

**INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO**

“The Role of Private Sector in the Use of Innovation and Technology  
to support Smallholders face COVID-19 disruptive impact”

**June 18, 2020**

**Raphaël Debbané**

President of Agricultural Committee  
Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture  
in Lebanon

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

1) What are the Elements of Success of the Initiatives in Innovation  
and Digitization?

**Main Three Elements of Success are:**

- 1. The use of internet and social media and networks among farmers and agricultural extension officers.**
- 2. Develop digital skills among the rural population.**
- 3. Introduce a culture which encourages digital agriprenurship and innovation.**

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

2) What are the Needed Policies and Strategies to Strengthen Private-Public Partnership?

**Contracts need to be flexible to adjust to the project's life cycle. The art of a PPP resides in the allocation of risks of the project and in the definition of the framework, principles, and rules to deal with change, because it will occur. So fundamentally in structuring a PPP contract we need to articulate a set of incentives to ensure the stability and sustainability of a project.**

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

3) What Framework is needed to strengthen Cross Border Collaboration?

- 1. There is a need for strong collaborative marketing efforts related to the high-value technology and innovation clusters in the region.**
- 2. Leadership from both sides of the Border must collaborate on expanding research, technical assistance, professional and workforce education to assure sustainable growth and competitiveness.**
- 3. Cross Border Collaboration needs co-investment and well-orchestrated programs to build competitive capacity for the innovation corridor.**

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

- 4) How the private sector could contribute in a market system to supplying the agricultural value chain using innovation and technology in a region under harsh natural conditions and in the time of the pandemic?

**New initiatives have recently appeared in Lebanon for direct sale of Fresh and/or Processed Agriculture products on social media.**

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

- 5) What are the main challenges encountered and what public policies and frameworks are needed to support entrepreneurial opportunities to open up new markets, add value and develop new products and services for agriculture stakeholders?

**The main pillar of success is securing competition protection by imposing tariffs. Evidence for this is the success of two main sectors in Lebanon due to protection, namely wine, poultry farming and its derivatives.**

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

6) How government and civil society organizations and the private sector have joined forces to deal with the crisis imposed by the pandemic?

Have they succeeded together in supporting smallholders to surviving the crisis so far?

What were their creative solutions?

**The Minister of Agriculture in Lebanon has promised to provide financial support to small farmers and has obtained the approval of the Council of Ministers to distribute 4.5 millions Lebanese Pounds to each farmer (equivalent today to approximatively USD 1.000). Also, as previous years, wheat seeds have been distributed.**

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

7) How Innovation and technology could play a major role in linking farmers to consumers through digital platforms, disseminating quick and responsive advisories and extension of agricultural aggregations, cooperatives and associations?

**The Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Lebanon has created an electronic platform/Application that includes all the information that the producer may need. There is also an electronic platform on the Federation of Lebanese Chambers' website, which is intended for exporters to inquire about export requirements and conditions (Norms and Standards). In addition, Agri-Research Authorities in Lebanon distributes periodically technical advices to the farmers via sms messages and through its pages on social media.**

INNOVATION ZOOMINAR SERIES  
ORGANIZED BY ESCWA & FAO

8) The future of innovation and technology will depend on how much the region will invest in research and development activities.

**Two poles could play an important role in promoting innovation and new technologies:**

- 1. The Governments, by securing and allocating enough budgets for innovative Research programs.**
- 2. The Private Sector, by disseminating actively the results of these Research and Developments programs among farmers and agricultural producers, so as they have more and more tools to increase their income in profitable crops.**

**Thank You**