly educated population, high penetration of mobile phones, low financial inclusion rates, and diasporas remittances are among the major driving forces. Nevertheless, new technology and business models also pose threats, therefore the regulator(s) have key roles to play and need to find compromises between allowing innovation and protecting the financial system and consumers alike.

Lebanese financial sector is heavily regulated to ensure financial integrity and stability of a country; whereas FinTechs require a more relaxed regulatory framework to enable them to successfully implement and run their operations. The rapid pace of innovation in financial services resulted in an

emergent need for the development of a regulatory framework that governs the operations of the Alternative Finance and FinTech with an ultimate objective of creating a balance between the potential benefits and possible risks of the new innovations.

In order to decrease and minimize the risks associated with the FinTech rapid development, different innovative regulatory tools and initiatives were put in place and adopted by different regulators to govern the industry depending on the market's sophistication and regulator's objectives, such as the Regulatory Sandbox Approach. The regulatory Sandbox is a regulatory framework that allows businesses and innovators to test their innovative Fintech products, services, or solutions in the market under a more relaxed regulatory environment, complemented by a well-defined space and duration arranged and agreed upon with the Regulator.

Regulatory Sandboxes provide greater transparency and replicability and are most relevant to markets with good supervisory capacity and high level of active, potential non-licensed players. Furthermore, Regulatory Sandboxes showcase the willingness of regulators to engage with industry participants and consumers with the ultimate objective of creating a balance between financial inclusion, consumer protection and financial stability. Additionally, Regulatory Sandboxes offer a faster route to market and a clearer understanding of the challenges that both regulators and Sandbox Participants must overcome. It provides a secured and safe environment for innovative FinTech solutions to be developed and tested against rules and regulations in a live environment with real consumers, inform long term policy making for the sector through learning and experimentation, signal commitment to innovation and learning, promote communication and engagement with market participants and FinTech Ecosystem Stakeholders, and update regulations that may prohibit beneficial innovation.

As a result, the MED MPME program will be able to help raise awareness and facilitate implementation of the Fintech Regulatory Sandbox (area in which the Programme has developed a guide). The sandbox is a first tool that foster the development of digitalisation, FinTechs and alternative finance and it encourages innovators to further engage with regulators to facilitate market entry of new ideas which will offer more innovative and affordable financing tools to MSMEs.

3.3 Support Existing Guarantee Players

Currently and start from fall of 2019, start of the financial crisis, securing loans from banks has become very difficult, if possible, at all; in addition to high collateral requirements for debt instruments offered by the banking sector prior to the financial crisis. The possibility of creating a regional counter-guarantee facility that would encourage the Lebanese guarantee companies to offload the risks on their books related to impact finance and alternative financing transactions, facilitating the management of risks at a controlled cost. A Regional Counter Guarantee will encourage the creation of other institutions capable of attracting funds circulation outside the banking system. Such an instrument will serve as a catalyst at the level of the MSMEs and will help unifying certain practices while reducing the existing heterogeneity. It will promote the high-risk products while ensuring the financing of new niches such as digitalization, the green economy, women, and youth entrepreneurship, etc...

This proposed Regional Counter Guarantee Facility can bring support for the ways to engage private sector money (e.g., family offices, established large businesses, DFIs). It can be key player to help maintain the financing ecosystem in Lebanon, particularly with the much-lessened role of banks in terms of debt instruments, and the de-facto halt of Circular 331's impact in terms of equity instruments.

The involved parties will define the facility mission and actions. Mission and actions will be diversified and modelled on the measures actions already taken at the EU level among others, the following financial and non-financial actions:

- Funding feasibility studies to see if the MSME project is likely to achieve its goals.
- Helping local institutions screen project and business proposals.
- Supporting beneficiaries in managing the financial affairs.
- Establishing a regular, formal dialogue, known as structured dialogue, between the private sector and governments. Bringing together governments and businesses to discuss investment challenges.
- Supporting governments to put reforms into practice.
- Encouraging more lending to small agricultural business, women business (low market penetration areas); providing a technical assistance by mobilizing financial and rural agriculture experts, such as agricultural engineers, accountants, insurance experts, etc...
- Helping in developing new MSMEs projects and ensure they succeed.

Among other benefits, facilitating the development of statistics, which, in the medium term, would make it possible to refine and adapt its procedures to better meet the specific needs of the Lebanese economy. The counter-guarantee facilities experiences in Europe have provided conclusive evidence of their effectiveness and positive effects on national and regional development. A North-South and South-South dialogue would help implement best practices through the sharing of experiences and procedures.

3.4 Support MFIs Up Scaling

Lebanon has made a giant leap in the field of microfinance, which has a very significant impact on the financing of very small businesses and particularly those which are not banked. This type of impact financing would improve access to financing for a greater number of Very Small Enterprises (VSEs) if it raises the loan size granted and if it develops microinsurance, in particular. The Lebanese Microfinance sector is small in terms of assets but has a significant outreach with an estimated portfolio of USD 190 million and active borrowers approximately 150,000, as of end of 2019, which reflects a considerable market penetration.

