

# QVALEB *Final Report*

Final Report on  
QVALEB -  
The Quality Programme  
Phase I

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October 2009

## Final Report on QUALEB - The Quality Programme Phase I

**Produced in the framework of the MEDA Project:**

Sustaining Quality Project, hosted at the

**Ministry of Economy & Trade** (PAO/SR2/MOET/QUALEB/SERV/01/2007)

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**Edited by QUALEB, the Quality Programme, hosted at  
the Ministry of Economy and Trade, LEBANON**

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**Dear Reader,**

With the approaching end of the first phase of QUALEB - the Sustaining Quality Programme, an EU funded project at the Ministry of Economy and Trade, I have the pleasure to lay in your hands the project's Final Report prepared by the QUALEB Team, to reveal the achieved goals and activities in the last five years.

Despite the difficult circumstances that Lebanon went through (political assassinations and the July 2006 war) during the period of the project's implementation, it is obvious that QUALEB, has managed to achieve most of its set objectives and leave a positive impact on the Quality infrastructure, mainly at the level of drafting quality related legislation and supporting private and public institutions, in terms of capacity building and the adoption of new modernized quality management strategies, in conformity with international standards. I will not go into details in this matter, as it will be further elaborated in the report itself.



I would like to highlight the fact that QUALEB is one of the fruits of the Association Agreement signed between Lebanon and the European Union, which falls under the provision related to the development and support of institutional capabilities, encouraging the technological and scientific exchange through specialised programmes. We understand that the path towards quality and excellence is a long and difficult one, but I can assure you that this programme has established the basic pillars to pursue and develop the quality structure and spread the quality and excellence culture at the national level. I am looking forward for the beginning of the



second phase of the Programme, around the first half of the year 2010, which will also be supported by the European Union. This will allow the Programme to continue achieving its set objectives that we already started implementing in the first phase, in the fields of standards, metrology, accreditation, national laboratory support, certification and market surveillance – in particular consumer protection, Lebanese Excellence Award and a unified National Quality Policy. We expect that this will reflect positively on the development of our industry & exports to international markets and on our national economy in general.

Through the EU-Lebanon Association Agreement, our relationship with the European Union went through three phases, starting from the Barcelona initiative, passing by the European Neighbourhood Policy, reaching the Union for the Mediterranean. Lebanon looks positively at this relationship and is looking forward to further strengthening it, for the benefit of both parties.

I sincerely assure our honest will to cooperate with the European Union and I seize this opportunity to thank the European Commission, represented by H.E. Mr. Patrick Laurent, Head of the European Commission Delegation to Lebanon, who offered all necessary support and cooperation in the field of quality and other different sectors. We hope that this support remains continuous, and harmonised with the spirit and provisions of the Association Agreement.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the Director of QUALEB and his team for their efforts and hard work which, despite the tough circumstances, lead to the completion of these achievements, according to the set objectives.

**H.E. Mohammad Al Safadi,**  
**Minister of Economy and Trade**

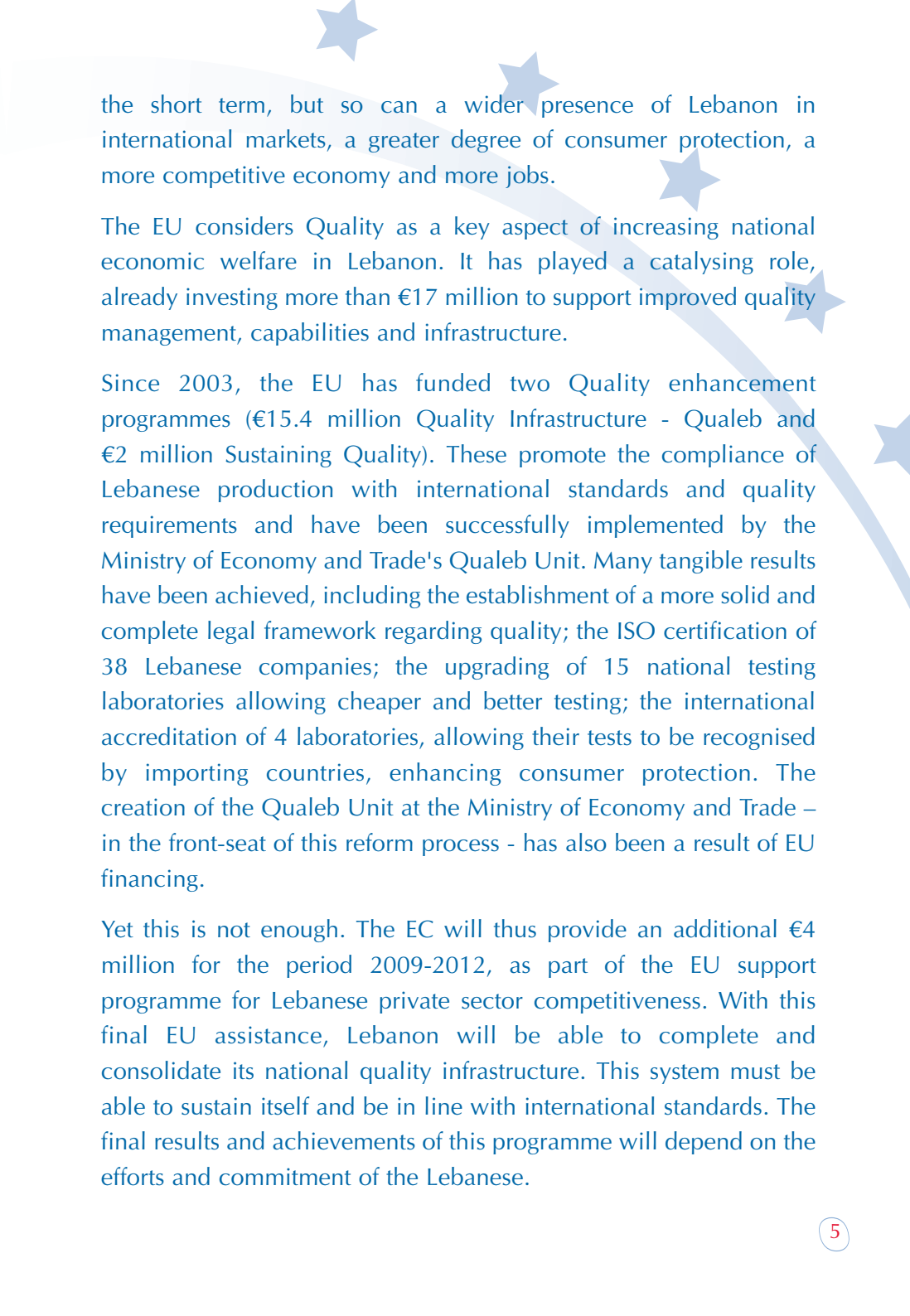
## FOREWORD

Since May 2007, the European Commission has organised a series of Inter-Lebanese Fora in Beirut, with the aim of facilitating open debate and building consensus on key economic and social reforms. To date, four fora have taken place, one of which notably addressed the issue of the competitiveness of Lebanese enterprises and SME development. The fora were inclusive, bringing together representatives of Lebanon's parliamentary blocs and professional associations, with Lebanese expert participation. Despite the sometimes difficult political environment, the fora discussions led to common agreement on reform priorities. One agreed conclusion was the need for enhanced quality and standardisation of Lebanon's production and services, related to both the local and export market.