Cross borrowing and over indebtedness require more careful oversight; a recent study indicates that 30% of microfinance borrowers have cross borrowings with another financial institution. Furthermore, with the reluctance of Lebanese banks to increase SME lending, after the financial crisis, the MFIs has a strategic role to fill in this gap. The MED MSME program will be able to support decision-makers to develop adequate policies aimed at improving the regulatory framework for Microfinance and Microinsurance in Lebanon, especially since several successful experiences are recorded in the region and the same need also exists in some partner countries. Lebanon today needs microloans and very small loans to develop their activities and create sources of income.

An urgent need that has pushed civil society as well as government institutions to reflect on concrete and rapid means to restructure the microfinance sector, the latter could gain further ground if we raise the size of loans granted, thus being able to respond to a strong demand for small and medium-sized enterprises and reach meso-finance which today represents the Middle-Missed in Lebanon. This activity will start by conducting a study to identify policies hindering MFIs upscale, developing a toolkit for self-assessment, and matching with international donors to enable additional funding resources.

4 Proposed Activities Tentative Structure

Draft proposed actions to support areas of intervention is presented, below, that could be undertaken in the short or medium term to support MSMEs access to alternative financing in Lebanon. The actions proposed below are intended to serve as a basis for discussion within the access to finance working group, the experts' suggestions for each proposed activity are presented as guidance and will be supplemented/amended during the working group meetings for validation and finalization of the roadmap.

During the year 2021, the MED MSMEs Program plans to support the target group through the implementation of support actions - at regional and national level - presented in the tables below.

4.1 Support the Development of the FinTech Sector

Activity Title	The development of the FinTech sector (towards Banking 4.0), taking into consideration the EU PSD2.
Overall objective	Sensitize decision-makers around the EU's PSD2 as a fintech catalyst and support them in the implementation if adopted.
Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Raise awareness of the target group on good practices in relation to EU PSD2. ii) Identify the measures needed to support the implementation of PSD2. iii) Support start-ups in the fintech sector.
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The target group is made aware of policies and practices relating to PSD2. - The national dialogue on strengthening development policies for the fintech sector is supported by the Program. - Strengthening the skills, organization and/or legislative with the regulatory framework of PSD2.
Target group/Partner (max 15 people)	Executives from the Ministries of Finance, Economy and Trade, BDL, the association of banks and other federations / associations of companies.
Support actions proposed under the MED MSMEs Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop a comparative study on policies allowing the disclosure of bank customer data to third-party service providers, a benchmark will help guide policy makers to develop new policies allowing secure digital payments and the use of fintech services. b. Organization of a regional event (physical or virtual) to raise awareness of PSD2 and present the conclusions of the policy study and the EU experience in the field. c. Support stakeholders in the development of FinTechs and the implementation of PSD2 if adopted by the government.
Methods of implementation	<p>The national SBA coordinator will play a central role in mobilizing members of the working group and other organizations involved in the development of FinTechs and open banking. As well as coordination with other national and international instruments and programs in the sector</p> <p>The MED MSMEs Program will mobilize the necessary expertise to support the national coordinator of the SBA for the implementation of the afore mentioned support actions.</p>

Implementation schedule	-
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study and benchmark on the implementation of the EU's PSD2 and identification of the measures necessary to support it. - Sensitization of key players and popularization of the concept of open banking. - Contribution of Lebanon to the regional event on PSD2 to discuss good practices. - At least 1 support action for capacity building / organization of the fintech ecosystem.

4.2 Support the launch of the Fintech Regulatory Sandbox

Activity Title	Support the Launch of the Fintech Regulatory Sandbox by BDL
Overall objective	Facilitate MSMEs access to finance through promoting and sponsoring FinTechs competition and innovation.
Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) supporting in bridging and closing the financing gaps faced by the MSMEs sector mainly by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Providing products and services at higher efficiency and lower costs. b. Mitigating information asymmetry: by increasing the scope for efficient and cost-effective collection an analysis of enormous quantities of data for use in financial decision-making. ii) Support strengthening the skills of organization and / or legislative on Fintech Regulatory Sandbox Framework. iii) Support start-ups in the fintech sector.
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The capacities of the actors concerned are strengthened for an effective implementation of Regulator Sandbox Framework (innovative financing mechanisms). - The legal framework innovative FinTech is improved.
Target group/Partners (max 15 people)	Executives from the Ministries of Finance, BDL, Economy and Trade and other federations / business associations.
Support actions proposed under the MED MSMEs Program	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organizing a webinar with partners and respective regulators to further elaborate and discuss the main features and requirements for the establishment of a Regulatory Sandbox and present the main finding of the Program's Guide. 2. Facilitating an exchange of experience and knowledge sharing between Partner Countries and EU countries. 3. Organizing a study tour to selected EU Countries. 4. On-demand facilitation of discussions for signing Collaboration Agreements. 5. Technical support for drafting of founding document.
Methods of implementation	<p>The SBA coordinator will play a central role in mobilizing the target group to participate in the proposed actions.</p> <p>The MED MSMEs Program will mobilize expertise to support the SBA coordinator for the implementation of the above activities.</p>

Implementation schedule	-
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing Sandbox regulation or policies from pioneer countries. - Action Plan to support the implementation of the Regulatory Sandbox. - Raising awareness among relevant stakeholders on the impact of Regulatory Sandbox Framework. - Facilitating space and environment for live testing under the regulator's supervision.