Compliance with international standards and requirements is essential for Lebanese enterprises: to become more competitive, permit them to open new markets by better serving consumers - and thereby create growth and jobs - and achieve compliance with stringent standards; overall, it will be instrumental to reach the 490 million consumers of the EU market, and in so doing the global marketplace.

It is certain that Quality has a price: transition and maintenance costs can be high. But, the EU is convinced that the economic and social benefits to be reaped from higher quality are far superior to the associated financial costs. Not only can more exports be expected in

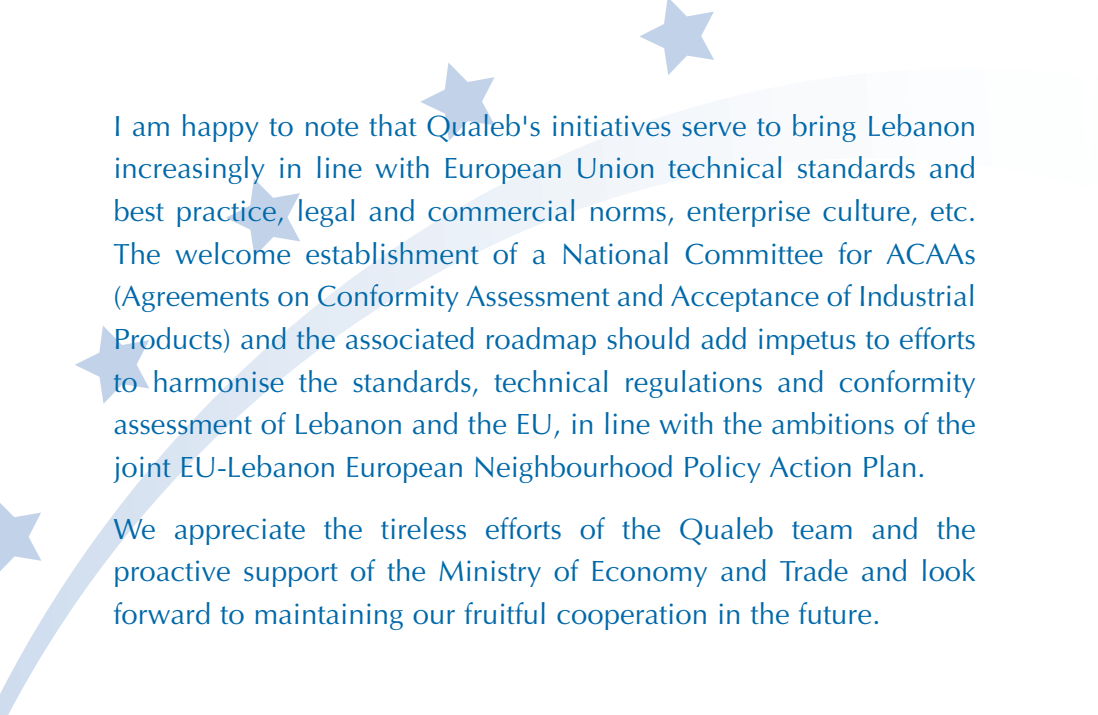


the short term, but so can a wider presence of Lebanon in international markets, a greater degree of consumer protection, a more competitive economy and more jobs.

The EU considers Quality as a key aspect of increasing national economic welfare in Lebanon. It has played a catalysing role, already investing more than €17 million to support improved quality management, capabilities and infrastructure.

Since 2003, the EU has funded two Quality enhancement programmes (€15.4 million Quality Infrastructure - Qualeb and €2 million Sustaining Quality). These promote the compliance of Lebanese production with international standards and quality requirements and have been successfully implemented by the Ministry of Economy and Trade's Qualeb Unit. Many tangible results have been achieved, including the establishment of a more solid and complete legal framework regarding quality; the ISO certification of 38 Lebanese companies; the upgrading of 15 national testing laboratories allowing cheaper and better testing; the international accreditation of 4 laboratories, allowing their tests to be recognised by importing countries, enhancing consumer protection. The creation of the Qualeb Unit at the Ministry of Economy and Trade – in the front-seat of this reform process - has also been a result of EU financing.

Yet this is not enough. The EC will thus provide an additional €4 million for the period 2009-2012, as part of the EU support programme for Lebanese private sector competitiveness. With this final EU assistance, Lebanon will be able to complete and consolidate its national quality infrastructure. This system must be able to sustain itself and be in line with international standards. The final results and achievements of this programme will depend on the efforts and commitment of the Lebanese.



I am happy to note that Qualeb's initiatives serve to bring Lebanon increasingly in line with European Union technical standards and best practice, legal and commercial norms, enterprise culture, etc. The welcome establishment of a National Committee for ACAAs (Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products) and the associated roadmap should add impetus to efforts to harmonise the standards, technical regulations and conformity assessment of Lebanon and the EU, in line with the ambitions of the joint EU-Lebanon European Neighbourhood Policy Action Plan.

We appreciate the tireless efforts of the Qualeb team and the proactive support of the Ministry of Economy and Trade and look forward to maintaining our fruitful cooperation in the future.

**H.E. Patrick Laurent,**

**Head of the Delegation of the European Commission to Lebanon**



## EDITORIAL



In October 2009, the Quality Programme-QUALEB phase I, and its follow up, the Sustaining Quality Project, will come to an end. However, a new project is in preparation, but unfortunately, it will not be back to back with the present project. It will be a matter of a few months before it will all start again. In the meantime, QUALEB will not cease to exist. QUALEB is part of the Ministry of Economy and Trade and will continue to support Lebanese organisations in matters of quality and in striving for excellence, through several means, including the Lebanese Excellence Award initiative. QUALEB will also continue to work on the completion of the national quality infrastructure, perhaps not at the same level of activity that was and will be possible with the past and future financial support of the European Union.

As you well know, creating an operational quality infrastructure and creating a quality culture are a long-term endeavour. It is a form of change management on a national scale. For Lebanon, it implies total change from one system of conformity assessment to another, as well as changing the mind sets of managers. Making the change from one system to the other takes time; actually, it takes years. We have been working on these system changes for five years now and have made substantial progress, albeit in an uneven manner. In some areas, it is much more advanced than in others; the path and speed of developments in the different fields of quality were not the same and not always in parallel. Perhaps the situation might have been better now, if the country had not gone through rather a turbulent period that almost fully coincided with the implementation of the Quality Programme. It is just a reality that we have to cope with, and





not an excuse. The QUALEB team made the most out of it.

We are glad that we can continue with our work in the near future, once again with the support of the European Union. Then, we will concentrate our efforts on those areas that are now lagging behind and we hope that at the end of 2013, we are able to say that Lebanon made it. In other words, that all what has been built up in competence of organisations and confidence in the operation of the system, and all that, with the indispensable support and inputs of many organisations and persons, has become sustainable. It doesn't have to be perfect in just a decade, but as long as the system is moving in the right direction and changes have become irreversible, it was worth all the efforts.

On behalf of myself and my colleagues at QUALEB, I put in your hands this final report that gives an account of our achievements and the obstacles we have faced throughout the period of implementation of this project.

We would like to seize this opportunity to thank H.E. Minister Mohammad Safadi for his continuous guidance, support and trust. Nevertheless, I would like to cite the support of previous Ministers of Economy & Trade, especially H.E. Minister Sami Haddad. Moreover, we highly appreciate the funding, technical assistance, and cooperation extended to QUALEB by the Head of the European Commission Delegation to Lebanon H.E. Patrick Laurent and his service, as well as, for PAO, the Project Administration Office, at the Council of Ministers, for its cooperation in the Sustaining Quality Project. Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge the serious efforts and hard work of QUALEB team, without whom these achievements would not have been possible.

**Ali Berro, PhD**  
**Programme Director**



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Final Report on QUALEB -  
The Quality Programme - Phase I

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>p. 10</b>
<b>2. Project background</b>	<b>p. 10</b>
<b>a. Objectives</b>	<b>p. 10</b>
<b>b. Finance</b>	<b>p. 11</b>
<b>c. The Programme's main Stakeholders and Target Groups</b>	<b>p. 12</b>
<b>3. Achievements</b>	<b>p. 13</b>
<b>a. Policies &amp; Legislation</b>	<b>p. 13</b>
<b>b. Laboratory Accreditation</b>	<b>p. 15</b>
<b>c. Inspection &amp; Certification</b>	<b>p. 17</b>
<b>d. Support to Quality Related Institutions (COLIBAC, CPD, LIBNOR)</b>	<b>p. 19</b>
<b>e. ISO Implementation Project</b>	<b>p. 21</b>
<b>f. Lebanese Excellence Award (LEA)</b>	<b>p. 24</b>
<b>g. Awareness Activities</b>	<b>p. 25</b>
<b>4. Challenges &amp; Future Perspectives</b>	<b>p. 29</b>
<b>a. Obstacles Faced</b>	<b>p. 29</b>
<b>b. Future Challenges</b>	<b>p. 30</b>
<b>c. Potential Activities - Phase II</b>	<b>p. 30</b>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

QUALEB, the Quality Programme is an EU funded project, hosted at the Ministry of Economy & Trade (MoET) - its main Beneficiary and Contracting Authority - and implemented between October 2004 and December 2007, with an extended period of implementation up to August 2008 for a specific number of activities.

The contract for the technical assistance to the Quality Programme was partially replaced by a new project, 'Sustaining Quality', with the same contractor – TECNITAS - and the same team of advisers, and pursued up to October 2009 and superseded as of 2010, by a planned Phase II of the Quality Programme.

The Sustaining Quality project is partly a prolongation of activities started during the Quality Programme and partly dealing with new aspects, such as inspection and certification, proficiency testing, food safety and a Lebanese Excellence Award.

Since January 2008, the Contracting Authority for the Sustaining Quality Project has been the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, through the Project Administration Office (PAO) and the Beneficiary being the Quality Unit at the Ministry of Economy and Trade.

QUALEB is the first public entity in Lebanon to be certified according to the ISO 9001:2000 quality management standard.

## 2. PROJECT BACKGROUND

### a. Objectives

Through its three components (policy, institutional development and enterprise), the overall objective of the Quality Programme focused on helping, improving and developing the major functions of the conformity assessment chain, while reinforcing awareness and co-ordination across private and public sector organisations.

All the objectives of the Programme fall within the scope of strengthening quality management, capabilities and infrastructure in Lebanon, leading to the protection of the health & safety of consumers and increasing Lebanese exports to EC countries, particularly:

- Developing and implementing the National Quality Policy
- Developing a quality related legal framework of laws and technical regulations
- Building up a competent and coordinated national market

- surveillance system
- Supporting leading testing & calibration laboratories towards international accreditation
- Creating a national accreditation system
- Assisting LIBNOR, the Lebanese Standards Institution in improving its operational capacity and supporting the development of technical regulations with corresponding national standards
- Offering capacity building to main stakeholders in both public and private sector organisations
- Extending technical support in terms of training and consultancy to public and private sector institutions to adopt Quality Management Systems and obtain relevant ISO certifications
- Creating a quality culture and improve awareness of private and public sectors, including educational institutions, industries and services on quality and consumer protection issues and help them resolve international trade issues
- Informing public and private sectors on international standards and conformity assessment procedures

## b. Finance

The overall budget for the Quality Programme is €15.4 million, including the contribution of the Lebanese Government. This budget is sub-divided into six budget lines:

Budget Line	Budget Item	Budget (in Million)	Activities
1.0	Main technical assistance	€4.3	Project management and technical assistance in all aspects of building a quality infrastructure (legislation, accreditation, standardisation, metrology, conformity assessment, market surveillance, awareness)
2.0	Contracts with specialised Member State institutions	€3.0	Training and consultancy to laboratories and companies on implementation of quality management systems
3.0	Supply contracts (equipment)	€6.0	Contracts for the supply of laboratory testing equipment, printing and visibility items
4.0	Other service contracts	€0.6	Contracts for, among others printing, web design, communications strategy, graphic design
5.0	Audits / evaluation	€0.4	Two Audit Missions performed by an external body
6.0	Contingencies	€0.7	
	Contribution of MoET	€0.4	Staff (salaries, compensation, insurance), offices (rent, maintenance, equipment, stationery,...), etc...
		<b>15.4 Million</b>	

The 'Sustaining Quality' Project led to an additional EU fund, amounting to 2 Million Euros.