4.3 Support Existing Guarantee Players

Activity Title	Support Existing Guarantee Players through Regional Counter Guarantee facility
Overall objective	Increase available financing for MSMEs
Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Attracting funds circulation outside the banking system Support start-ups in the fintech sector. ii) Increase financing to women MSMEs. iii) Increase financing to agriculture business. iv) Increase financing to alternative finance institutions. v) Reduce number of SMEs loan application rejection.
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Action plans discussed with the target groups as well as regional Counter Guarantee facility establishment modality. - Mechanisms and tools specific to start up entrepreneurs, underserved business (e.g., agriculture business, women MSMEs) identified and discussed within the working group.
Target group/Partners (max 15 people)	Executives from the Ministries of Finance, National Guarantee Funds and companies, the association of banks, BDL, Kafalat and other federations / associations of companies.
Support actions proposed under the MED MSMEs Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. A comprehensive study to be carried out, through surveys and dialogues, to identify a common denominator on which a regional platform could be established. b. An in-depth analysis of the transactions of each guarantee system which would include various information such as corporate government, systems, processes, professional team, analysis of default, portfolio, loss frequency, commission collection, etc. c. Identify the risk mitigation products (leasing, private equity, etc.) provided to MSMEs by the guarantee institutions for which a counter-guarantee could be obtained. The financing of investments and working capital may also be counter guaranteed in order to assist the development of SMEs and/or to support them financially in times of crisis (COVID-19 and financial crisis). d. Organization of a regional event (physical or virtual) to agree on the study analysis and share the EU experience in the field.
Implementation Methods of	The national SBA coordinator will play a central role in mobilizing members of the working group and other organizations involved in the development

	<p>of Counter Guarantee modalities. As well as coordination with other national and international institutions and programs in the sector</p> <p>This process will take place at the national level first and between the countries of the region in a second phase, linking both the countries concerned and the promoters. To achieve this, a bilateral dialogue would pave the way for multilateral dialogue. An interesting avenue to explore concerns the alternative finance products as they may spearhead economic development by granting credits to companies ignored by traditional Financial Institutions due to their high exposure to risks.</p> <p>The MED MSMEs Program will mobilize the necessary expertise to support the national coordinator of the SBA for the implementation of the aforementioned support actions.</p>
Implementation schedule	-
Deliverables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Study and benchmark on the implementation of the National, Regional and EU's Counter Guarantee facilities and identification of the measures necessary to support it. - Sensitization of key players and popularization of the concept - Active participation of Lebanon in the regional event to benefit from the exchange of experience.

4.4 Support MFIs Up Scaling

Activity Title	Formulation of policies and regulations allowing MFIs to increase their loan size (up-scaling)
Overall objective	Improving the regulatory framework and the organization of the microfinance sector for better access to financing for small and medium-sized enterprises.
Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Allow MFIs to improve their institutional structure. ii) Allow MFIs to access additional funding from international donors. iii) Address the missing middle sector to expand financing mechanisms. iv) Gender based lending for women entrepreneurs is considered. v) The evolution of the regulatory framework of the microfinance sector in Lebanon or introducing new organisation tires. vi) Alternative finance sector development by strengthening NBFIs' governance structure, capacities, including sensitization.
Expected results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Areas for improving the alternative financing regulatory framework are identified and discussed during the national dialogue. - The capacities of the target group are strengthened for a better implementation of microfinance promoting better access to financing for micro-enterprises. - Enhancing access to finance to MSMEs including women through alternative finance
Target group/Partner (max 15 people)	Executives of the Ministries of Finance, economy and trade, BDL, LMFA, Women Association, and other federations / associations of companies.

<p>Support actions proposed under the MED MSMEs Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development of a self-assessment tool kit to improve the institutional requirements for international donors. b. Identifying of policies and regulation allowing or hindering the up scaling of NBFIs. c. Webinars to facilitate dialogue with international donors including finance intuitions in the EU Initiative for Financial Inclusion d. Organization of a national dialogue aimed at reforming and improving the legal framework of the microfinance sector. e. Organize a regional event promoting the exchange of experience in microfinance and micro-insurance and improving access to financing for VSEs.
<p>Methods of implementation</p>	<p>The SBA coordinator will play a central role in mobilizing the target group to participate in the proposed actions.</p> <p>The MED MSMEs Program will mobilize expertise to support the SBA coordinator for the implementation of the above activities.</p>
<p>Implementation schedule</p>	<p>-</p>
<p>Deliverables</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development and dissemination of a self-assessment toolkit - Results of the policy study is completed and shared at regional level. - Participation in webinars. - Microfinance bill drafted following national dialogue. - Active participation of Lebanon in the regional event to benefit from the exchange of experience. - Gender based lending is increased