More than 85% of the total budget amount of 17.4 Million was contracted and executed. This Final Report will provide the reader with detailed information on all performed activities throughout the implementation period of the programme.

#### **TOTAL number of mandays consumed:**

- ▶ Around 10,000 mandays for international & local experts
- ▶ Around 80 different international experts and 50 local experts worked for QUALEB and supported its team in successfully achieving the project's activities

### **c. The Programme's main Stakeholders and Target Groups**

- Ministries & Public Establishments
- Associations and organisations representing the business community, such as the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, the Association of Lebanese Industrialists, the various sectoral industrial and services syndicates (e.g. Syndicate of Lebanese Food Industries, Syndicate of Restaurants, the Orders of Engineers, the Bar Associations, etc...)
- Educational institutions at university, vocational and schools levels
- Companies in the industrial and service sectors, as well as non-profit organisations (e.g. hospitals) that have an interest in the implementation of quality management systems
- Conformity assessment bodies, such as laboratories (in public, private and non-profit sectors) providing or willing to provide testing services to third-parties and 'potential' inspection bodies and certification bodies that facilitate conformity assessment
- Companies, institutions and persons providing services in the field of quality management through training and consultancy
- Relevant NGO's (such as Consumers Lebanon and the Lebanese Society for Quality)

### 3. ACHIEVEMENTS:

#### a. Policies & Legislation:

Through the Policy Component, QUALEB team sought building high standard capabilities in the field of quality, within the public sector, particularly, at the Ministry of Economy & Trade, through permanent technical international and local expertise, aiming at raising Lebanon's profile and level of response, in bilateral and multilateral trade.

The staff of QUALEB has acquired a reasonably detailed understanding of the major elements of the quality infrastructure and the concept of quality, which facilitated the response to actions and requests coming from international trade related issues, such as the Palermo process on the negotiation of the ACAA Agreement with the EU and the accession negotiations to the WTO.

In addition to the various activities that the Quality Programme is undertaking to strengthen quality management, capabilities and infrastructure in Lebanon, QUALEB team and particularly the Policy Component has been preparing and developing a Lebanese National Quality Policy and a complete legal framework, with the objective of establishing and operating a comprehensive quality infrastructure, comparable to best practices in the European Union. The adoption of the national quality policy and the proposed legislation will create the basis and the conditions for the further coherent development of the quality infrastructure in Lebanon, providing the first necessary phase for a full approach system.


The legal infrastructure crystallizes the worldwide quality vision towards reaching a better production and ensuring international required standards for export oriented products.

The importance of the proposed set of draft laws also resides in the identification of the framework of fair competition within local markets, under the efforts invested by the Lebanese Government to join the WTO, with all the conditions set by the latter in this regard.

The Quality Programme team has been working on the completion of several draft regulations (laws and implementing decrees) in quality and standards related matters, taking account of the following:

- The approval of the **Food Safety draft law** and the **Competition draft law** by the Council of Ministers and their transfer to the Parliament for discussion and enactment.

The rationale behind the food safety law is to combine the numerous



Lebanese legislation dealing with food safety and general public health, as these current regulations lack up dated information and processes and do not guarantee a proper protection of consumers' rights, in terms of safe food; additionally, there are several ministries and institutions that are responsible today for the implementation of such regulations.

The new food safety law has been elaborated and completed to unify and harmonize the series of existing laws in a single legislation, including all rules guaranteeing food safety and establishing the competent authorities in charge of enforcing the law's provisions.

- The completion, along with the Ministry of Industry and the Board of Directors of LIBNOR, the Lebanese Standards Institution, of the amendment of the **Standardization draft law**, setting the principles and major objectives of national standards and the procedures for adopting and enforcing them, in addition to the provisions related to the restructure of LIBNOR, its responsibilities and financial resources.
- The completion of a new **Metrology draft law**, along with its implementing decrees, replacing the outdated regulations in the field and setting the rules governing metrology, to ensure proper measurement operations, according to international requirements and guaranteeing consumer protection and fair competition.
- The amendment of the **Accreditation law** has also been prepared and proposed.
- The drafting of the **Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment law**, along with its implementing decrees, identifying the procedures for adopting technical regulations and the conformity assessment of a product to these regulations, in addition to highlighting the responsibilities of economic entities that place products in the market.
- To complement the Consumer Protection law, the Policy Component has also worked on the development of some of its implementing decrees, in addition to the **draft law on General Product Safety and Market Surveillance**, which lays down the rights and obligations of producers and distributors, for safe Lebanese products and services, besides market surveillance competences.

QUALEB team has been continuously supported by qualified international and local experts, to prepare and complete the aforementioned regulations, in addition to discussing them with relevant stakeholders.

Finally, remains the issue of implementing and properly enforcing the provisions of quality related legislations, once enacted by the Parliament.



The Policy Component also worked on other activities, such as:

- The reorganisation and restructure of LIBNOR – the Lebanese Standards Institution, in terms of legal basis, database, staff training, technical committees' development, ISO & CEN affiliations, ISO implementation, etc...
- The development of a database on Lebanese national technical regulations to identify and analyse the roles and responsibilities of ministries in the Conformity Assessment field
- The performance of a gap analysis of the conformity assessment and quality infrastructure situation in Lebanon and the situation in the EU member states
- A detailed study on existing quality related courses in Lebanese educational institutions and the means of their development
- The training of public & private sector representatives on EU legal draftsmen and quality related legislation (delivered to Ministries, Professional Orders, etc...)
- The development and delivery of training courses and study tours for ministry staff involved in the development and implementation of quality policy
- The support of market surveillance activities (regulations drafted, market surveillance strategy proposed and around 100 consumer protection and health inspectors trained on food safety principles and practical inspection skills - in collaboration with the British Chartered Institute for Environmental Health)

## **b. Laboratory Accreditation**

**b-1.** Through the Institutional Development Component, QUALEB team sought developing and/ or improving the quality system of conformity assessment bodies in the areas of testing, calibration, standardisation, metrology, inspection and certification at an international accreditation level, by providing them with equipment, training and consultancy, to increase their capabilities and serve the needs of industries and government. For international accreditation purposes, 16 Lebanese private and public sector laboratories have been selected and supported by QUALEB, as follows:

- ▶ Equipment (worth € 4.55 million)
- ▶ Training: 26 joint training modules and 2 in-house training modules for 206 days in the following areas:
  - ISO 17025 Basic & Advanced
  - ISO 17025 Internal Audit
  - ISO 17025 for Laboratory Managers
  - Method Validation

- Uncertainty measurement for testing and calibration laboratories
- Change Management
- Experience Exchange Groups
- ▶ Seminars: Six Sigma & Supply Chain Management
- ▶ Consultancy: 766 days of consultancy to all supported laboratories, for international accreditation purposes

### **Accreditation Status of Laboratories Supported by QUALEB:**

<b>Laboratory</b>	<b>Contact person</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Field of Accreditation</b>	<b>Progress towards accreditation</b>
AUB - American University of Beirut	Dr. Ghazi Zaatar	Bliss street-Hamra	Water (potable, bottled & ground, waste, sea) & soils	Accredited
ACTS - Advanced Construction Technology Services 2.0	Mr. Mohammad Dokmak	Georges Assy Street-Sanayeh	Ciment, asphalt, concrete, paints, soil	Accredited
AUST - American University for Science and Technology 3.0	Dr. Amer Saker	Achrafieh – Hotel Dieu area	Food, GMO's (PCR), Amino Acid	Applied for accreditation/assessment phase
BAU - Beirut Arab University	Dr. Mohammad Abdel Ghani	Cola- Beirut	Petroleum, Food (Veterinary Drugs in Meat Products)	In progress
WE - Water Establishments (3 Laboratories, in the South, Beirut/Mount Lebanon & the North)	Mr. Mahmoud Baroud	Cornish al Naher	Water	In progress
IRI El - Industrial Research Institute - Electricity	Dr. Imad Hage Chehade	Hadath-Lebanese Campus	Batteries	Accredited
IRI Food - Industrial Research Institute - Food	Dr. Nadia Khoury	Hadath-Lebanese Campus	Food	Accredited
IRI Eng - Industrial research Institute - Engineering	Mr. Elias Dib	Hadath-Lebanese Campus	Soil, Asphalt, Concrete, Steel Bars, Tiles	In progress
Kfarshima – Ministry of Agriculture	Dr. Salem Hayar	Kfarshima	Pesticide	In progress

Laboratory	Contact person	Address	Field of Accreditation	Progress towards accreditation
LAEC-CNRS Lebanese Atomic Energy Commission	Dr. Bilal Nsouli	Old airport road	Pesticide, Gamma	Applied for accreditation/assessment phase
LARI - Fanar Central laboratory	Dr. Christo Hilan	Fanar area	Food	Ready to apply for accreditation
LC - Libancables - Calibration	Mr. Ghassan Boulbol/ Mr. Samir Saliba	Nahr Ibrahim	Electricity	In progress
USJ - Université Saint Joseph	Dr. Toufic Rizk	Mansourieh	Food Authenticity (SNIF-NMR)	Applied for accreditation/assessment phase

### b-2. Proficiency testing and inter-laboratory comparisons for testing and calibration laboratories

To set up a Proficiency Testing and Inter-Laboratory Comparison scheme for selected laboratories, QUALEB introduced, organised and implemented this activity, within the framework of laboratory accreditation.

The result was the design and organization by QUALEB of 4 Proficiency Testing (PT):

- ▶ 2 PT on drinking water chemical analysis (participation of 13 laboratories)
- ▶ 1 PT on food testing (participation of 6 laboratories)
- ▶ 1 PT on fuel testing (participation of 5 laboratories)

Additionally, several Lebanese public and private sector laboratories have participated in training and PT, at an international level, through the European inter-laboratory comparison scheme, managed by the Euromed Quality Programme and locally coordinated by QUALEB.

### **c. Inspection & Certification:**

To increase the capabilities and credibility of local inspection and certification bodies and promote the establishment of new bodies, QUALEB in general and the Institutional Development Component in particular, selected and supported 5 Conformity Assessment Bodies (IRI, LIBNOR, LIBANCERT Organic Farming, LAEC & ACTS) in terms of:

- ▶ Training: 3 training modules on:
  - ISO 17020
  - GUIDE 65 + ISO 17024
  - Internal Auditor
- ▶ Consultancy: 183 visits



The Institutional Development Component also worked on other activities, such as:

- The analysis of existing structure and technical capabilities of the Lebanese testing laboratory sector and metrology network
- The plan for the national metrology function and the drafting of relevant technical implementing decrees
- The conduct of survey related to existing calibration and testing laboratories in Lebanon and the selection of compliant participants for technical support
- The preparation of extensive sets of technical specifications for the purchase of laboratory equipment and for technical assistance, through training and consultancy
- The successful tendering of equipment and training, including contracts with participating laboratories and assistance to site preparation and commissioning of equipment
- The preparation of the organisational setup of the Lebanese Accreditation Council (COLIBAC), its structure and internal procedures, in addition to the training of its potential assessors and lead assessors
- The implementation of the ISO 9001:2000 standard within QUALEB, in close cooperation with all the team members

## **d. Support to Quality Related Institutions (COLIBAC, LIBNOR, CPD, etc...)**

### d-1. Support to COLIBAC (the Lebanese Accreditation Council):

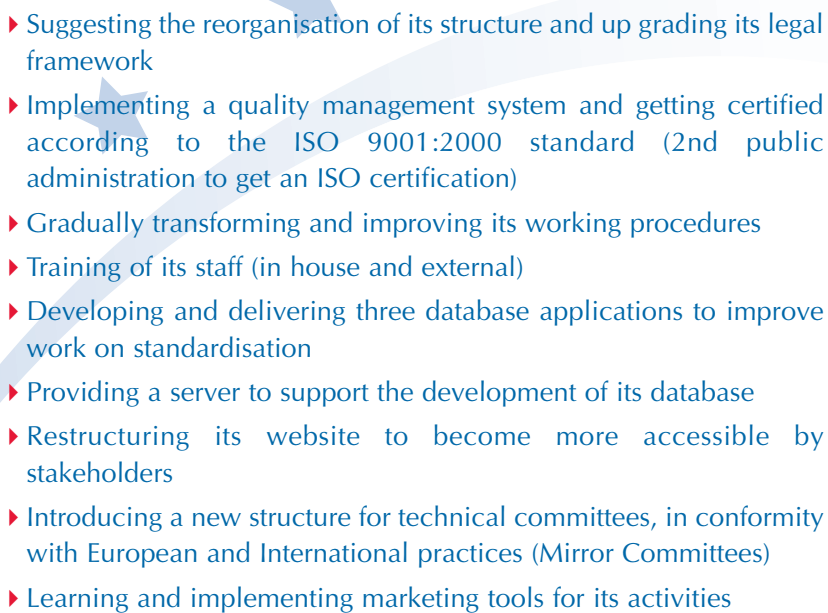
As the operation of this body will have a major positive impact on the Lebanese quality infrastructure, due to its great importance for certification and inspection bodies, laboratories and the international acceptance and recognition, through its participation in international organisations, QUALEB supported the establishment of COLIBAC, as follows:

- ▶ Training of:
  - 18 people to become technical assessors in the field of accreditation of laboratories
  - 8 people to become technical assessors in the field of accreditation of inspection bodies
  - 7 people to become technical assessors in the field of accreditation of certification bodies certifying persons
  - 9 people to become technical assessors in the field of certification body certifying products
  - 19 people to become technical assessors in the field of certifying management system
  - 13 people to become lead assessors
- ▶ COLIBAC Benchmarking
- ▶ Proposals of COLIBAC internal regulations and operational procedures and documents related to its Board of Directors, accreditation, logo and marks, vision, quality policy and objectives, by-laws and organisation of technical committees, appeals and complaints, management system documentation detailed structure, witness auditing procedure, procedure for grading non-conformities and management manual
- ▶ Preparation, design and printing of an ABC guide on Accreditation

### d-2. Support to LIBNOR (the Lebanese Standards Institution):

In its endeavour to strengthen the standardisation field in Lebanon, QUALEB extensively supported LIBNOR in the following activities, with the delivery of around 300 consultancy mandays:

- ▶ Becoming a full member of ISO - International Organisation for Standardisation
- ▶ Becoming an affiliate member of CEN – European Committee for Standardisation

- 
- ▶ Suggesting the reorganisation of its structure and up grading its legal framework
  - ▶ Implementing a quality management system and getting certified according to the ISO 9001:2000 standard (2nd public administration to get an ISO certification)
  - ▶ Gradually transforming and improving its working procedures
  - ▶ Training of its staff (in house and external)
  - ▶ Developing and delivering three database applications to improve work on standardisation
  - ▶ Providing a server to support the development of its database
  - ▶ Restructuring its website to become more accessible by stakeholders
  - ▶ Introducing a new structure for technical committees, in conformity with European and International practices (Mirror Committees)
  - ▶ Learning and implementing marketing tools for its activities
  - ▶ Adopting the Code of Good Practice
  - ▶ Preparing for the establishment of an operational WTO/TBT inquiry point

#### d-3. Support to the Consumer Protection Directorate (CPD) at the Ministry of Economy & Trade:

Within the framework of its market surveillance activities, QUALEB offered consultancy activities to the Consumer Protection Directorate, particularly:

- ▶ Proposing an Action Plan for the market surveillance system
- ▶ Drafting the general product safety and market surveillance law
- ▶ Proposing procedures and processes of the implementation of the ISO 9001:2000 standard
- ▶ Orienting CPD new assistant inspectors on quality and market surveillance practices and training (in house) CPD new experts
- ▶ Training CPD inspectors on basic food safety principles and practical inspection skills, in collaboration with the British Chartered Institute for Environmental Health and offering them thermometers

## **e. ISO Implementation Project:**

The key focus of the Enterprise Component at QUALEB was constantly to improve awareness within the private sector, on the importance of quality as a driving force for exports and as a tool for compliance with technical regulations, protecting the health and safety of consumers. A key development in this regard was the launching of the ISO Implementation Project in 2006, offering an intensive series of training modules and consultancy visits to 50 Lebanese enterprises in different regions and industrial and services sectors, to up grade their Quality Assurance Systems.

### e-1. Training & consultancy offered by QUALEB within the ISO Implementation Project framework

The Training & Consultancy activities were primarily focused on two groups of selected companies, totaling 50 enterprises in all. The first group was representative of the agro-food sector interested in food safety and hygiene management systems (HACCP, ISO 22000:2005) and the second group consisted of other industrial and service sectors interested in introducing quality management systems (ISO 9001:2000).

The 50 selected companies received not only in house training and consultancy visits by local and international experts, but also intensive joint training modules on different aspects of the implementation of quality management and food safety management systems, through 34 training courses on ISO 9001 related subjects and 23 training courses on ISO 22000 related subjects (basic, advanced, internal audit, Experience Exchange Groups, etc...).

QUALEB was able to achieve and even exceed the original targeted number of certifications, in reaching 38 ISO certified companies. QUALEB has also played a major role in promoting and enhancing a quality culture and food safety principles within both the public and private sectors, in addition to contributing towards increasing the levels of access opportunities for Lebanese products to international markets.



e-2. Final list of ISO certified companies through QUALEB support:

List of ISO 9001 Certified Companies			
Company	Products / Services	ISO Standard	Date of ISO certification
Ets Fouad Baayno	Bookbinding	ISO 9001:2000	7-Nov-07
Saga Concept	Cosmetics	ISO 9001:2000	16-Nov-07
Samobelt	Leather Belts	ISO 9001:2000	19-Nov-07
Lefico Fiber Co SAL	Mattresses	ISO 9001:2000	21-Nov-07
Fomaco SARL	Foam Products	ISO 9001:2000	22-Nov-07
Sipes Paint Co SARL	Paints	ISO 9001:2000	26-Nov-07
Al Machrek SAL	Insurances	ISO 9001:2000	26-Nov-07
Wilco PM	Poultry Products	ISO 9001:2000	27-Nov-07
Diana de Beauté SAL	Cosmetics	ISO 9001:2000	27-Nov-07
Fidelity Insurance SAL	Insurance	ISO 9001:2000	12-Dec-07
Arab Printing Press	Printing products	ISO 9001:2000	18-Dec-07
Bimatec SARL	Bakery Equipment	ISO 9001:2000	7-Jan-08
Stageco Plastics Co	Plastic Packaging	ISO 9001:2000	4-Feb-08
Karaky Printing Press	Printing products	ISO 9001:2000	4-Feb-07
QUALEB, the Quality Unit - Public Sector	Development of Quality Infrastructure	ISO 9001:2000	16-Apr-08
Mimosa Paper Co., Chtaura	Paper Products	ISO 9001:2000	17-Jun-08
Pharmadex SAL	Pharmaceuticals	ISO 9001:2000	26-Jun-08
Société Générale de Banque au Liban SAL	Conception, Développement et Emission des cartes bancaires	ISO 9001:2000	31-Jul-08
LIBNOR - Lebanese Standards Institution	Lebanese Standards Institution	ISO 9001:2000	4-Aug-08

### List of ISO 22000 Certified Companies

Company	Products / Services	ISO Standard	Date of ISO certification
Hawa Chicken	Poultry Products	ISO 22000:2005	7-Dec-07
LIBANCAVE trading & Industry SARL	Wine	ISO 22000:2005	7-Feb-08
Abdul Rahman Hallab & Sons, Tripoli	Traditional Arabic Sweets	ISO 22000:2005	12-Feb-08
Al Rassoul Al Aazam Hospital	Hospital kitchen facilities	ISO 22000:2005	17-Apr-08
Zaatar W Zeit Restaurant	Food Services	ISO 22000:2005	19-Apr-08
Roadster Diner, Restaurant Network	Restaurant facilities	ISO 22000:2005	24-May-08
Al Kazzi Trading Establishment	Mixed roasted / coated nuts	ISO 22000:2005	13-Jun-08
Poppins - Daher International Food Co SAL	Breakfast Cereals	ISO 22000:2005	16-Jun-08
Assaha Traditional Village	Restaurant	ISO 22000:2005	17-Jun-08
Second House Products	Puddings, Ready Mixes, Spices, Beans	ISO 22000:2005	16-Jun-08
Chtoura Garden - Alfa Interfood SAL	Canned foods, Halawa, Tahina, Jams, Olives & Oils	ISO 22000:2005	27-Jun-08
Pomo Food Industries SARL	Corn Flour, Tortilla, Nacho Chips, Bran Bread, Papa Sito Tortilla - Rice Cake, Wheat Cake, Corn Cake	ISO 22000:2005	27-Jun-08
National Flour Mills Co SAL	Production & Sales all kind of wheat flours	ISO 22000:2005	24-Jul-08
Atyab Company, Boulos Olive Oil	Olive oil, Vinegar, Olives and pickles	ISO 22000:2005	25-Jul-08
Gardenia Spices - Lebanese Co. for Modern Food Industry SARL	Production of spices, grains and powders	ISO 22000:2005	4-Aug-08
Al Baba Al Mumtaza Sweets	Sweets	ISO 22000:2005	18-Aug-08
Master Chips - Daher International Food Co. SAL	Potato Chips	ISO 22000:2005	28-Aug-08
Almaza Brasserie B.A. SAL	Beer & malt beverages	ISO 22000:2005	18-Sep-08
Kassatly Chtaura Chateau Ka	Manufacturing of red, white and rose wines	ISO 22000:2005	25-Nov-08

## **f. Lebanese Excellence Award (LEA):**

As many of the most developed countries in the world and the entire 27 countries of the European Union, QUALEB has introduced an initiative for supporting competitiveness in the Lebanese business community, through a programme that includes the design and implementation of the Lebanese Quality Management Model (LQMM) and the Lebanese Excellence Award (LEA).

The Lebanese Quality Management Model is a framework that helps managers to apply systematic management practices. The efficient use of this model leads to earning the Lebanese Excellence Award.

Applying to the LEA scheme consists of submitting a formal document prepared by the applicant company, following specific and pre-set requirements that are based on the Lebanese Quality Management Model.

This Submission Document is assessed and scored by a team of trained LEA assessors, who are experienced managers coming from a range of Lebanese industries and services.

After the completion of the initial assessment, the assessor team formally visits the organisation in question to independently assess and verify the submitted documentation and produce a detailed feedback report. Subsequently, an expert Jury, at a recognized high level of competence and integrity, reviews the reports and successful entries are granted the Lebanese Excellence Award winner status.

In order to materialise this endeavour, an intensive training of Assessors was carried out in April and end of September 2009 over two phases, which included an initial introductory module, followed by an extremely intensive three-day module, including a four-hour case study assessment covering all aspects of the LEA process and Assessor responsibilities. The training was conducted by two European leading experts in the field of Excellence, who also completed the detailed assessment of the participants overall capacities, personality, experience and suitability to the role of Assessor.

The successful candidates in these training sessions have received certificates. All successful assessors have signed an Assessor Declaration form relating to possible conflict of interest and a confidentiality Agreement, protecting the interests of the participating organisations.

The first Jury panel was appointed in September 2009 and met twice during two months (up to the issuance of this report), under the chairmanship of the Minister of Economy & Trade.

On the other hand, by end of May 2009, a total of 27 organisations from different sectors have applied to the Lebanese Excellence Award scheme, out of which 16 have completed the whole process and were assessed, as previously planned, by selected assessors' teams who submitted all relevant feedback reports to the Award Office, that received and audited them before their submission to the Jury, for study and final decisions.

## **g. Awareness Activities:**

### **g-1. ABC Guides:**

As part of its awareness campaign on the role and importance of quality related issues, QUALEB produced and issued a number of ABC Guides which are introductory pointers to a number of quality related topics and links for a better elaboration of references.


These ABC Guides may be obtained, free of charge, from QUALEB offices; they were also distributed to QUALEB's different stakeholders, mainly Ministries, factories, Universities, Trade Associations, Professional Orders and Federations.

A quick glance on the contents of each ABC Guide:

**g-1-1. Quality**, defining quality concepts and offering an overview of quality management systems, policies, infrastructure and ISO Standards; it also highlights the benefits and advantages of implementing and adopting a quality management system in general and within small and medium enterprises in particular. It also develops subjects related to Certification, Conformity Assessment, CE Marking and Market Surveillance.

**g-1-2. Food Safety Management Systems**, providing a general background, a reference guide and some practical information on HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points) and the ISO 22000:2005 standard.

**g-1-3. Metrology**, giving details on Metrology in general and on Industrial, Scientific and Legal Metrology in particular, besides metrological units and international and regional metrology organisations.



g-1-4. **Packaging and Labelling**, tackling matters related to EU, General and Particular Food Labelling, detailing specific foodstuff categories, clarifying issues related to food packaging materials, design and presenting an overview of the food packaging and labelling in Lebanon.

g-1-5. **New and Global Approach**, highlighting the understanding of international principles for technical regulations, standardisation and conformity assessment, with a special focus on the EU concepts of the New and Global Approach.

g-1-6. **Accreditation**, focusing on the concept of Accreditation and its place in the Quality Infrastructure, besides recognising the advantages of using Accredited Conformity Assessment Bodies and understanding the International and Regional Dimension of Accreditation.

g-1-7. **Standardisation**, providing general information on the benefits and needs of standards, as well as the process of standards adoption.

g-1-8. **Conformity Assessment**, providing a summary of the Conformity Assessment basics, process and tools for international trade, as well as the role and interest of governments in Conformity Assessment through technical regulations.

g-1-9. **Certification and Inspection**, explaining the concepts of Certification and Inspection within national and international contexts, besides presenting an introduction to different related topics (e.g. Management System Certification, Product Certification and Certification of Persons).

g-1-10. **Consumer Protection**, defining Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance, as well as consumer rights and the role of the governments in these prospects. It also shows the general principles and benefits that lie behind Consumer Protection and Market Surveillance and presents a summary of the Lebanese situation in this field.

g-1-11. **Lebanese Excellence Award**, introducing and describing the various processes of the Lebanese Quality Management Model, leading to the Lebanese Excellence Award.

### g-2. Newsletters:

As part of its awareness campaign on the role and importance of quality related issues, QUALEB has also prepared and issued on regular basis 12 Quality Info newsletters, covering the activities of QUALEB, from its launching in 2005 up to the end of the Sustaining Quality project, besides various quality related events. All newsletter issues have been printed in 10,000 copies and distributed all over Lebanon.

### g-3. Awareness campaigns:

QUALEB organised a series of awareness seminars and presentations on quality related matters (such as Total Quality Management, ISO 9001:2000, ISO 22000:2005, HACCP, Packaging and Labeling, Exports to EU, Food Safety Principles, Change Management, etc...) delivered to:

- Universities, vocational institutions and schools, in several Lebanese regions
- Representatives of trade, industrial and services associations, through the Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture, the Association of Lebanese Industrialists, the Syndicate of Lebanese Food Industries and other active syndicates

Also, QUALEB jointly organised, in close cooperation with its key stakeholders and partners, annual regional conferences on quality, excellence and food safety, attended by hundreds of participants from Lebanon and the Arab countries.

### g-4. QUALEB Library:

Throughout the last 5 years and with the financial assistance of the European Union, QUALEB purchased around 600 books on various topics of quality, management and excellence in general and on some highly specialised issues, like laboratory testing.

Through this comprehensive collection of books, QUALEB is making available to the public, at its premises, at the Ministry of Economy & Trade, useful technical information for research, study and other purposes.

The Enterprise Component also worked on other activities, such as:

- The analysis of economic sectors and the selection of six priority sectors
- The reasonable level of media coverage of QUALEB various activities, contributing to the visibility of this EU funded project
- The delivery of a series of seminars and conferences, informing a wide audience about the importance of spreading a quality culture and adopting quality concepts
- The creation of a strong brand identity for QUALEB (logo design and application on all QUALEB visibility and promotional items)
- The design and development of QUALEB interactive website for the Lebanese private and public sectors, providing value-added information, with direct links to key stakeholders and ultimately a search engine to link up with European Directives
- The fruitful cooperation with NGO's and other donor aid organisations and projects, resulting in a series of joint activities (TBT seminar, Quality & Food Safety Conferences, etc...)
- The participation, within the Lebanese pavilion, in regional and international trade and food fairs (such as ANUGA-Germany, GULFOOD-UAE, HORECA-Lebanon, etc...)

**A total number of 150 seminars,  
training modules and conferences  
have been delivered to more than 2000 participants,  
throughout the Project**



## 4. CHALLENGES & FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

### a. Obstacles Faced

The unstable political situation and the insecurity in Lebanon from 2005 up to 2009 (assassination of political, intellectual and military figures, Israeli war, clashes, demonstrations, etc...) hampered the smooth implementation of the Quality Programme planned activities and had direct effects on the project, in terms of:

- ▶ Delay in the launching of some projects
- ▶ Cancellation and postponement of the delivery of certain training modules, meetings and visits
- ▶ Absenteeism of participants in certain activities, for security reasons
- ▶ Deferral of major decisions
- ▶ Delays in the issuance of regulations, due to the Government crisis and the Parliament paralysis
- ▶ Reschedule of a number of planned activities, delaying their completion
- ▶ Closing of some institutions participating in the programme, leading to their withdrawal from the project (such as laboratories, companies affected by the war, etc...)
- ▶ Loss of six tenders, causing the cancellation of certain planned activities (lack of equipment and technical resources), due to the war of 2006
- ▶ Unavailability of international experts from certain EU countries, due to negative travel advices to Lebanon

Besides the political situation effects, QUALEB faced certain obstacles, among which the lack of coordination among the private sector representatives, leading to the withdrawal of certain activities, such as the Lebanese National Quality Centre.

Despite all the obstacles that faced QUALEB, it successfully achieved most of its set objectives and even overcoming them in certain instances; furthermore, its staff received the appropriate capacity building and participated in several international meetings, workshops and study visits.

Additionally, QUALEB was successfully monitored and evaluated more than once, on both financial and administrative levels, by the European Union mandated assessors, who granted it satisfactory grading results.

## **b. Future Challenges:**


- ▶ Sustainability of the programme's activities beyond the completion of its Phase I and the extension project, through the establishment of the National Quality Council
- ▶ Wider promotion and implementation of quality concepts and systems
- ▶ Enforcement and implementation of quality related legislation
- ▶ Further development of existing quality related institutions
- ▶ Cooperation between the Quality Unit and the various quality key players in the public and private sectors.
- ▶ Creation of a flexible and independent LEA Office that is able to execute timely all its planned duties
- ▶ Continuous development of the Lebanese Quality Management Model, to provide the Lebanese organisations with a complete and updated management framework or guide that will allow them to constantly improve the management processes and stay competitive within the local and international markets
- ▶ Improvement of the Lebanese Excellence Award process, to distinguish the sectors and target more specific markets

## **c. Potential Activities - Phase II**

The European Union is willing to further support Lebanon in building and developing its quality infrastructure, by launching the Quality Programme

– Phase II in 2010, aiming at completing the following activities:

- ▶ Development and implementation of Technical Regulations in accordance with the new law
- ▶ Adoption & implementation of a Lebanese National Quality Policy
- ▶ Preparation for accreditation of selected testing laboratories
- ▶ Preparation for accreditation of selected inspection and certification bodies
- ▶ COLIBAC to become a fully operational accreditation body complying with international requirements, while servicing the needs of national stakeholders

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- ▶ LIBNOR to become an independent and improved standardisation organisation complying with international requirements, while servicing the needs of national stakeholders
  - ▶ Support to the implementation of the law on Metrology and the National Metrology Policy, once enacted
  - ▶ Increase in the efficiency and efficacy of the market surveillance and official controls systems
  - ▶ Introduce Quality Management Systems in the Public Sector
  - ▶ Further development and implementation of the Lebanese Excellence Award scheme
  - ▶ Increase in the awareness of the business community and the public sector on the importance of quality and the creation of a national quality culture:
  - ▶ Introduce Innovative Management Models for organisations advanced in quality management
  - ▶ Support to the educational sector to promote the concept of quality